

**GRACE TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAWNSIDE**  
**Wednesday Night Bible Study (Class Notes)**

**JOSHUA 1: GOD'S COMMISSION TO JOSHUA**

*The first chapter of Joshua establishes the setting and agenda for the book. This chapter has been compared to the pistol shot at the beginning of a race, with all the action in the rest of the book starting from the people, commands, and promises introduced in this chapter. Of course, this chapter doesn't begin in isolation from the rest of the Bible's story. The book of Joshua is like the opening scene in a movie sequel where the characters and themes from the Pentateuch are carried forward. At the end of it all, Moses died. This is where Joshua 1 begins.*

- A. Introduction: A survey of the history of Israel from Egypt to Canaan.
1. Israel was delivered from Egypt's degrading bondage.
    - a. These were historical events, but they were not only historical. God speaks through history to give an example of our deliverance from the degrading bondage of sin (as Paul makes clear in 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11).
    - b. The central act of redemption in the New Testament is the work of Jesus on the cross. The central act of redemption in the Old Testament is the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.
  2. Israel, led by Moses, wandered in the Sinai wilderness.
    - a. During that time, Israel experienced supernatural providence such as the supply of manna, water from rocks, the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, and so forth.
    - b. During that time, they also received Divine revelation – the Mosaic Law. God communicated to them His holy standard.
  3. The land of Canaan represents the destination of God's people after they have been set free from degrading bondage.
    - a. This is not our ultimate destination, as some well-known hymns such as "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" would have it. Those hymns suggest that Canaan represents heaven.
    - b. Biblically, the land over the Jordan – the Promised Land – does not speak of heaven. Hebrews 3-4 shows Canaan as a picture of the rest and victory that can be enjoyed by every believer.
    - c. This also shows that the deliverance from Egypt was only in preparation for the enjoyment of Canaan. In our Christian life, we are brought out of sin so that we might be brought into abundant life. The wilderness is never God's intended destination for us.

- d. Even as an entire generation of Israel died in the wilderness, so many Christians die in the desert dryness of spiritual experience, never walking in the fullness of what God has for them.
4. The leader: Joshua as a type of Jesus.
    - a. Remember that the Greek name Jesus simply translates the Hebrew name Joshua. Their names are identical. Whatever Israel received in the Promised Land, they received through the hand of Joshua; whatever we receive from God we receive through Jesus Christ, our Joshua.
- B. God commissions Joshua's work.
1. Moses is dead, and God speaks to Joshua. (1)
    - a. After the death of Moses:
    - b. The Lord spoke to Joshua:
    - c. Moses' assistant:
  2. Am giving and have given. (2-3)
    - a. Your foot . . . have given you:
    - b. I have given you:
  3. The promise: victory is assured because Joshua is called by God. (4-5)
    - a. From the wilderness...as far as the great river:
    - b. I will be with you:
  4. The conditions of the promise of victory. (6-9)
    - a. Be strong and of good courage:
    - b. That you may observe to do according to all the law: J
    - c. To all the law:
    - d. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success:
    - e. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go:
- C. Preparations to cross the Jordan.
1. Command to the officers. (10-11)
    - a. For within three days:
  2. Reminder to the eastern tribes. (12-15)
    - a. And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke:
    - b. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them:

3. The eastern tribes promise their allegiance to Joshua. (16-18)
  - a. All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go:
  - b. Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you:
  - c. Only be strong and of good courage:

## Chapter 1 Questions:

1. What did the Lord tell Joshua to do? (1-2)
2. What was the extent of the land that was promised to Israel? (3-4)
3. How did the Lord promise to be with Joshua? (5)
4. What was Joshua to do in order to be prosperous and successful? (6-9)
5. What were the Reubenites, Gadites and half the tribe of Manasseh to do? (12-15)
6. What does God's promise to Joshua teach us about His faithfulness?
7. How can Joshua's call to courage inspire you in your present-day challenges?
8. What does it mean to meditate on the Book of the Law day and night? How can we apply this in a modern context?
9. How does the people's response to Joshua's leadership model the behavior of followers in a spiritual community?
10. How can we find courage in our lives like Joshua did when faced with great tasks?

## **JOSHUA 2: THE RESCUE OF RAHAB**

*This chapter gives an account of the spies sent by Joshua to Jericho, and of their entrance into the house of Rahab, who hid them from the king's messengers, Jos 2:1-7; of the relation she gave them of the fear and dread of Israel, which were fallen upon the Canaanites, Jos 2:8-11; and of the request she made to them, to save her and her father's house, when the city should be taken, and to have a sure sign of it given her, Jos 2:12,13; which the spies solemnly promised, and gave her a sign of it, with a charge not to discover the matter to any, Jos 2:14-20; and being let down by a cord through the window of her house, they made their escape to a mountain, where they lay three days, and then returned to Joshua, and made their report, Jos 2:21-24.*

### **A. Spies are sent to the city of Jericho.**

1. Joshua sends forth spies. (1a)
  - a. Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly:
  - b. To spy secretly:
  - c. Go, view the land, especially Jericho:
2. The spies at Rahab's house. (1b)
  - a. Came to the house of a harlot named Rahab:
  - b. And lodged there:
3. Rahab hides and protects the spies. (2-7)
  - a. Then the woman took the two men and hid them:
  - b. Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from:
  - c. The men went out:

### **B. Salvation for Rahab.**

1. Rahab's confession of faith. (8-14)
  - a. I know that the Lord has given you the land:
  - b. He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath:
  - c. That you also will show kindness to my father's house:
  - d. Swear to me by the Lord:
2. The means of Rahab's salvation: the scarlet cord. (15-21)
  - a. Bind this scarlet cord in the window:
  - b. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window:
  - c. According to your words, so be it:
3. Mission accomplished. (22-24)
  - a. And told him all that had befallen them:
  - b. Truly the Lord has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us:

## Chapter 2 Questions:

1. Who hid the men that Joshua sent to spy out Jericho? (3-4)
2. What had the people of Jericho heard about Israel? (9-10)
3. What did Rahab ask of the spies? (12-13)
4. How did the spies escape from Jericho? (15,16,21-23)
5. How were the Israelites to know which was Rahab's house? (17-20)
6. What report did the spies bring to Joshua? (24)
7. What lessons can we learn from the act of sparing Rahab and her family, but destroying everything else in Jericho?
8. Why was it important for the silver, gold, bronze, and iron to be placed in the treasury of the Lord's house?
9. Why was the specific instruction given to avoid the things devoted to destruction? What implications might this hold for us today?
10. How can we apply the principle of obedience as seen in this passage to the modern-day situations where God's instructions might not align with our understanding or expectations?

### **JOSHUA 3: CROSSING THE JORDAN**

*Joshua removed from Shittim to Jordan, where he stayed three days, Jos 3:1,2; the people are directed to move when they saw the ark bore by the priests, and what distance they should keep from it, Jos 3:3,4; are bid to sanctify themselves against the morrow, when wonders would be wrought, Jos 3:5; and the priests are ordered to take up the ark, Jos 3:6; Joshua is encouraged by the Lord, and instructed to command the priests when they come to Jordan to stand still in it, Jos 3:7,8; and he declares to all the people, as a token that God would drive the Canaanites from before them, that as soon as the feet of the priests bearing the ark should rest in the waters of Jordan, they should be parted, and make way for them to pass through, Jos 3:9-13; which accordingly came to pass, so that all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, Jos 3:14-17.*

#### **A. Instructions for crossing the Jordan River.**

1. Camping by the Jordan. (1-2)
  - a. Came to the Jordan . . . and lodged there before they crossed over:
  - b. After three days, that the officers went through the camp:
2. The ark of God will lead the way. (3-5)
  - a. When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it:
  - b. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure:
  - c. Sanctify yourselves:
3. Joshua's step of faith. (6)
  - a. Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people:
  - b. So, they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people:
4. God's encouragement to Joshua. (7-8)
  - a. This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel:
  - b. That they may know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with you:
  - c. When you have come to the edge of the water . . . you shall stand in the Jordan:
5. Joshua encourages and instructs Israel. (9-13)
  - a. By this you shall know that the living God is among you:
  - b. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan:
  - c. The waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap:

B. Crossing the Jordan River.

1. The faith of the priests and of Joshua. (14-15)
  - a. The feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water:
  - b. Dipped in the edge of the water:
  - c. For the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest:
  
2. The Jordan is stopped, and the people cross over on dry ground. (16-17)
  - a. The waters which came down from upstream stood still:
  - b. On dry ground in the midst of the Jordan:
  - c. The priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan:
  
3. To face such impossible challenges in our lives, we must look to Jesus, our Joshua. He always leads us.
  - 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.



### Chapter 3 Questions:

1. How did the Israelites know when to start marching toward Jordan? (3)
2. What miracle was given to let them know that God would drive out the inhabitants of the land? (10-17)
3. Why do you think it was important for the Ark of the Covenant to lead the way across the Jordan?
4. How does the miracle at the Jordan demonstrate the power of God?
5. How does the role of the priests reflect their commitment to their faith?
6. Can you recall a situation in your life where you had to step out in faith, much like the Israelites crossing the Jordan?
7. How can we discern God's guidance when faced with significant life decisions?
8. How can we stand firm in our faith, just like the priests holding the Ark in the middle of the Jordan?
9. What does it mean to trust in God's presence and guidance in times of transition or change?
10. How can we continue to keep our faith strong, even when we have not yet seen the fulfillment of God's promises?

## **JOSHUA 4: MEMORIAL STONES**

*This chapter relates an order, that is men, should take twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, and carry them to the first place they lodged at as a memorial of their passage over it, Jos 4:1-8; and how Joshua set up twelve other stones in the river itself, Jos 4:9; and how many of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, went before the Israelites when they passed over, Jos 4:10-14; which being done, the priests were ordered to come out of Jordan, when the waters returned to their place, Jos 4:15-18; The time when this miracle was wrought is observed, Jos 4:19; and an account is given of Joshua's pitching the twelve stones taken out of Jordan in Gilgal, and the use they were to be of in future time, Jos 4:20-24.*

- A. Crossing the Jordan River is finished, and the ark of the covenant comes from the midst of the river.
  1. After the nation crosses over, God commands Joshua to set up a memorial of the crossing. (1-9)
    - a. When all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan:
    - b. Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm:
    - c. That this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come:
    - d. Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan:
  2. The nation passes over, the priests come through, and the Jordan returns to its normal flow. (10-18)
    - a. So, the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished:
    - b. And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel:
    - c. On that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel
    - d. The waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before:
- B. The first work at Gilgal: memorial stones set up.
  1. The stones are set up as a memorial in Gilgal. (19-20)
    - a. They camped in Gilgal:
  2. The purpose of the memorial stones. (21-24)
    - a. What are these stones?
    - b. Then you shall let your children know:
    - c. That all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord:

#### Chapter 4 Questions:

1. What did they do with the twelve stones that they got from the midst of Jordan? (8-9,19-24)
2. What did the waters of Jordan do after everyone had crossed over? (18)
3. What does this passage teach us about the importance of remembering God's miracles and blessings?
4. How can we create "memorials" in our own lives to remember God's faithfulness?
5. What does the act of the priests standing in the middle of the Jordan signify about their faith and obedience?
6. How can we apply the concept of 'crossing over' into challenges we face in our daily lives?
7. How does the miracle of crossing the Jordan River on dry ground parallel the earlier crossing of the Red Sea, and what does this teach us about God's unchanging nature?
8. What does the phrase "the hand of the Lord is mighty" mean to you personally and how have you seen it played out in your life?
9. In what ways can we bear witness, like the stones, to the mighty works of God in our lives to future generations?
10. How does the reverence shown to Joshua teach us about respect for God-appointed leaders in today's society?

## **JOSHUA 5: CIRCUMCISION AND PASSOVER AT GILGAL**

*The Canaanites being dispirited on the passage of the children of Israel through Jordan, Jos 5:1; Joshua is ordered to circumcise such of the people of Israel that were uncircumcised, Jos 5:2-9; in order to their eating of the Passover, which was now to be kept, Jos 5:10; and they being now provided with corn sufficient, the manna ceased, Jos 5:11,12; and there appeared to Joshua a divine Person, in an human form, to encourage and direct him what to do in the conquest of the land, and particularly Jericho, Jos 5:13-15.*

### **A. The second work at Gilgal: A radical obedience.**

1. The fear of Israel's enemies at the faith and obedience of Israel. (1)
  - a. Their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel:
  - b. Heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel:
2. The circumcision of Israel at Gilgal. (2-8)
  - a. Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time:
  - b. Then Joshua circumcised their sons:
  - c. They stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed:
  - d. Till they were healed:
3. The effect: God rolls away their reproach. (9)
  - a. This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you:
  - b. Therefore, the name of the place is called Gilgal:

### **B. The third work at Gilgal: A redemption remembered.**

1. The Passover is celebrated: looking back to their redemption from Egypt. (10-11)
  - a. And kept the Passover:
  - b. After the Passover:
2. A new source of provision: God stops the manna. (12)
  - a. Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land:
  - b. They ate the food of the land of Canaan that year:
3. Joshua meets with the Commander of the army of the Lord. (13-15)
  - a. Behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand:
  - b. Are you for us or for our adversaries?
  - c. Commander of the army of the Lord:
  - d. And Joshua did so:

### Chapter 5 Questions:

1. What was the reaction of the kings west of Jordan when they heard that the Lord had dried up Jordan? (1)
2. Who did Joshua circumcise at Gilgal? (5-7)
3. What else did Israel keep at Gilgal? (10)
4. When did the manna cease? (11-12)
5. Who did Joshua encounter near Gilgal? (13-14)
6. Why do you think Joshua needed to circumcise the sons of Israel again? How does this relate to spiritual rebirth or renewal?
7. How does the phrase "their hearts melted, and their spirits failed" demonstrate the psychological impact of God's miracles?
8. How does the act of Joshua falling facedown in reverence apply to our approach to God in prayer and worship?
9. How does "the place where you are standing is holy" change our perspective of Encountering God in our everyday lives?
10. How does the story of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness and then finally entering the promised land mirror our spiritual journeys?