

Joshua Chapters 1 to 4 – 3 Studies – Part 1

Please Note the following:

1. It is not necessary to answer the Bible Study Questions before meeting together for the Bible Study. Some people like to prepare beforehand whereas others like to think through the Bible Passages in a group setting. It is also not compulsory to answer ALL the questions.
2. It is not necessary to look up all the Bible cross references listed in a particular question; your Growth Group Leader will summarize these Bible cross references for you.
3. Just a reminder that sometimes in our Growth Groups, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information **MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP**

Introduction to the Book of Joshua

Author: The Book of Joshua does not explicitly name its author. More than likely Joshua the son of Nun, the successor of Moses as leader over Israel, penned much of this book. The latter part of the book was written by at least one other person after the death of Joshua. It is also possible that several sections were edited / compiled following Joshua's death.

For further information on "who wrote the book of Joshua" see article:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/who-wrote-the-book-of-Joshua.html>

Date of Writing: The Book of Joshua was likely written between 1400 and 1370 B.C.

Purpose of Writing: The Book of Joshua provides an overview of the military campaigns to conquer the land area that God had promised. Following the exodus from Egypt and the subsequent forty years of the wilderness wanderings, the newly-formed nation is now poised to enter the Promised Land, conquer the inhabitants, and occupy the territory. The overview that we have here gives abbreviated and selective details of many of the battles and the manner in which the land was not only conquered, but how it was divided into tribal areas.

Brief Summary: The Book of Joshua continues the story of the Israelites after the exodus from Egypt. The book chronicles the approximately 20 years of Joshua's leadership of the people after Moses anointed him at the end of Deuteronomy. The twenty-four chapter divisions of the Book of Joshua can be summarized as follows:

Entering the land – chapters 1 to 4

Taking the land – chapters 5 to 12

Possessing the land – chapters 13 to 21

Retaining the land – chapters 22 to 24

Key Verses

Joshua 1:6-9: "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.""

Joshua 24:14-15: "Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Practical Application: One of the key verses of the Book of Joshua is 1:8 "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it." The Old Testament is replete with stories of how the people "forgot" God and His Word and suffered terrible consequences. For the Christian, the Word of God is our lifeblood. If we neglect it, our lives will suffer accordingly. But if we take to heart the principle of verse 1:8, we will be complete and able to be of use in God's kingdom (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and we will find that God's promises in Joshua 1:8-9 will be ours as well.

Joshua is a prime example of the benefits of a worthy mentor. For years he remained close to Moses. He watched Moses as he followed God in an almost flawless manner. He learned to pray in a personal way from Moses. He learned how to obey through the example of Moses. Joshua apparently also learned from the negative example that cost Moses the joy of actually entering the Promised Land. If you are alive, you are a mentor. Someone, somewhere, is watching you. Some younger person or someone that you are influencing is seeing how you live and how you react. Someone is learning from you. Someone will follow your example. Mentoring is far more than the words that are spoken by the mentor. His or her entire life is on display.

Study 1 – Promise Before Possession

Joshua 1:1-18

(Sermon on 12th April 2026)

Read Joshua 1:1-18

1. What event has just happened at the beginning of the chapter? (vv1-2)

Moses, the servant of the Lord, has died and passed the mantle on to his protégé, Joshua, son of Nun.

Joshua was prepared by faithful service in small things, in being Moses' assistant. Redpath tells of a motto over a kitchen sink: "Divine service is conducted here three times daily." The motto is true, and great men and women are prepared by faithfulness in the small things.

2. What command does God give Joshua? (v2)

Joshua and the people are to ready themselves to cross the River Jordan – and Joshua is to lead them into the Promised Land that the Lord God is giving them.

3. What promise does God give about the land? (v3)

God will give Joshua and the people every place where they set their foot, as God promised Moses. God promised in Deuteronomy 11:24 – "Every place where you set your foot will be yours: Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea"

4. What promise does God give Joshua personally? (v5)

God promised Joshua: "No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you"
Victory is assured not because Joshua is a great leader, or because Israel is a great nation, but because God is a great God, and He says to Joshua, I will be with you. This is enough for any man seeking to do God's will.

5. How many times does God tell Joshua to be strong and courageous?

Three times – in verses 6, 7 and 9. Therefore it must be important to God that Joshua is strong and courageous and equally it must mean Joshua will face many challenges in the future!

In verse 18, all the people encourage Joshua to be strong and courageous!

This bold courage would not be in Joshua himself, but in God. We can be full of self-confidence that will take us to ruin, but we should instead be full of a genuine God-confidence.

6. What instructions does God give about the Book of the Law? What will happen if Joshua obeys the Law? (vv7-8)

Joshua is to be careful to obey the Law and not turn to the left or the right, so that he is successful wherever he goes.

Joshua is to keep the Book of the Law on his lips, meditate on it day and night, and obey it. Then he will be prosperous and successful.

God's word so lived is a guarantee of Christian success. Not that it promises a life without problems, but it does ensure a life able to deal with anything because it takes full advantage of God's presence and promises.

And Christian success is not measured by the same standards as the world's success. Even if the world accounts us as sheep for the slaughter, we are actually more than conquerors through Him who loved us (Romans 8:36-37).

7. What tribes have already received land to east of the River Jordan? What were those tribes still required to do? (vv12-14)

The Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh have been allocated land to the east of the River Jordan. All their fighting men, ready for battle, must cross over ahead of their fellow Israelites and they are to help them conquer the Promised Land.

This same principle operates in the Body of Christ. When one member has a need, it is the common need of the body (1 Corinthians 12:25-26). We should never refuse to help a brother in need because our own state is settled. See also Hebrews 10:25 and 1 Samuel 23:16!

These tribes expressed their desire to settle on the east side of the Jordan river in Numbers 32:16-32, in land that Israel had already conquered.

Here's the land allocations at the time of Joshua – which is described in Joshua 13-19....



8. What did the people promise Joshua at the end of the chapter? (vv16-18)
The people promised Joshua: "Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you as he was with Moses. Whoever rebels

against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death ”

Here we see Israel in the kind of unity as a nation that was essential to fulfill God’s calling and promise for them. They overcame the temptation to see the eastern tribes as separate from the rest of Israel.

The willingness of the people to receive Joshua as their leader, replacing Moses, was a confirmation of the Lord’s words to Joshua previously in the chapter.

*The representatives from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh say the same thing to Joshua that he heard from the Lord in Joshua 1:6. This must have been a confirmation of God’s word to Joshua when they said it. **God loves to confirm His word to us.***

9. **Ponder:** Why might Joshua have been afraid or needed courage?

- *He was replacing Moses as the leader of the people and those are big boots to fill*
- *He is about to enter the Promised Land – entering into unknown territory and will no doubt face opposition from unknown opposition!*

10. **Ponder:** According to this chapter, what is the **key** to success?

Obeying and meditating on God’s Word.

11. **Ponder:** What does this chapter teach about leadership?

A good leader trusts God, obeys God’s Word, and leads God’s people forward in faith and obedience!

12. **Discuss:** What commands in this chapter apply to believers today?

- *Be strong and courageous*
- *Trust God’s promises – as Joshua and the people did*
- *Obey God’s Law*
- *Waiting on God – Joshua and the people had to wait three days before they were allowed to cross the River Jordan (v11)*
- *Keep God’s Word on our lips and meditate on it day and night*
- *Do not be afraid or discouraged – God goes with us wherever we go!*

The final encouragement, repeated from Joshua 1:5, reminds us that Joshua's success did not depend solely on his ability to keep God's word. It depended even more on God's presence with him.

13. **Discuss:** What promise in this chapter encourages believers today?
God is with His people and will never leave them or forsake them! (v5, v9)

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 1:1-18**?

- *The name **Joshua** means “The Lord saves”, which is the same name as **Jesus**.*
- *Joshua leads God's people into the Promised Land — Jesus leads God's people into eternal life, in the Promised Land of Heaven!*
- *God promises “**I will never leave you**” (Joshua 1:5), which is repeated for believers in **Hebrews 13:5**.*
- *Joshua gives **rest in the land**, but Jesus gives **true eternal rest** (Hebrews 4:8–10).*
- *God promises to be with Joshua wherever he goes, which is the same promise Jesus gives to His disciples in Matthew 28:20.*

14. How do the following New Testament passages relate to **Joshua 1:1-18**?

Hebrews 13:5-6

*God promises us as Christian believers, in Hebrews 13:5 that He will never leave us nor forsake us, which is exactly what God promised Joshua in Joshua 1:5.
Hebrews 13:6 promises that Lord is our helper – which again Joshua was promised.*

James 1:22-25

James warns us to not just listen to the word, but do what it says. This relates to God's command to Joshua to meditate on God's Word and obey it!

Matthew 28:18-20

*God's presence with His people
God tells Joshua: “Be strong and courageous... the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9)*

Jesus says in Matthew 28:20: “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”

Hebrews 4:1-11

This is a very important theological connection.

*The Book of Hebrews explains that Joshua bringing Israel into the land **was not the final rest** — it pointed to something greater.*

If Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. (Hebrews 4:8)

Joshua leads the people into the “Promised Land rest”

In a far greater way, Jesus leads believers into “Eternal rest” in Heaven!

2 Timothy 1:7

2 Timothy 1:7 says that God has not given us a spirit of fear/timidity but of power, love and self-control! This echoes God’s call to Joshua (three times) to be “strong and courageous”

John 14:15

Joshua is told to obey the God’s law and meditate on in day and night.

Likewise, Jesus tells His disciples in John 14:15 “If you love me, keep my commands”.

If we think about it, if we love someone, we generally want to please them.

Therefore if we love God/Jesus, we will want to please Him/Them – and one way to show that is to keep God’s Holy commands.

What’s the **BIG IDEA** of Joshua 1:1-18?

God calls His people to be strong and courageous as they trust His presence and obey His Word.



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V8 - Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You that You are a faithful God who keeps Your promises. Just as You were with Joshua, we thank You that You promise to be with us and never leave us nor forsake us. Please help us to be strong and courageous, not because we are strong, but because You are with us. Help us not to be afraid or discouraged, but to trust You in all the things You call us to do. Help us to love Your Word, to read it, to think about it, and to obey it in our daily lives. Please guide us as we follow You, and help us to walk in Your ways this week. We thank You that Jesus leads us into the true promised land and gives us rest and eternal life. Help us to follow Him faithfully. In His Name. Amen.

Study 2 – Rahab and the Spies

Joshua 2:1-24

(Sermon on 19th April 2026)

Read Joshua 2:1-24

1. Where did Joshua secretly send the spies? Where do they stay? (v2)

Joshua sent spies to look over the land and especially Jericho.

They stayed at the home of a prostitute called Rahab.

This kind of careful preparation shows faithfulness, not a lack of faith. God's promises of success to us should never lull us into inaction. They should spur us on to a step out in godly activity.

i. We aren't told who the two spies are, but Jewish tradition — speculation, really — says they were faithful Caleb and the high priest Eliezer.

ii. Remember that all this takes place during the three days Joshua has commanded the nation to wait on the banks of the Jordan (Joshua 1:11). God has a special purpose for these three days.

*Joshua also shows wisdom by sending them **secretly**. The last time that spies that went out publicly it turned out badly for Israel; when a majority of the spies came back with a discouraging report (Numbers 13).*

2. What did the king of Jericho tell Rahab to do? What did Rahab do instead? What lie did she tell? (vv3-5)

The king told Rahab to bring out the spies.

Her lie: She said the men had already left the city at dusk, she didn't know which way they went but that the king's men could still catch them if they hurried.

Instead, Rahab hid the spies on her roof under stalks of flax (v6).

In the culture of that day, there was a strong tradition of hospitality. If someone was a guest in your house, you had the duty to protect them and care for them. Even considering this, Rahab went much further than the respect of cultural traditions regarding hospitality. She put her own life on the line for these men.

The Bible simply reports Rahab's lie; it does not praise it or excuse it. Perhaps if she had beforehand determined in her heart to not lie in obedience to God, He would have made a way for her to preserve the life of the spies without lying.

Rahab's lie is not justified, but it does show courage. Consider that she was a pagan sinner in a city and culture wholly given over to the worship of false gods and immorality, with no previous contact with the word of God or the things of God. What is our excuse?

3. What did Rahab say she knew about Israel's God? (vv9-11)

Rahab confessed that she knew:

- *The **Lord had given Israel the land***
- *The people in Jericho [and rest of the land] were **terrified** of Israel*
- *That the Lord had dried up the Red Sea and defeated the Amorite kings Sihon and Og in the East of the Jordan*
- *That the LORD God of the Israelites is God in heaven above and on the earth below*

This is a remarkable confession of faith from a Canaanite.

This surprising outburst of faith shows that God had a plan in bringing Rahab and the spies together. It is the same kind of thing we see when God supernaturally brings us to people who are believers or open to the gospel.

Rahab's declaration was proof of her faith. It was not strong faith and it was not perfect faith, but her faith was commendable nonetheless (See Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25).

4. What did Rahab ask the spies to do for her? (vv12-13)

*She asked for **kindness (mercy)** in return for the kindness she had shown the spies. She asked that they spare her **father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all who belong to them – and save them from death!***

5. What **sign** would show Rahab's house should be spared? Who had to be inside the house to be saved? (vv18-19)

*The sign she would show was **a scarlet cord** tied in the window.*

Those saved were everyone inside the house; anyone outside would not be protected. This was the signal to the army of Israel that the people in this home were to be spared. Despite Rahab's desire, despite her faith, despite the promises of these spies,

she would have perished unless she put her trust in a blood-red cord cast down from her window. Without the scarlet cord, she could not have been saved.

*As early as the first century, commentators such as Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen and more **saw this scarlet cord as a symbol of the blood of Jesus.***

Joshua would be a savior for Rahab, but a judge of the rest of Jericho. In the same way, Jesus is a savior for those who trust Him, but a judge for those who reject Him.

6. Where do the spies hide after leaving Rahab? (v22)

The spies went into the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had searched all along the road and returned without finding them!

7. What report do the spies give to Joshua on their return? (v24)

*They reported that “The LORD has surely given the whole land into our hands; **all the people are melting in fear because of us.**”*

Considering how God will have them conquer the city of Jericho, how did the information from these spies help in the battle for Jericho? Jericho was one of the strongest and most heavily fortified cities of Canaan; if Israel could conquer it, the whole land would be before them — but how did this reconnaissance help them with the eventual battle? It didn't help them at all!

The reconnaissance mission didn't help with military strategy, but it did help in encouraging the faith of these spies and the whole nation. This was far more important than a good battle plan.

8. **Ponder:** Why do you think Rahab helped the spies?

- *She believed the truth about God!*
- *She believed the Lord God of Israel was the One True God!*
- *She feared God more than the king of Jericho!*
- *She saw God's power and chose to align with Him!*
- *She acted in faith, not just words*

9. **Ponder:** What does Rahab show about faith?

- *Faith is believing and acting on that belief*
- *Faith can appear in the most unlikely people*
- *True faith leads to risk and obedience*
- *Rahab trusted God before seeing the outcome – she walked by faith, not by sight!*

10. **Ponder:** Why do you think the scarlet cord was important?

Yes the scarlet cord was important because:

- *It marked out those who would be **saved from judgment***
- *It required **trust and obedience***
- *It visibly identified those under **promise and protection***
- *The scarlet cord pointed to the scarlet blood of Jesus that saved people from sin and death*
- *The scarlet cord also reminds us of the blood of the Passover Lamb spread on the doorposts and lintels of the homes of the Israelites to protect them from the angel of death!*

11. **Discuss:** What does this chapter teach about salvation?

- *Salvation comes through faith in God, not ethnic background or culture*
- *Salvation involves trusting God's promises*
- *There is a clear boundary for salvation: inside (saved) vs outside (non-saved/judged) – believe (saved) vs unbelief (non-saved/judged)*
- *God is available to ALL who believed – Jew or Gentile*

12. **Discuss:** What does Rahab teach us?

The story and inclusion of Rahab teaches us:

- *No one is beyond God's grace*
- *Faith can begin with limited knowledge*
- *God uses unlikely people in His plan*
- *Faith expresses itself through **action***

- *There was another purpose at work in sending the spies: to save Rahab. In this, we see the extent God goes to in bringing one woman and her father's house to salvation — someone seemingly "impossible" to save.*
- *We may know some people that seem "impossible" to save, but God's hand is not too short or too weak to save people like Rahab, and He can work in amazing ways to bring salvation.*

13. **Discuss:** Is there a connection to Passover in this chapter?

- *Scarlet cord ↔ blood on the doorposts at Passover*
- *Judgment passes over those marked*
- *Safety is found by being inside the marked place*
- *Both require **faith and obedience***

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 2:1-24**?

- *The **scarlet cord** points forward to the **blood of Jesus***
- *Salvation comes through being "covered" by that sign*
- *Rahab, a Gentile, is brought into God's people → points to the **inclusion of the nations***
- *Rahab is in Jesus' genealogy*
- *God saves by grace, not merit*

14. How do the following New Testament passages relate to **Joshua 2:1-24**?

Hebrews 11:31

*Rahab is **commended for her faith**—she welcomed the spies and was not destroyed.*

James 2:25

*Rahab shows that **faith is proven by works**—her actions demonstrated her belief.*

Matthew 1:5

*Rahab is in the **genealogy of Jesus** → God's grace brings her into the Messiah's line.*

Romans 5:9

*Paul says we are saved **from judgment** and justified by Jesus' blood which echoes the scarlet cord imagery in Joshua 2.*

Ephesians 2:8-10

Paul tells us we are saved **by** God's **grace** (God's underserved favour) **through** our **faith** (and even our faith is a gift from God) and we are **not saved by works** in case we boast! Paul also says **we are God's handiwork**, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared in advance for us to do!

A neat way to summarize this is: We are saved BY grace, THROUGH faith, FOR good works, which God has planned for us to do already.

Applying this to Rahab, she was saved BY God's grace (God's undeserved favour in sending the spies to specifically save her), THROUGH her faith (which was also a gift from God and God knew she would believe), FOR the good works of hiding the spies, and this good work, God had already planned in advance for her to do – and yet she had free will to choose – but God knew she would do His will!

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Joshua 2:1-24?

God saves by grace through faith—even outsiders—and true faith responds with courageous action believing His promises to be true!



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V11 - When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone's courage failed because of you, **for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.**

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the example of Rahab, who believed in You and trusted You for salvation. Help us to have faith like hers — to believe Your Word and to act on it. Thank You that You are a God who saves not because we deserve it, but because You are gracious and merciful. Thank You that we can be saved from judgment and brought into Your family. Help us to trust You, to live by faith, and to show kindness and courage like Rahab did. Please help us to remember that salvation comes from You alone. We thank You most of all for Jesus, whose blood saves us and brings us safely into Your kingdom. We pray this in His name. Amen.

Study 3 – Crossing the Jordan

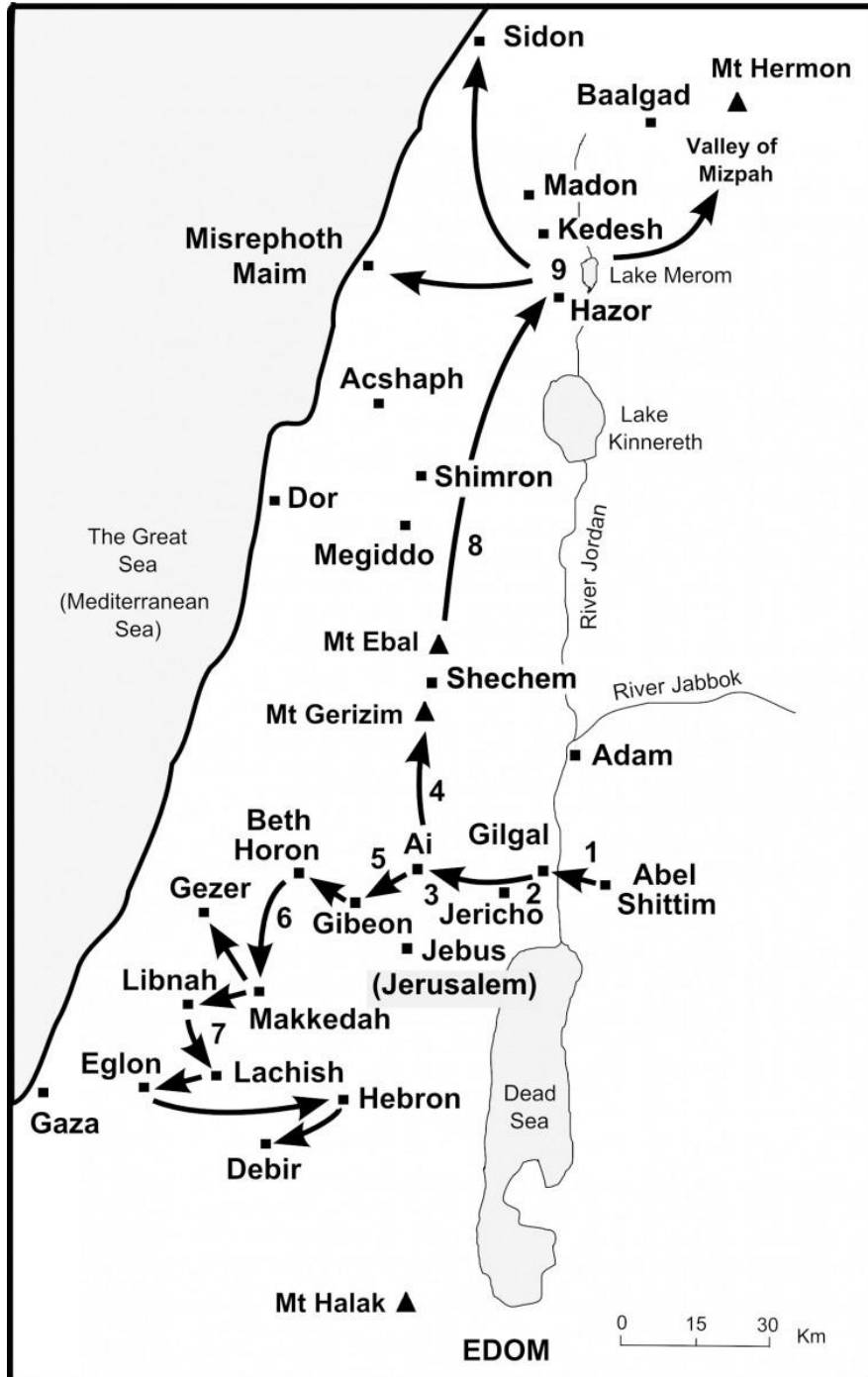
Joshua 3:1-4:24

(Sermon on 26th April 2026)

Read Joshua 3:1-4:24

1. Where did Joshua and the Israelites camp before crossing the Jordan? (3:1)

They camped at Shittim – see map



2. How long did the officers go through the camp before giving instructions? (3:2)

After three days, the officers went through the camp.

3. What instructions were the people given about following? (3:3-4)

*They were told to follow the Ark of the Covenant, carried by the priests, but to keep a distance of about 2,000 cubits (~1 km). There were two reasons for this: first, to respect the holy nature of the ark of the covenant. But second, also, it was to make sure that everyone had a clear view of the ark. **That you may know the way by which you must go** shows that the ark of the covenant led the way. Israel would accomplish this impossible task as they set their eyes upon God's presence and followed only after His presence.*

4. What did Joshua tell the people to do in verse 3:5 before crossing? What does that mean?

They were to "consecrate" themselves.

*Because this would be a spiritual battle, Joshua requires that the people have a spiritual preparation. **Sanctify yourselves** means they were to separate themselves from common things to focus in on the Lord, and to see that **the Lord will do wonders among you**.*

Consecrate involves

- *Setting yourselves apart for God*
- *Preparing spiritually (repentance, cleansing, renewed devotion)*
- *Having a mindset that expects God to act*

*It's about **heart readiness**, not just outward ritual.*

5. What does God say will happen on this day and what instructions are given to the priests? (3:6-12)

What will happen

- *God will exalt Joshua on that very day, just like He exalted Moses, so that the people will know that God is with Joshua, just like He was with Moses (v7)*
- *God promises to drive out the tribes of the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites (v10)*
- *The ark of the covenant (a symbol of God's presence) will go ahead of them (v11)*

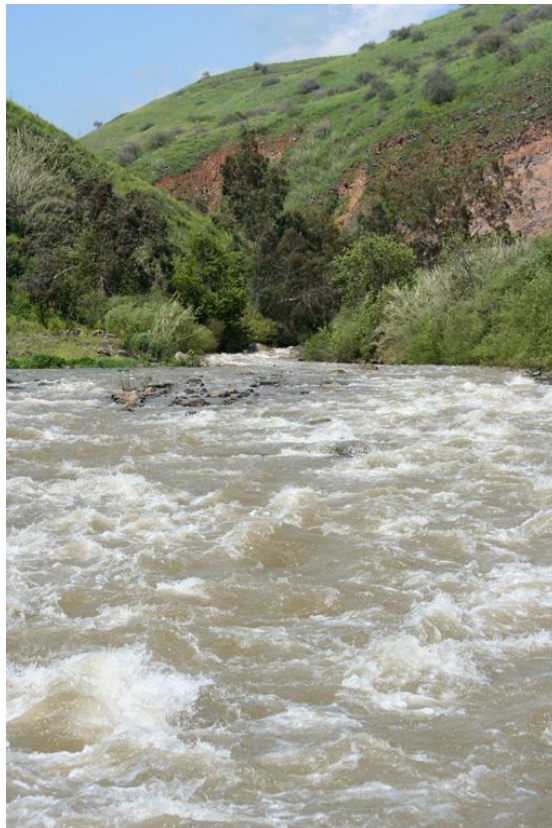
Instructions

- *Priests were told to take the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people (v6)*
- *Priests are to carry the ark to the edge of the river and then go and stand in the river (v8)*
- *The people are to choose 12 men, one from each tribe*

6. What miracle happened when the priests stepped into the Jordan? (3:13-17)
Where did the priests stand when the people crossed? Does this miracle remind you of another miracle?

When the priests set foot in the River Jordan (which we know from verse 15 was a flood stage during harvest time and would be very fast flowing) – the water stopped flowing. The water piled up in a heap a great distance away at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan (see map above). See River Jordan in spring-time below.

This miracle should remind us of the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14)



7. How many men were chosen to take stones from the Jordan? Why? (4:2-3)

Twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe were chosen and they were told to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, from right where the priests were standing, and to carry them over with them and put the stones down at the place where they stay that night. Why? They were later use them as a memorial.

8. Where were the twelve stones placed? (4:8, 20)

At their camp at Gilgal.

9. Why were the stones set up? (4:6-7, 21-22)

Vv6-7 - To serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."

Vv21-22 – Joshua said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their parents, 'What do these stones mean? tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' ²³ For the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over

10. When did the river return to flood stage? (4:18)

No sooner had they set their feet on the dry ground than the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before.

11. What effect did this miracle have on the people? (4:14, 24)

V14 – That day the Lord exalted Joshua and the people stood in awe of Joshua all the days of his life like they did Moses.

V24 - so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God.

12. **Ponder:** Why did the Ark go first into the river?
- *It represented God's presence leading His people*
 - *It showed God went before them into the danger they faced*
 - *The way forward is opened by Him, not by anything the people did*
13. **Ponder:** Why do you think God performed this miracle?
- *To confirm Joshua's leadership and that he was equal to Moses*
 - *To strengthen Israel's faith for the conquest of the land – knowing God's was with them*
 - *To show His power over even creation*
 - *To prepare them for entering the Promised Land*
14. **Ponder:** What does this event show about God?
- *He is all-powerful (He even controls nature)*
 - *He is faithful (always keeps His promises)*
 - *He is ever-present (He goes with His people)*
 - *He is Holy (and requires our reverence)*
15. **Discuss:** What does “stepping into the river before it stopped” teach us?
This teaches:
- *Faith precedes sight – we step out in faith and walk by faith not by sight*
 - *Obedience comes before the miracle*
 - *Trusting God often means stepping into the impossible first*
16. **Discuss:** Why is remembering what God has done important?
- *We are often very forgetful people*
 - *Our memory often fuels our faith and our obedience*
 - *It helps us pass on our faith to the next generation*
 - *It overcomes any doubts we have in future trials, when we remember what God did in the past*

Where is **JESUS** in **Joshua 3:1-4:24**?

- *The Ark (God's presence) points to **Jesus as God with us***

- Jesus **goes before us** into death and opens the way to Heaven (our Promised Land)
- The Jordan crossing foreshadows **salvation and new life** – Jesus Himself says in **John 5:24** - **“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has **crossed over** from death to life”**
- Jesus is the **true way into the Promised Rest**
 - a. Jesus is the fulfillment of the ark; He is Immanuel, which is translated, “God with us” (Matthew 1:23).
 - b. Jesus has cleared the way to victory over all things: Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it [the cross] (Colossians 2:15).
 - c. As we keep our eyes on and follow behind our victorious Jesus, the river of impossibility will dry up.
 - d. To the cynic, who wonders if they haven’t tried that and been disappointed, we must ask them: “Have you really tried this? Have you truly walked according to God’s word, trusted in Jesus and been disappointed?” Perhaps your disappointment is actually in your flesh.

17. How do the following New Testament passages relate to **Joshua 3:1-4:24**?

1 Corinthians 10:1-2

Paul says “For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea”

*Baptized into Moses means – being baptized into someone means being **united with them, coming under their leadership; and publicly identifying with them.***

The same thing happened for Joshua as the people crossed the Jordan.

Moses and Joshua as saviour figures point to Jesus, our ultimate Saviour.

*Ultimately, as Christians, we are baptized into Jesus and identify with Him, not just as our leader but our **Saviour!***

Romans 6:1-4

Paul talks about – that as Christians we were baptized into Christ Jesus and were baptized into his death? And therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

*Crossing the River Jordan into the new land = **dying to old life, rising to new life**
Like baptism, it marks a **transition***

Crossing into the Promised Land is like baptism - starting a new life!

Colossians 2:12

*Buried and raised with Christ → like passing through the waters into **new identity***

Hebrews 12:1-3

*Just as Israel followed the Ark, we **fix our eyes on Jesus [the pioneer and perfecter of faith]**, who goes before us.*

John 10:9

*Jesus is the **gate** - just like the opened path through the Jordan*

John 14:6

Just like the Ark of the Covenant was the only way to the Promised Land; Jesus is the Way to our Promised Land

Luke 22:19

When Jesus initiated the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; he used bread and wine to represent and remind us of His body broken and blood shed for us – and told us to do this 'in remembrance of me' – likewise the stones were a memorial of what God did for the people to cross the Jordan

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Joshua 3:1-4:24?**

God goes before His people, making a way where there is none, calling for faith-filled obedience, and giving lasting reminders so His saving power is never forgotten.



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Joshua 3:13- And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the Lord—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for the way You led Joshua and the Israelites across the Jordan, just as You lead us in our lives. Thank You for reminding us that You go before us, making a way even when the path seems impossible. Lord, help us to trust You more fully, just as the Israelites had to trust in Your promise. May we remember the lessons of the twelve stones—reminders of Your faithfulness—and share Your mighty works with those around us. Strengthen our faith, Father, so that we will follow You with courage, obeying Your commands even when the journey is challenging. Let Your Word take root in our hearts and guide our steps every day. We pray this in the name Jesus. Amen.