



Joshua

August 3rd | The book of Joshua

Read Exodus 17:8-16 This is our introduction to Joshua, who will succeed Moses eventually as the leader of the people. After Moses struck and killed the Egyptian and had to flee Pharaoh's house at age 40 we never hear of any act of violence on his part (striking the rock with his staff for water is the closest he comes). Joshua, on the other hand, is a man of action, military action. What assignment does Moses give him, and how does Joshua execute it? What is the significance of the first half of verse 14?

Read Exodus 24:12-18 If you haven't read the story carefully, you might miss the fact that the whole nation of Israel heard the Ten Commandments in God's own voice (Exodus 20:1-17), asked God to talk to Moses, not them (20:18-21), and then God gave Moses further oral instructions (20:22- 23:33). Then a group of 70 elders of Israel saw God at the foot of the mountain, eating and drinking with him (24:1-11). Only then does Moses go back up to receive the tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments written on them. Who goes with him? Why?

Read Exodus 33:7-11 God speaks face-to-face with Moses in the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. Having heard God, Moses will share what he has heard with the people. What does Joshua do? Why?

In **Numbers 13:1-16**, which we looked at last week, we noticed that Joshua was one of the twelve spies, and joined Caleb in urging the people to enter the Promised Land the first time. If you look at this story again you'll note that all 12 were "chiefs" of their own tribes. What tribe is Joshua from? It turns out that Joshua is Moses' nickname for him--what is his full name? Make sure you pay attention to the sermon for further information about his name!

Read Numbers 27:12-23 Moses here learns that he is not to take the people into Canaan, because he was unfaithful at Meribah, striking the rock to bring forth water as though he was the one giving it, not God. Moses' response is to ask God to appoint a leader, a shepherd, and God names Joshua. Discuss the ceremony that follows.

In **Numbers 34:16-29** we're given a list of the men who will divide the Promised Land into allotments for each of the twelve tribes. Who are the two leaders of the division process?

Read **Joshua 1:1-9**, which ends with one of the more famous verses in the Bible. Look at the language God uses. What is the value of hearing affirming words like these? Do you ever speak like this to others? Has anyone ever affirmed you like this?

Joshua 3:7 and 4:14 bookend the story of the parting of the Jordan so that Israel could cross over on dry land, just like they did the Red Sea. Name some ways this crossing is different than that one. What is the purpose, according to these two verses, for God choosing to part the Jordan?

Joshua 5:13-15 seems to echo a story we've recently studied, maybe even two. Name them.

The fall of Jericho is one of the greatest Sunday School stories ever. With or without reading it in Joshua 2 and 6, discuss the details of the story, as many as you remember. Why does God do it this way? What is ironic about 2:11 and 2:24?

Joshua 7-10 includes several stories that are crucial to understanding God's relationship with his people as they enter the Promised Land. As they go against the seemingly insignificant Ai, they meet initial defeat because of what? (2:10-12)

When Ai falls, God once again is the one who makes it happen, but this time, instead of knocking down the walls, what part does God play? (Chapter 8)

Why do the Israelites make an alliance with the Gibeonites? (Chapter 9)

What do you make of the sun standing still in Chapter 10?

The middle chapters of Joshua detail the various battles and the distribution of the land--important, but not exactly riveting! It's the end of Joshua, **Chapter 24**, that really interests us. Read **24:14-22** and discuss the most well-known verse in there, 24:15. Talk about themes of family, of believers versus culture, of courage, of willingness to go against the grain.

Next Week

Judges – Please read the book of Judges!