

Women in the Lineage of Christ

Week 3 – RAHAB - Joshua 3-6

Prepare...

As you begin, take a moment to pray and focus on the Lord as you come into his presence and study his word.

You may want to use this prayer, based on Hebrews 4:12

God, your Word is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing my soul and spirit, my joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of my heart. I want to hear you through your word now.

Begin...

Read through the text twice. First read to gain a general understanding of the passage. Read a second time slowly, looking at each verse in detail.

To make sure you have understood the story in Joshua 3-5, answer the following questions (in your head or on paper). The study questions over the page will concentrate on the events of chapter 6, linking them to more global themes found in all four chapters.

1. From the end of chapter 2, how long did the spies stay in the hills and what was their report to Joshua?

From chapter 3

2. Where did Joshua and the Israelites go when they left Shittim, and how long did they stay there?
3. What and who were they instructed to follow for this stage of their journey?
4. For what reason did Joshua tell them to consecrate themselves?

From chapter 4

5. How were they to cross the Jordan?
6. What was the state of the river at that time?
7. What was the next thing they were commanded to do?

From chapter 5

8. What was the reaction to the news of their crossing the Jordan from the local kings?
9. Why were the Jews circumcized at this point?
10. What feast did they then celebrate, and what heavenly provision stopped from that point?
11. Who did Joshua meet near Jericho and what message did he receive?

Memory Verse for the Week...

James 2:26

“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.”

Historical context

Try to imagine what an amazing time of healing and restoration this was for the Israelites. For those who were to finally make it out of the desert, their anticipation and excitement must have been mingled with regret and fear : regret as they remembered their parents' generation who died whilst wandering the desert; and fear at all that lay ahead of them.

In Joshua 5 the generation born during the forty years of desert wanderings are circumcised. They could then celebrate the Passover together. This was only the third time they had celebrated this feast, the last time being at Sinai, 39 years before. After this celebration there was to be no more manna, the heavenly food that had sustained them for the past forty years (Joshua 5:12).

Here are references to key events:

Exodus 12—first Passover

Exodus 13:15-31—crossing the Red Sea

Exodus 16—the beginning of God's provision of food from heaven

Exodus 24—Moses receives the Law

Numbers 9—second Passover

Numbers 14:29-31—God punished the Israelites—only Joshua and Caleb would get to the Promised Land and the rest of Israel would die whilst wandering in the desert.

Some scriptures for contemplation...

Joshua 2:8-9

Before the spies lay down for the night, she (Rahab) went up on the roof and 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.

Joshua 2:11

When 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.

Joshua 2:24

They said to Joshua, "The LORD has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us."

Study Questions

FEAR AND FAITH

1. From **Joshua 6:1**, why were the gates of Jericho shut?

.....

Copy out **Joshua 4:24**, which gives the reason the Israelites were to set up their memorial of the crossing of the Jordan.

.....

.....

2. What reason is given in **Joshua 3:7-10** for God making the waters of the Jordan back up?

the Lord to Joshua

Joshua to the Israelites

3. Joshua 3:15-16a

Notice that the priests had to step out into the river in flood conditions, carrying the heavy Ark of the Covenant, which they weren't to touch, BEFORE the water backed up. Are there any decisions you face, or have faced, which require similar strength and courage?

.....

.....

4. What is your personal reaction to the concept of fearing the Lord? Using concepts from the above questions, plus the scriptures from Joshua 2 in the side bar, try to come up with a statement about fear and faith.

.....

.....

.....

A HOLY WAR

On one level, the idea that Joshua crossed the Jordan, fought the battle of Jericho and destroyed Canaanite cities seems just too close for comfort, especially given the current state of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These are difficult passages of scripture to read. If you are struggling, take time to go to God in prayer with your issues.

5. Joshua 6:2

Joshua 6:2; 2:8-9; 2:24 (from the side bar) all say the same thing about this battle. What is it?

.....

6. In **Joshua 5:13**, just before the battle of Jericho, Joshua meets a man with a sword. Their conversation literally means: 'Art thou for us or for our adversaries?' And He saith, 'No, for I [am] Prince of Jehovah's host; now I have come;' ... Who is this man, who presents himself as neither "friend or foe", as some translations render the question in v.13?

.....

.....

What did he tell Joshua to do and why?

.....

.....

7. Note the verses which refer to the priests in **Joshua 6:3-21**.

.....
What was their role in the destruction of Jericho?
.....
.....

An encounter with the commander of the army of Lord, who has some surprising last-minute battle instructions; priests in the front ranks of the army, with a very precise but bizarre strategy to follow—all united to win a battle that has apparently already been won! The battle of Jericho was certainly a very strange one from the human perspective!
.....

8. What do you think the priests and Israelites must have been thinking and feeling during the siege of Jericho?
.....
.....

9. Using scripture from the side bar, and what you’ve learned from the battle of Jericho, answer the following questions:

Are there areas of your life where you are really struggling, or battling?
.....
.....

Take one of these areas and give: your perspective on who the “opponents” are and their “strategies” :
.....
.....

God’s perspective on the same things :
.....
.....

Use the personal application box to record your reflections on seeing things from God’s perspective. What might you do to keep a more God-centered vision of things?

REUNITED WITH RAHAB

10. In **Joshua 6:22-25**, we finally meet Rahab again. How long do you estimate she has been waiting with her scarlet cord hanging from her window?

What happened to her and her family immediately after they were rescued?
.....

11. Describe the family she ultimately married into. (See Joshua 6:25; Matthew 1:1-6; Ruth 4:19-22; Numbers 10:14)
.....
.....

Rahab is given the great accolade of being put beside Abraham as a woman of faith in James 2:20-26), and is listed along with the greats of Jewish history in Hebrews 11:31. Why not finish this week’s study by recording your own appreciation of our heroine below?
.....
.....

More scriptures:

2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

1 Samuel 17:45

David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”

Psalms 34:7

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

Personal Applicaton

“You do not need a great faith, but faith in a great God.”

Hudson Taylor, missionary to China, 1832-1905