

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2026

September 6

Joshua Leads Courageously

Printed Text: Joshua 1:1-11

Devotional Reading: Daniel 10:18-21

Background Scripture: Exodus 19-24; Deuteronomy 31:1-8; 34:1-12; Joshua 1

Key Text: Joshua 1:9

September 13

Israel Remembers God's Deeds

Printed Text: Joshua 4:14-24

Devotional Reading: Luke 8:35-39

Background Scripture: Exodus 14; Joshua 3:1-4:24

Key Text: Joshua 4:21b-22

September 20

Joshua Fights for God

Printed Text: Joshua 11:6-9,16-23

Devotional Reading: Psalm 108

Background Scripture: Deuteronomy 7; Joshua 6; 8:1-29; 10:28-43; 11:1-23

Key Text: -Joshua 11:20

September 27

Rahab Welcomes Spies

Printed Text: Joshua 2:8-13; 6:16-17

Devotional Reading: Matthew 25:31-46

Background Scripture: Joshua 2; 6:16-25; Matthew 1:5; James 2:25; Hebrews 11:31

Key Text: Joshua 6:17

Zoom Sunday School Classes – 6 September 2026, 09:00 AM EST

Meeting ID: 848-9423-0612

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Joshua Leads Courageously

Printed Text: Joshua 1:1-11

Devotional Reading: Daniel 10:18-21

Background Scripture: Exodus 19-24; Deuteronomy 31:1-8; 34:1-12; Joshua 1

Key Text: Joshua 1:9

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: More Than Conquerors - Romans 8:31-39
Tuesday: See What God Has promised - Genesis 13:14-18
Wednesday: The Promised Land Revealed - Deuteronomy 34: 1-12
Thursday: God's Promised Rest - Hebrews 4: 1-11
Friday: God's New Covenant - Hebrews 10: 14-18
Saturday: Whom Shall I Fear - Psalm 27
Sunday: Be Strong and Courageous - Joshua 1:1-11

LESSON AIM:

IDENTIFY the characteristics of good leaders, exemplified in God's choice of Joshua as Moses' successor,

TRUST that God will help cultivate any leadership skills we possess, and

CREATE a list of leadership traits we possess. Be determined to strengthen those qualities.

KEEP IN MIND:

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9, NIV).

BACKGROUND:

Almost 40 years before Moses led the Exodus, and while the Children of Israel were still enslaved to the Egyptians, Joshua was born into the tribe of Ephraim (1 Chronicles 7:27). His birth name was "Hosea," which means "salvation." Moses renamed him "Joshua," which means "the Lord is Salvation" (Numbers 13:8, 16). During the Exodus out of Egypt, Joshua served as Moses' military commander. About two months after leaving Egypt, the Israelites faced an unprovoked attack by the Amalekites in Rephidim. Moses appointed Joshua to organize an army and serve as the military commander. With God's assistance, the Israelites defeated the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-13).

Joshua was a close aide to Moses, who permitted Joshua to accompany him part of the way up Mount Sinai where he subsequently received the Ten Commandments from God. While camped in the wilderness of Paran, Joshua was one of the 12 men sent by Moses to explore the Promised Land (Numbers 13:3, 16-17). Forty days later, 10 of the spies gave Moses a dispirited report, claiming there was no way Israel could defeat the inhabitants of Canaan. Only Joshua and Caleb gave an encouraging report, and assured Moses and the people that Israel could indeed capture the land. After hearing the 10 spies' negative report, "all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron" (14:2). The Israelites ignored the pleading of Joshua and Caleb to "go

up at once and possess" Canaan (13:30). As a result of the Israelites' rebellion, God sentenced them to "wander" in the wilderness for 40 years, until all of the males aged 20 years and older had died (14:33).

For 40 years, Moses led the disobedient and oftentimes complaining Children of Israel in the wilderness. Then the Lord led him to the top of Mount Nebo, and he was allowed to look out and into the Promised Land, but God told him that he would not be able to enter. This prohibition from entering the Promised Land was a result of Moses' claiming an act of God's miraculous power as his own (20:1-13). It was a costly error in judgment and resulted in his not being able to enter the Promised Land. The mantle of leadership now passed from Moses to the man who stood faithfully by his side—Joshua.

LESSON COMMENTARY:

Chosen to Lead through God's Commission (Joshua 1:1-2, NIV)

¹After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide:

²"Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.

In this lesson, we're going to identify with Joshua as he is called to take over the leadership role that Moses once held and lead the Children of Israel to the Promised Land. He does not have to walk in Moses' shoes; he must walk in the shoes that God made for Joshua. He must lead as God tells him to lead.

The opening words of the book of Joshua describe a period of transition. It marks not only a change in leadership but a change in purpose. The people would change from Moses to Joshua and also from wanderers to warriors. This change would not only be difficult for the fledgling nation, but also for Joshua. The death of Moses was a heavy blow to the Israelites. He was the one who had led them out of the oppressive Egyptian bondage. When the Israelites were thirsty, God used Moses to cause water to flow from a stone. When the Israelites were hungry, God answered Moses' prayers and sent quail and bread from heaven. For almost 40 years, Moses had served as the Israelite's leader and legislator. He alone spoke face to-face with God on their behalf. But now he was dead!

Israel was still encamped on the plains of Moab, directly east of the Jordan River, at the very edge of the Promised Land. For 30 days they mourned Moses, their beloved leader, but now it was time to inherit the land God had promised to Abraham and their forefathers hundreds of years earlier (Genesis 15:7-21). Joshua, the new leader of the Israelites, had been commissioned by Moses before his death (Numbers 27:22-23), and he was now being ordained by God.

Before Joshua is commissioned to be a leader, he spent 40 years learning how to obey as a servant. He was first a servant, and then God made him a leader. This servant-leader style continued in Joshua's approach to leadership for the next 25 years as he led the people in conquest. Following God, Joshua led as a servant. The 40 years Joshua spent with Moses had demonstrated his faithfulness to an earthly leader. Just as God had called or commissioned Moses to redeem His people from Egypt, He is now commissioning Joshua to redeem His people into the Promised Land.

Although we are not told exactly how God spoke to Joshua, His message to Joshua is quite clear. God commanded Joshua to "cross the Jordan River" (verse 2). This crossing of the Jordan will mark Israel's entrance into the Promised Land, just as crossing the Red Sea marked their departure from Egypt.

God's plan that He would give Israel a land was built upon the ancient promises He had given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God's promises are true. Again and again, we see God using men and women to move His plan along. As present-day Christians, we should always anticipate the next move of God in our lives.

Encouraged to Lead through God's Promises (Joshua 1:3-6, NIV)

³I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

⁴Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates--all the Hittite country--to the Great Sea on the west.

⁵No one will be able to stand up 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.

⁶"Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them.

The Children of Israel did not heed Moses' plea to trust God. Instead, they rebelled. As a result of their attitude and mistrust of God, they suffered severely in the intervening years. Now some 40 years later, God is giving Israel another opportunity to trust and obey Him so that He can bless them. Canaan, the promised territory God was giving them, would be more land than the nation had ever occupied. The extensiveness demonstrates the lavishness of God's provision for His chosen people. He was giving them far more land than they needed or could possibly imagine. Present-day believers should take comfort in the knowledge that we serve a God who is "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20).

The Lord commanded Joshua to prepare himself and the people to cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land. He makes three promises to His new leader: (1) A promise of land, "'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you'" (Joshua 1:3, NLT); (2) A promise of victory, "No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live" (from 1:5, NLT); and (3) A promise of presence, "For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you" (1:5b, NLT).

A promise of land: "Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you." Joshua was going to experience the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham and repeated to his sons Isaac and Jacob. He would lead the people into the land that had been promised to Moses. The Israelites would occupy the land from the great river to the great sea. The area described is roughly the same area God promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:18-20).

A promise of victory: "No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live." God promised Joshua victory over anybody and everybody who came against him. This promise was not limited to the taking of the Promised Land but was extended for as long as Joshua lived. However, this promise came with a warning. The people who lived in the land were protected by powerful armies and fortified cities. The battles would be hard fought. As it was in Canaan, the Christian life is a life of conflict with enemies who must be confronted and overcome. Although the outcome of our battle is assured, we must be prepared for conflict if we are to claim the kingdom's earthly promise of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17).

A promise of presence: "For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you." These words call our attention to one of the great truths of the Bible. Israel would get into the land of promise the same way they got out of the land of bondage. They trusted in the power of the Lord to free them and the presence of the Lord to guide them. Likewise, Christians enter into the life of Christ the same way we were delivered from the wrath of God, by trusting in the power of the blood to free us from sin and the presence of the Lord to lead us and guide us through our lives.

Christians must remember that God, the Creator is perfect! God will not fail us when we are weak or forsake us even when we are flawed. Believers are assured that God has set before us open doors that nobody can close. We are called to walk through those doors by faith and to claim new territory for the Lord. Some of those new territories may be difficulties we encounter in our homes, in the workplace, or in our churches. Regardless of the situations, God has the solution.

Challenged to Lead through God's Word (Joshua 1:7-8, NIV)

⁷Be 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.

⁸Do 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. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

In verse 7, God's promises to Joshua begin with a clear directive: "Be strong and very courageous." This challenge to courageous, obedient leadership is based on the absolute certainty of God's promise. Whatever courage Joshua might have is not in himself, but in the powerful assurance that God will be with Israel as they trust Joshua's leadership and enter the Promised Land. God's sovereignty always expresses itself

through humanity's response. First, God speaks the word of promise, declaring who He is and what He will do. God then encourages His people to trust and believe in Him. It is our faithful obedience that will compel us to do purposeful activity. God's promises do not exempt believers from struggle, difficulty, and in some cases, even persecution. Believers' lives may be difficult, but God's power will be with us and His presence will continually sustain us.

God will keep the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Joshua. The enemy will be defeated, and Israel will possess the land. The strength and courage that God calls for in Joshua (verse 7) will come from meditating on the Word of God, believing the promises in it, and living in obedience with it. The "book of the Law," mentioned in verse 8, refers to Moses' compilation of a written, historical record of God's activity among the people from Creation history through the history of the patriarchs. Throughout the 40 years of wilderness wandering, Moses added to this record, and eventually it became the Pentateuch (the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). During his time, Moses committed the care of "the book of the Law" to the priests.

Joshua is charged with doing more; he must make it a part of him by reading and meditating on it daily. The translation for the Hebrew word "meditate" is "to mutter." Present-day Orthodox Jews continue this tradition by reading Scriptures aloud to themselves. In this way, they go beyond casual reading and encourage dialogue with the Word of God. For present-day Christians, our participation in Sunday School and Bible study becomes a vehicle for us to have intense, personal engagement with the Scriptures. It is this personal engagement that will move us beyond personal understanding and into God's guidance, direction, and control. Through the revelation of God's Word in our lives, we can effectively live in His will.

Called to Lead Through God's Command (Joshua 1:9-11, NIV)

⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

¹⁰So Joshua ordered the officers of the people:

¹¹"Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.'"

Verse 9 begins with a rhetorical question from God: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged." Here we see God commanding and empowering Joshua from His Word. Whenever Joshua faces hardships and becomes discouraged, he can claim the presence of God, and because of the Word of God, he can take comfort in the knowledge that he is enabled to accomplish the will of God. Joshua is to obey God because God is committed to accomplishing His work through Joshua.

Just as the Israelites were instructed to prepare their provisions, believers today are called to prepare spiritually and practically for the tasks God sets before them. The three-day period before crossing the Jordan teaches us to trust in God's perfect timing and not rush ahead of His plans. Joshua's leadership and the people's obedience highlight the importance of following God's instructions to receive His promises. The role of Joshua in directing the people stresses the importance of godly leadership and unity within the community of believers. The act of taking possession of the land serves as a metaphor for believers to actively claim and live out the promises of God in their lives.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

1. In verse 7, Joshua is commanded to observe the Law and to keep the Word of the Lord. The word "Law" refers to what God had instructed Moses to write down. "Turning not to the right or to the left" is another way of saying, "Do not compromise." Discuss the complications that arise when leaders deviate from God's Word. What are the personal implications for the leader? How are followers affected?
2. The word "courage" is the root of the word "encouragement" and is found three times in Joshua. Discuss the role of encouragement in a leader's effectiveness. Do the people being led owe the leader encouragement? If so, how is this best done? How can leaders encourage themselves?
3. When God commissioned Joshua, He told him three times to be strong and courageous. Do you think this command is meant only for Christian leaders or does living faithful Christian lives require strength and courage by all believers? How can believers draw strength from God's promise to never leave us or forsake us?
4. If the kingdom of God is promised to believers and the manifestation of the kingdom within believers is righteousness (goodness), peace, and joy, why are so many Christians miserable and troubled?

LESSON TO LIVE BY:

Many people, including believers, are controlled by their passions. Our uncontrolled desires are often the cause of a majority of our problems and illnesses. People with anger problems have a hard time maintaining meaningful relationships, eating disorders can be the cause of diseases like hypertension and diabetes, and so on. Does God give believers the power to overcome the desires of their flesh? If so, why do we so often fall victim to the passions within us?

Believers must ask themselves: "How has God personally commissioned me to serve Him and His people?" It may be time for you to ask God, "Lord, what is it You want me to do? What area do You want me to move into? What qualities do You want

me to possess?" Perhaps there is some influential leader you will be asked to follow at home or in the church. You may be called to mentor a troubled child who needs unconditional love. You may be asked to replace an accomplished Sunday School teacher or Bible study leader. Whatever the call, it will require your immediate and obedient response.

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Israel Remembers God's Deeds

Printed Text: Joshua 4:14-24

Devotional Reading: Luke 8:35-39

Background Scripture: Exodus 14; Joshua 3:1-4:24

Key Text: Joshua 4:21-22

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: Hold Fast to the Teachings - 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

Tuesday: Victory at the Sea - Exodus 14:21-31

Wednesday: The Lord Goes Before Us - Numbers 10:29-36

Thursday: DO Not Be Afraid - John 6:1 5-21

Friday: Remember God's Mighty Deeds - Psalm 77:10-20

Saturday: Remember Jesus's Saving Work - 1 Corinthians 11:23-27

Sunday: Crossing into the Promised Land - Joshua. 4:14-24

LESSON AIM:

IDENTIFY the characteristics of good leaders, exemplified in God's choice of Joshua as Moses' successor,

TRUST that God will help cultivate any leadership skills we possess, and

KNOW that God is true to His word.

KEEP IN MIND:

"He said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.'" (Joshua 4:21-22, NIV).

BACKGROUND:

The same power that divided the Red Sea for the Israelites to leave Egypt divided Jordan before Joshua. The people could see that the hand of God was present with Joshua to bring them into Canaan as it had been with Moses to bring them out of Egypt. The duty of Israel at this time was to *“go forward.”* As the feet of the priests bearing the ark touched the brink of the river, the waters of Jordan were held back on the upper side, and those below running down to the Dead Sea were cut off. All the host passed over on dry ground. They made the best use of the opportunity and hastened across the river. Retreat was impossible now. A new page in the history of Israel was turned. The desert was as unreachable as Egypt, thus Israel began a new era.

The Lord commanded that this event be remembered by a memorial. From the riverbed where the feet of the priest stood, twelve men, one from each tribe of the children of Israel, were to carry twelve stones and leave them at their first lodging place at Gilgal. The memorial stones were to be a witness to future generations of the miracle of God's faithfulness and power in bringing His people through the River Jordan into the promised land.

LESSON COMMENTARY:

Israel Remembers God's Deeds (Joshua 4:14-19, NIV)

¹⁴That day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they revered him all the days of his life, just as they had revered Moses.

¹⁵Then the LORD said to Joshua,

¹⁶"Command the priests carrying the ark of the Testimony to come up out of the Jordan."

¹⁷So Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan."

¹⁸And the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 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.

¹⁹On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho.

Israel's crossing of the Jordan marked the beginning of their entry into the land God had promised to their fathers. As at the Red Sea, the Lord made His power known before the nation and confirmed that He was leading them into a new stage of their history. God publicly established Joshua as Moses' appointed successor, showing that His presence and authority remained with Israel under Joshua's leadership. The nation witnessed God's confirmation of Joshua through the miraculous crossing, giving every tribe reason to recognize his authority. Their respect for Joshua was grounded in their recognition that the Lord had chosen and empowered him to lead them. Joshua retained this God-given authority throughout his years as Israel's leader. Joshua continued the work begun under Moses, leading Israel into the promised land according to the Lord's command.

God appoints leaders according to His purpose. Just as Joshua was exalted, we should recognize and respect the leaders God places in our lives. The transition from Moses to Joshua shows that God's work continues through different leaders. We should trust in God's ongoing plan and provision. The Israelites revered Joshua as they did Moses. We are called to respect and support our spiritual leaders, recognizing their role in God's plan. Joshua's exaltation was a result of his faithfulness to God. Our own faithfulness and obedience can lead to God's blessing and honor in our lives. The miraculous crossing of the Jordan River was a testament to God's power. We should be attentive to the ways God demonstrates His power in our lives and communities.

1. How does the exaltation of Joshua in Joshua 4:14 demonstrate God's faithfulness to His promises?
2. In what ways can we show reverence and support for the leaders God has placed in our lives today?
3. How does the transition of leadership from Moses to Joshua encourage us to trust in God's ongoing work in our lives?
4. What are some practical ways we can demonstrate faithfulness and obedience to God in our daily lives?
5. How can we be more attentive to witnessing and acknowledging God's power and presence in our personal and communal experiences?

The Twelve Stones Placed in Gilgal (Joshua 4:20-23, NIV)

²⁰And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan.

²¹He said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, 'What do these stones mean?'

²²tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.'

²³For the LORD your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The LORD your God did to the Jordan just what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over.

It is the duty of parents to tell their children betimes of the words and works of God, that they may be trained up in the way they should go. In all the instruction parents give their children, they should teach them to fear God. Serious godliness is the best learning. Are we not called, as much as the Israelites, to praise the loving-kindness of our God? Shouldn't we raise a pillar to our God, who has brought us through dangers and distresses in so wonderful a way? For constantly, the Lord has helped us today, as much as he did his saints of old. How great is the stupidity and ingratitude of men, who do not perceive God's hand, and will not acknowledge His goodness, in their frequent deliverances!

Two-fold Lesson of the Memorials (Joshua 4:24, NIV)

²⁴He did this 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."

The miracle of God at Jordan was to be told by the father from one generation to another, thus keeping ever in the minds of the people that their very existence was because God had performed a miracle to give them the inheritance promised to them generations before. As we read and study this wonderful memorial of God's faithfulness to His promise, we cannot help but remember the inheritance that God has promised those who put their trust in and faithfully follow the Lord Jesus Christ. This text leaves us with a two-fold lesson of the memorials:

1. "That all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty,"
2. "That you may fear the Lord your God forever."

The first lesson given to Israel involved a larger missionary hope. Through them the heathen nations were to learn the knowledge of God. This takes us far beyond the statement in Joshua 2:9 that the terror of Israel should fall upon them. So, we learn that at this time of Israel's entrance into Canaan and by the miracle which made it possible, the whole earth would know of the mighty works of God.

There is a second feature about the memorial stones that we need to know. The stones not only speak to us of our duty to remember, but also the danger of forgetting the past mercies of God. In studying the history of the Jews, we think of them as being a nation who through their unbelief and unfaithfulness to God were monsters of ingratitude. Then as we do a little personal reflecting on ourselves, we realize that they were average men. We ask the question, "How do we reflect the goodness and mercies of God as a nation and as individuals?" We need to cultivate a thankful remembrance. Psalm 78:7 puts it like this, "*That they may set their hope in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments.*" Another lesson to learn from the memorial stones is the duty of parents to instruct children in God's mercies. This law remains in force. Parents are still the most powerful instructors in the ways of God. You are either setting an example for or you are either setting an example against God. The children of Israel had passed Jordan. They were in their long-promised land. They were not only in Canaan but were there with a fresh testimony that their God was with them.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

1. How does the crossing of the Jordan River demonstrate the power of God, and how can we see His power in our lives today?
2. In what ways can we cultivate a healthy fear of the LORD in our daily walk with Him?
3. How can we be effective witnesses to the "peoples of the earth" about the mighty acts of God in our lives?
4. What are some "Jordan River" moments in your life where you have seen God work powerfully, and how can you use these as a testimony to others?

5. How can we ensure that the next generation knows about the mighty works of God, and what practical steps can we take to teach them?
6. What are some ways you can create "memorial stones" in your life to remember God's faithfulness?
7. How can you effectively share accounts of God's work in your life with the next generation?
8. In what ways can you trust God during transitions or changes in your life, as the Israelites did when crossing the Jordan?
9. How do physical symbols or practices in your church or personal life help you remember and worship God?
10. What steps can you take to promote unity and community within your church or small group, reflecting the unity of the twelve tribes?

LESSON TO LIVE BY:

The crossing of the Jordan on dry ground is a testament to God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises. Just as He was faithful to Israel, He remains faithful to us today. The memorial stones serve as a physical reminder of God's miraculous works. We should also establish "memorials" in our lives to remember and testify to God's goodness. The instruction to tell future generations about God's deeds emphasizes the importance of passing down faith accounts to our children and grandchildren. The Israelites had to wait for God's perfect timing to enter the Promised Land. We, too, must trust in God's timing for the promises He has given us. Just as the Israelites stepped into the Jordan by faith, we are called to step out in faith in our own lives, trusting in God's provision and guidance.

God is faithful to His promises. Just as He led Israel through the Red Sea and the Jordan, He will lead us through our challenges. The miracles of the Jordan and the Red Sea serve as reminders of God's power and presence. Reflect on how God has worked in your life. Joshua's leadership and the people's obedience were crucial. Consider how God calls us to lead and follow in faith. The Israelites had to wait for God's timing to cross the Jordan. Trust in God's perfect timing for the events in your life. The stones taken from the Jordan served as a memorial. Establish spiritual "memorials" in your life to remember God's faithfulness.

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Joshua Fights for God
Printed Text: Joshua 11:6-9,16-23

Devotional Reading: Psalm 108
Background Scripture: Deuteronomy 7; Joshua 6; 8:1-29; 10:28-43; 11:1-23
Key Text: - Joshua 11:20

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: Live as Holy People - Deuteronomy 7: 1-11
Tuesday: God Will Love and Bless - Deuteronomy 7: 12-26
Wednesday: Strengthened in Every Circumstance - Philippians 4:10-19
Thursday: Armed for Spiritual Warfare - 2 Corinthians 10:1-5, 15-18
Friday: Christ Has Overcome the World - John 16:23-33
Saturday: God Fights for God's People - Joshua 10:40-11:5
Sunday: God Brings Victory - Joshua 11:6-9, 16-23

Aim for Change

IDENTIFY scriptural support that God keeps His promises;
FEEL blessed that God stands behind His promises; and
PRAISE God that His promises are true.

Keep in Mind

"For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. " (Joshua 11:20).

BACKGROUND:

Joshua 11 emphasizes the theme of obedience to God's commands. The chapter begins with God instructing Joshua to not be afraid and to take action against the northern kings. Joshua's compliance with God's directives is a central theme, as seen in Joshua 11:6, "The LORD said to Joshua, 'Do not be afraid of them, for by this time tomorrow I will deliver all of them slain before Israel.'" The chapter highlights God's sovereignty and power over the nations. The defeat of the northern coalition of kings demonstrates that God is in control and can deliver victory to His people. The theme of divine judgment is present as the Canaanite cities and their inhabitants are devoted to destruction. The conquest of the land is a fulfillment of God's promises to the patriarchs.

The theme of God's faithfulness to His covenant is highlighted as Israel takes possession of the land. Joshua 11:23 concludes, "So Joshua took the entire land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses." The chapter also reflects the theme of unity and cooperation among the tribes of Israel as they work together to conquer the land. This collective effort is crucial for the success of their mission, as seen in the coordinated attacks against the Canaanite kings. Joshua's leadership is a key theme, as he faithfully executes God's commands and leads the Israelites to victory.

His role as a leader who listens to God and acts decisively is highlighted throughout the chapter, reinforcing the importance of godly leadership.

LESSON COMMENTARY:

Northern Kings Overcome at the Waters of Merom (Joshua 11:6-9, NIV)

⁶The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them over to Israel, slain. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots."

⁷So Joshua and his whole army came against them suddenly at the Waters of Merom and attacked them,

⁸and the LORD gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left.

⁹Joshua did to them as the LORD had directed: He hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.

Canaan was virtually conquered in two great decisive battles. The first was fought against the five confederate kings of southern Palestine (Chapter 10), and the second we find in this eleventh chapter of Joshua, a larger confederation of the petty kingdoms of northern Palestine. This was a powerful confederacy of all the tribes that had not yet fallen before Joshua. King Jabin of Hazor, far to the north, headed the new battle. In answer to his call, the fighting men of the whole region came together in one place at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel. They came with their horses and chariots, which they relied upon for success in this battle. Horses and chariots do not seem to have been encountered by the Israelites in the previous battles, probably because they could not be used effectively in the mountain regions of Judea. The Israelites could have had a special dread of them and as God gave His promise to Joshua for success, we find a distinct reference to them included in the promise. "Do not be afraid, "for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire." No details concerning this battle and victory are recorded. Joshua and his forces came upon them suddenly, and the Lord delivered them into their hands.

The destruction of Hazor is markedly recorded because of its leading part in going against Israel. Jabin, the king of Hazor, escaped with his life out of the battle and went back to his own city, where he was slain and his city burned.

The wonders God worked for the Israelites were to encourage them to act vigorously themselves. God encouraged Joshua. Fresh dangers and difficulties make it necessary to seek fresh supports from the word of God, which we have coming to us for use in every time of need. God proportions our trials to our strength, and our strength to our trials. Joshua's obedience in destroying the horses and chariots, shows his self-denial in compliance with God's command. The possession of things on which the

carnal heart is prone to depend, is hurtful to the life of faith, and the walk with God; therefore, it is better to be without worldly advantages, than to have the soul endangered by them.

The Promises Fulfilled (Joshua 11:16-23, NIV)

¹⁶So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev, the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills, ¹⁷from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and struck them down, putting them to death.

¹⁸Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time.

¹⁹Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle.

²⁰For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²¹At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns.

²²No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive.

²³So Joshua took the entire land, just as the LORD had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.

After Joshua's victories over the city-states of Jericho and Ai, word spread throughout the hill country and down the entire coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The kings in the southern region of the Promised Land joined together to defend themselves against the Israelite invaders. However, the people of Gibeon rejected the military coalition and tricked the Israelites into signing a peace treaty with them (Joshua 9:1-26). When the other five kings of the coalition heard about the treaty, they were enraged and gathered their armies to attack Gibeon. The Gibeonites immediately sent word to Joshua to come to their aid.

Just as He had at Jericho (6:1-5) and again at Ai (8:1-3), God assured Joshua that He would deliver the opposing armies into his hands and that their victory was guaranteed (10:8). At God's word, Joshua assembled the Israelite army and marched all night from their camp at Gilgal to Gibeon. Joshua led a surprise attack on the coalition forces. Just as God had promised, the Israelites routed the much larger army and went on to subdue all the remaining cities in the southern area of the Promised Land.

Joshua then led the Israelites to capture the royal cities in the area. They took the spoils for themselves, including the livestock, and they killed all the people. In doing this, they obeyed God's command to them through Moses, leaving nothing undone.

This was the end of the major battles Israel needed to fight. They had overcome the greatest armies from the greatest cities. They followed their initial conquests by a long period of war against the surrounding cities and their kings. Then finally after a long and exhausting campaign, "Joshua took control of the entire land, just as the LORD had instructed Moses. He gave it to the people of Israel as their special possession dividing the land among the tribes. So, the land finally had rest from war."

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

1. How does Joshua's obedience to God's command in this passage challenge our understanding of success and power in today's world?
2. In what ways can we apply the principle of relying on God's strength rather than our own resources in our daily lives?
3. How does the destruction of horses and chariots in Joshua 11:9 relate to the New Testament teachings on spiritual warfare?
4. What are some modern-day "chariots and horses" that we might be tempted to trust in, and how can we shift our reliance to God?
5. How can Joshua's example of faith and obedience inspire us to trust in God's promises, even when the path seems unconventional or difficult?
6. If the kingdom of God is promised to believers and the manifestation of the kingdom within believers is righteousness (goodness), peace, and joy, why are so many Christians miserable and troubled?
7. How does God's assurance to Joshua in this passage encourage you in facing your own fears and challenges?
8. What are some "horses and chariots" in your life that you might be tempted to rely on instead of trusting in God?
9. How can the principle of divine strategy in this passage be applied to decision-making in your life?
10. In what ways does this passage demonstrate God's sovereignty, and how can that understanding impact your daily walk with Him?
11. How can the themes of this passage be connected to the New Testament teachings on spiritual warfare and reliance on God's power?

LESSON TO LIVE BY:

Just as God assured Joshua of victory, believers today can trust in God's promises and His faithfulness. God's command to Joshua not to fear is a reminder that fear can be overcome by faith in God's power and plan. The passage underscores God's control over the events of history and His ability to deliver His people. The physical battle faced by Joshua can be seen as a metaphor for spiritual battles, where believers are called to rely on God's strength.

Joshua's actions exemplify complete obedience to God's instructions, even when they defy conventional wisdom. Believers are called to trust and obey God's word, even

when it challenges societal norms or personal understanding.

The destruction of horses and chariots symbolizes a rejection of reliance on human strength. Christians are encouraged to place their trust in God's power and provision rather than worldly resources or strategies. Joshua's leadership and actions are rooted in faith in God's promises to Israel. Believers today are reminded to hold fast to God's promises, trusting in His faithfulness to fulfill them. The physical battles in Joshua's time can be seen as a metaphor for spiritual warfare. Christians are called to fight spiritual battles with God's guidance and strength, using spiritual weapons rather than worldly ones.

Zoom Sunday School Classes – 27 September 2026, 9:00 AM EST

Meeting ID: 848-9423-0612

Pass Code: 669872

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84894230612?pwd=Zk1ESitzbGZwTlJyV21UZXY5aTVPZz09>

Rahab Welcomes Spies

Printed Text: Joshua 2:8-14; 6:16-17

Devotional Reading: Matthew 25:31-46

Background Scripture: Joshua 2; 6:16-25; Matthew 1:5;

James 2:25; Hebrews 11:31

Key Text: Joshua 6:17

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: Welcoming Strangers - Joshua 2:1-7

Tuesday: Faith without Works Is Dead - James 2:14-26

Wednesday: May the Nations Know God's Salvation - Psalm 67

Thursday: Faith to Live By - Hebrews 11: 1-2, 29-31

Friday: God Shows No Partiality - Acts 10:34-48

Saturday: Rahab's Faith in God - Joshua 2:8-14

Sunday: Rahab Is Spared - Joshua 6:6-17, 22-23, 25

AIM FOR CHANGE:

REFLECT on Rahab's commitment to saving her family;

CONSIDER the possible risks and costs of making a commitment; and

EVALUATE the demands of your own commitments and the need to make appropriate changes.

KEEP IN MIND:

"The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent." (Joshua 6:17, NIV).

BACKGROUND:

Joshua was born in Egypt and was a descendant of Joseph. Joshua's original name was Hosea, which means "salvation." changed his name to Joshua, which means "the Lord is salvation." The name change is fitting when we remember that it is not Moses or Joshua but only the Lord who can and does save His people.

When the Children of Israel left Egypt, Joshua was about 40 years old. At that time, he was a personal aide to Moses. His service to Moses included service in the army. Shortly after God provided for Israel's miraculous delivery at the Red Sea, the army of the Amalekites attacked the Israelites. Here we read that Moses appointed Joshua to lead the Israelite army, and we read "And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword" (Exodus 17:13).

Moses' confidence in Joshua was confirmed when he selected representatives or "rulers" of each of the 12 tribes to cross over the Jordan and go into Canaan to see if the Promised Land was habitable. Ten of the twelve spies were disheartened and brought back reports that Israel could not conquer the powerful inhabitants of the land. Only Joshua, representing the tribe of Ephraim, and Caleb, representing the tribe of Judah, brought Moses reports that expressed their unwavering confidence in God's promise that Israel could indeed occupy Canaan. It is interesting to note that Joshua and Caleb's faithfulness was rewarded. These two men would be the only two Egyptian-born Israelites allowed to move into Canaan.

We pick up the story some 40 years later. Joshua was about 80 years old. He and the Children of Israel were camped in the hills of Moab, just across the river from Canaan. God commanded him to "go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel" (Joshua 1:2). Here we see God reaffirming His promise to His chosen people to provide them with a land of their own. Although God was giving the land to Israel, the book of Joshua makes it clear that Israel had to take possession of the land, which is already occupied. Joshua and the Children of Israel had witnessed God delivering them from Egyptian bondage. It was up to them to trust Him to lead them into the land He had promised them.

The key to Israel gaining possession of the Promised Land lay in God's continual encouragement to their new leader, Joshua, to "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (Joshua 1:9). Present-day Christians should take great comfort in these words. God's promise to Joshua is ours. We, too, can be strong because we have blessed assurance that whatever battles we face, God is with us, and through faith in

Him, we can take possession of the spiritual blessings He has promised to us.

LESSON COMMENTARY:

God Protects the Spies (Joshua 2:8-11, NIV)

⁸Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof

⁹and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you.

¹⁰We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed.

¹¹When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.

Before launching an attack, a good leader will always try to gather as much information about his or her enemy as possible. However, Joshua remembered what had happened when Moses publicly sent the 12 spies on a mission to gather information on the opposition they faced. The men brought back a report that struck fear into the hearts of the people and caused them to revolt against Moses and God. This commander was taking no chances. He secretly sent out two spies to check out the enemy, with particular emphasis on Jericho, and report back to him.

Somehow the two men made their way across the Jordan River and traveled the eight miles over land to Jericho without being spotted by any lookouts. They made their way to an inn being run by a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there. God's divine protection is not only in the fact that the two men managed to cross the Jordan River and reach the city undetected, but also in the house they chose. The entire city must have been on alert for strangers coming to spy out the city. However, God directed the Israelite spies at that time to one person in all of Jericho whom He had chosen for divine appointment. Scripture simply describes her as "Rahab the prostitute." It was not unusual for strangers and foreigners to go to Rahab's house, or hotel, and so the spies would not appear suspicious there. Others who passed through the house would provide the spies with information on the situation in Jericho.

Somehow the spies were spotted either before they made it to Rahab's house or maybe their questions in the house caused suspicion. At any rate, the news was reported back to the king of Jericho. When the king heard the news of the two spies in the city, he immediately dispatched a contingent to Rahab's house to capture them. The king's men arrived at Rahab's house and ordered her, "'Bring out the men who have come into your house, for they have come here to spy out the whole land'"

(Joshua 2:3). Somehow Rahab had been alerted to the coming of the king's men and had hidden the two spies. She met the king's men at the door and deceived them into thinking that the spies had gone. She first acknowledged that the men had indeed arrived there earlier, but she denied knowing who they were. Then she lied to the king's men: "I don't know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them" (verse 5).

Rahab Covenants with the Israelite Spies (2:12-14, NIV)

¹²Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign

¹³that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death."

¹⁴"Our lives for your lives!" the men assured her. "If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land."

Rahab had heard of the mighty deeds of God and was willing to leave her Canaanite home in Jericho, abandon pagan worship, and take all of her relatives with her. So far, she had treated the spies honorably, and she asked that Israel treat her honorably by saving her and her family from the destruction that she was certain was coming on the city of Jericho, under the hand of Almighty God and the fighting men of Israel.

It is telling that Rahab asked that the spies "swear unto me by the LORD" God of Israel and not by gods she had served all her life (Joshua 2:12). Like Jacob (Genesis 32:24-26), Rahab would not let the two spies go unless they blessed her and her entire family. Her commitments were undergoing a radical change. She understood that her salvation did not rest in the power of the king of Jericho, not in the strength of the walls of the city, and not even in the might of the army of Jericho. Rahab's commitment to and her confidence was now in the God she had heard could dry up the Red Sea. Only He could save her and her family. Rahab insisted that the soldiers give her a "true token." This indicated the strength of her belief that the Lord God of Israel could be trusted to do whatever He promised to do.

Joshua Obeys the Plan (Joshua 6:16-17, NIV)

¹⁶The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city!

¹⁷The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent.

The Israelites, led by Joshua, chose to follow the Lord's instructions exactly as He commanded. Not only did He give instructions about how to destroy the city, but He also provided instructions about what to do after the walls fell, to not take possession of anything. Perhaps the Israelite's decision to obey so readily stemmed from the history

of their people. They were to enter the Promised Land unlike their fathers because of the past generation's failure to fully trust God. Although God's instructions were not familiar in warfare, it proved that He alone was responsible for the victory. Not only did the Israelites have a choice, but Rahab the prostitute had a choice. Rahab, who protected the spies and demonstrated her devotion to God, made a decision that allowed for her and her family to be spared (Joshua 2:1-24; 6:17).

Joshua's instructions may have seemed strange to the people, but they performed the first six days faithfully. On the seventh day they got up early. This day they were to increase their daily march and walk around the city seven times. When they had finished marching the seventh time, the priests blew their trumpets and Joshua commanded the people to shout the victory. The Lord had given them the city.

God is able to give us the victory over our enemies when we obey His words and follow His instructions. As long as God's people are obedient to Him, they are witnesses to His mighty power exhibited on their behalf. We may not agree with the Lord's directions for our lives, and we may not even want to accept His principles. But God is never short on His promises. He will come through for us whenever we submit to Him and follow His word every day!

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

1. What encouragement can you give to new Christians about trusting God?
2. What significance do you see in the repetition of the number seven in the conquest of Jericho?
3. What lessons can you take from this text about victory in your personal battles?
4. At first glance it might appear that the use of a prostitute to aid Israel seems like a strange choice. How important is Rahab's occupation to our understanding of this biblical narrative? Does the fact that she is a prostitute make the account more or less remarkable? Why do you think this?

LESSON TO LIVE BY:

Each of us has multiple commitments in our lives. We have commitments to people (spouses, children, friends, and parents), our jobs, our churches, and social and civic organizations. Our commitments are usually made on the basis of our beliefs about ourselves, about our community, our family, and about the world in which we live. Many of the commitment choices we have made in our past have brought us to where we are today. Many of us struggle in marriages because we chose a partner based on impulse, rather than seeking God's guidance. Our decision to become "friends" with our children, rather than parent and nurture them, often results in tormented days and

sleepless nights. Our youthful decisions to drift through school, instead of studying and applying ourselves, may have resulted in low-paying jobs as adults. The choices we make today, tomorrow, next week, or next year impact our future. Some of those choices will be split-second decisions. They will come out of our commitments about who we believe we are and what we believe about ourselves and our God. These decisions will determine the actions we take. The strength of our commitment to God impacts the decisions we may be called to make. The only way we can properly make the decisions that will be pleasing to our God is to be armed with the truth from God's own Word.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON: 4 October 2026

A Renewed Covenant

Printed Text: Joshua 24: 18-27

Devotional Reading: Jeremiah 31:27-34

Background Scripture: Deuteronomy 29:1-20; Joshua 23-24

Key Text: Joshua 24:14

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