

# Let's Worship God

20th-25th November 2017

Joshua

## The Book of Joshua

**THE PROMISED LAND**

**BOWNE**

# The Book of Joshua

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## **Monday -Joshua 2:15-21 - The Beauty of the LORD's Grace**

In these verses, the spies promise that Rahab and anyone in her household on the day the Israelites attack Jericho will be spared. Here we see the beauty of the LORD's grace.

Joshua 2 could easily have been left out by the writer in recording the account of Israel's entry into the land. Chapter 3 seems to follow more logically from chapter 1. But the writer deliberately turns aside and inserts a detailed record of the story of Rahab. Surely this shows a special significance to this account. Why would the writer go out of his way, as it were, to include this material?

This story involves the conversion of a pagan - a Canaanite, even one caught up in a very immoral lifestyle. Rahab is not just a Gentile, she is a disreputable one. Yet the spies promise to spare her from the coming destruction because of her faith in God and her assistance as they did His work. We see later in the book that she is welcomed into the church (Josh. 6:22-25)! To some, that might be offensive. We might say: 'We can't have that'. Surely the church is only for respectable, clean, upright, decent folks. But that is like saying that hospitals are only for doctors, nurses and x-ray machines instead of for sick people. Or it is like saying that only coroners and undertakers belong in morgues instead of dead people. Who then should be in the church but sinners? The church is not a club but a refuge for sinners who have been touched by the grace of God. In fact, when we come to the New Testament, it seems that Rahab's sinful past did not bother the writer of the first Gospel. Rather, Matthew seemed to see in Rahab a trophy of divine grace. Isn't it astounding that this shady lady of Jericho should be the ancestress of Jesus the Messiah (Matt. 1:5)!

## **Questions**

1. What does Rahab teach us about the grace of God?
2. How should this affect our attitude in our church life?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks for God's grace.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## **Memory Verse**

And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." Joshua 2:24

**Praise: Psalm 99B:all - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

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### **Tuesday - Joshua 2:22-24 - Encouragement in the LORD's Faithfulness**

The events of this chapter gave Israel encouragement in the faithfulness of the LORD. One of the benefits of the whole episode appears in the spies' report in v24: "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." The land has continued to be the concern of this chapter (see also v1,9,14 and 18). Now, as the fruit of this spying mission, the Israelites are assured that the LORD will give them the land as promised.

This is what their mission achieved. The spies did not remain in Jericho to help the attack on the city from within. Their purpose wasn't to do an 'inside job' and cunningly deliver the city. When we read later in this book what the battle strategy was going to be (6:2-5), it's hard to see how the spying mission had helped to develop the plan!

What Israel did receive from this episode was being sure of the LORD's promise. We might say that they should have been certain of God's promise without this extra encouragement. True, the LORD's word is adequate in itself. The problem, however, is not that the LORD's promises are not sure but that we need to feel sure of them. His word should be sufficient to strengthen us. But because of the weakness of our faith, He graciously stoops down and by many signs, evidences and providences makes us feel assured of His already sure word. It's like a husband sending a card to his wife telling her how much she means to him. She shouldn't need to be sent a card in order to know that he loves her, but it is an extra action that makes her feel loved and appreciated. So the LORD understands our needs.

### **Questions**

1. What did the spies' visit to Jericho achieve?
2. What do we learn about God from the fact that He did this for His people?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks that God assures us of His love.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." Joshua 2:24

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### Wednesday - Joshua 3:1-6 - Awareness of the LORD's Work

Chapters 3 and 4 describe Israel's preparations for crossing the Jordan (which lay between them and the Promised Land) and the completion of the task. The chapters describe the words and events that accompanied the crossing as well as how the memory of the crossing was to be preserved.

Here in v1-6 the writer emphasises awareness of the LORD's work. First we notice the central role of the ark of the covenant in this whole episode. "As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place and follow it" (v3). The ark is mentioned seventeen times in these two chapters! The writer refuses to allow us to lose sight of it. Thus the ark - the sign of the presence of the LORD among His people - meets us at every turn, reminding us that it is the LORD Himself who leads His people into Canaan. He is the One who cuts off flooding waters and holds them back as it were with His hand. The whole event is the LORD's achievement and the Israelites, even though they are active in a sense, are still spectators first and foremost.

How was Israel to spectate the LORD's work? From a distance, v4 seems to say: "Yet there shall be a distance between you and it, about 2,000 cubits in length. Do not come near it, in order that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before". The order of the text most naturally suggests that the reason for the distance from the ark is so that the people can tell where to go and can witness the cutting off of the Jordan - something they could not do if everyone was closely following the priests and the ark. But this way all could see the LORD's great deed and all could know the path to take.

### Questions

1. What did the ark symbolise?
2. Why was it important that the Israelites could see it?

### Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that the Lord is in control at all times.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### Memory Verse

And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." Joshua 2:24

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## Thursday - Joshua 3:1-6 - Awareness of the LORD's Work

As well as distance (v4 - as we saw yesterday), the attitude of the people was also important for spectating the LORD's work. In v5 we read: Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." What did this command involve? From other occurrences in the Old Testament (look up, for example, Ex. 19:10,14,22; Num. 11:18; Josh. 7:13; 1 Sam. 16:5), we see that it means the special preparation of the people whenever the LORD was going to reveal Himself in a special way. It could include washing their clothes and abstaining from marital relations; it probably included confession of sins too.

Why all the bother about distance and attitude? Why all this fuss and preparation for the big event? Because it was crucial for Israel to recognise that what was about to happen was indeed the work of the LORD. Unless they had proper insight, expectancy and preparation, they could see the LORD's work and yet still not understand its true value and significance. Just as we might prepare ourselves for seeing a movie by finding out more about the storyline, or we might prepare ourselves for going to a concert by getting to know the artist's songs better, proper preparation can lead to a proper appreciation. This is also true of Joshua 3-4. God's people must be rightly prepared for God's 'show' if they are going to appreciate it, if they are going to be strengthened in their faith. Although the LORD may not often cut a path through rivers for His people today, the principle remains. Do you prepare yourself for the practice of the public worship of God? If we are not impressed with the magnificence of the living God in public worship, is it because we have not prepared ourselves to see Him as such? Could it be that we even fail to detect God's marvellous working in the routine details of our lives simply because we have not prepared ourselves to see or even expect that?

### Questions

1. Why was it important for the people to prepare for what God would do?
2. In what ways can we prepare ourselves to see God's greatness?

### Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would see and appreciate God's work in your life.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### Memory Verse

And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." Joshua 2:24

**Praise: Psalm 101:all - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

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## Friday - Joshua 3:7-9 - The Exaltation of the LORD's Servant

Before the crossing the LORD assured Joshua: "Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you" (v7). Later in the account the writer confirms for us that God was true to His promise: On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life. When we consider the circumstances - the crisis of Moses' death; the change of leadership that followed; and the struggle for conquest of the Promised Land that lay ahead of them - we realise the purpose and the importance of God's assurance to Joshua. It was crucial that he felt secure in his position and that Israel was confident in Joshua's abilities under God.

It might not be immediately clear to us why this endorsement of Joshua's leadership was so important. Its importance becomes more obvious to us when we consider the consequences for an army or a nation when confidence in their leadership is lacking. History shows us that troops who are not well supplied, who are unclear of their instructions, who doubt the decisions or strategies of their superiors, do not succeed. They have no confidence in their leadership. God knew how vital His people's opinion of Joshua would be for the upcoming wars in Canaan. So God stooped down that day both to dam up the river and also to place his seal of approval upon his man Joshua.

## Questions

1. What do these verses teach us about God?
2. What do these verses teach us about our attitude to God's appointed leaders?

## Prayer Points

1. Pray for your minister and elders.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## Memory Verse

And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." Joshua 2:24

**Praise: Psalm 102A:1-6 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

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## **Saturday - Joshua 3:10-13 - The Assurance of the LORD's Power**

Before the crossing Joshua had predicted: "Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites" (v10). There is a certain logic behind this assurance. If the LORD can tame a raging river, He can also resist attacking Amorites. If He can stop up the Jordan, He can put down the Jebusite. If He can get Israel into the land, He can surely give them that land. Israel had failed to exercise this same kind of logic in the past - like when they complained about their hunger as they wandered (Ex. 16:3). They should have realised that the God who had just miraculously delivered them from Egypt by bringing them through the Red Sea (Ex. 14) would not let go of them in the wilderness.

Bible commentator Dale Ralph Davis says: "The rescue at the Red Sea, the crossing of the Jordan, and the death and resurrection of Christ are explosions of God's power that are meant to colour the whole horizon of the believer's life in order to assure us that the God who so mightily handles greater emergencies is surely adequate for the smaller crises and anxieties that beset us". "You shall know that the living God is among you" (v10). The point of this text is to impress us with the adequacy of God. It drills into us that God is not merely a three-letter word in our Christian vocabulary. He is not merely the honorary leader of our club. He is the living God who works and intervenes and saves and rescues and counsels His people in all their perplexities. He is indeed "the Lord of all the earth" (v11,13). This is no lower league 'god'. We must turn our back on our tendency to downsize God, to carve Him down to our stature and to limit Him to our possibilities.

### **Questions**

1. What was the significance of what was about to happen to the Israelites (at the Jordan) for what lay further in the future for them (in Canaan)?
2. How does this apply to you?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." Joshua 2:24

**Praise: Psalm 102A:7-12 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that  
Ezra read from  
the book of the Law  
day after day  
and that  
the people of God  
were filled with joy!**

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