Joshua Introduction—
Chapter 1-3

Bible Study
Introduction

Joshua—the name means ‘the Lord is salvation’

He is mentioned twenty-seven times in the Pentateuch (Gen.—Deut.)

He was of the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Nun, was born in Egypt, the land of bondage
(I Chron. 7:22-27)—his ancestry

Joshua is first mentioned in Exodus 17:8—13
➢ As a leader in Israel’s victory against Amalek, who attacked Israel shortly after leaving Egypt

He is called Moses ‘assistant’ in Exodus 24: 13 and Numbers 11: 28
➢ He was being prepared and trained to succeed Moses

Only he and Caleb brought a positive report on the land of Canaan when 12 spies were set to scout the land
(Numbers 13-14)
The phrase ‘the servant of the Lord’ was first applied to Moses at the end of his life (Deut. 34:5).

Joshua is the second person to be called ‘the servant of the Lord’ at the end of his life (Jos. 24:29).

Author—the Bible does not identify the author of the book of Joshua (BKC) “many scholars ascribe the book to Joshua himself with minor additions made by Eleazar the high priest and his son Phineas”

Date of events (1406—1399 BC)

The date of the Exodus was 1446 BC...subtracting 40 years of wilderness wandering= 1406 BC

➢The conquest of the land lasted seven years= 1399 BC
Contents of the book

Chapter 1:1—12:24 The conquering of the promised land

Chapter 13:1—22:34 Distribution of the promised land

Chapter 23:1—24:33 Call to covenant obedience
Timeline—40th year after leaving Egypt [1406 BC]

Deuteronomy 1:1—34:8

The book of Joshua begins

1st month 40th year
2nd month
3rd month
4th month
5th month
6th month
7th month
8th month
9th month
10th month
11th month
12th month

Numbers 20: 1

Numbers 36: 13

Deuteronomy 34: 8 (weep for Moses 30 days)

1st month 41st year
10th day—Cross the Jordan
14th day—Passover

Joshua 4: 19
Joshua 5: 10
1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying:

2 "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them--the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

v. 2 God said to Joshua: “Go over this Jordan”...
Even though Moses was dead, God’s purpose for the nation was still alive and well
(New Bible Commentary)—Literally ‘now arise cross’ i.e. ‘cross immediately, do not delay’

v.3-4
God’s commitment to Israel—all the land that had been promised to the patriarchs
No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

“I will be with you”
- God encourages Joshua that he must now go forward in faith and to trust in God to be with him

“I will never leave you”
May be translated: “I will not drop or abandon you”

“as I was with Moses”
A great promise to Joshua
6 Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

7 Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

v. 6 First, Joshua was to be strong and courageous by focusing on God’s promise of the land

v. 7-8 Secondly, the second call to courage: be careful to obey the law

v. 9 Joshua’s third call to courage was based on the wonderful promise of God’s presence
Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

"Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.' "

v. 10 “Officers of the people”—these are the officers of Deuteronomy 20: 5-9 who excuse certain men from battle and then appoint commanders over the army

v. 11 “Pass through”—this is the same verb in the Hebrew used in verse 2-- “go over”

It is a verb of action used in the opening chapters to describe key activity—in this verse to prepare provisions
And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying,

"Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.'

Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He gave you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise."

Reminding these tribes of their responsibility to help the other tribes to conquer Canaan in return for being given land on the east side of the Jordan.
16 So they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

17 Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses.

18 Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage."

v. 16 "All you command us we will do"

The fighting men from the east side of the Jordan are aware of Joshua’s ambiguous position and they affirm his leadership—they did remember the commitment they made.

v. 17 “Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses”

(BKC) “they were willing to follow Joshua if he showed clear evidence that he was being led by God.”
Chapter 2

Rahab, and the spies' mission

“had sent” (Companion)

1 Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.

“spy secretly”

‘secretly’ (Heb. heres)—only appears here in biblical Hebrew—a term such as ‘skillfully’ could translate the Hebrew

“the house of a harlot named Rahab”

(Expositors) “Rahab’s house was the only place where the men could stay with any hope of remaining undetected and where they would be able to gather the information they were seeking. Moreover, her house afforded an easy way of escape since it was located on the city wall. (v.15)”
Israel's camp on the east side of the Jordan
And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the
country."

So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they
have come to search out all the country."

v. 2 The spies mission does not remain secret—it becomes known to the king, at the highest levels

v. 3 The king sends messengers to tell Rahab to turn the men in—it would be treason to harbor and give aid to them
4 Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.
5 And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them."
6 (But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.)
7 Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.

v. 4 Rahab realized the men were of Israel, she could have told them to leave but did not. (Parallel) “there were stirrings in her heart, seeds of faith in the God of Israel, which could not be ignored. She chose to hide the men instead.”

(BKC) “The lie of Rahab was recorded but not approved. The Bible approved her faith by good works (Heb. 11:31) but not her falsehood.”

(Parallel) Rahab’s lie
1) She was a pagan woman living in a pagan society, no doubt she was unaware that lying was a sin
2) No where is found a reference that either the spies, or later Joshua condoning the lie
3) Although seed-like faith seems to be developing, there was not a reference to her faith in God until after the lie was told
8 Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof,
9 and said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the
inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.
10 For we 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
the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.
11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of
you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

v. 11 “for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth”—a confession of faith and belief in the true God

Hebrews 11:31
31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

Rahab would eventually marry Salmon of the tribe of Judah...he was the son of Nahshon a tribal leader at the time of the
Exodus.

- Their later descendent, Boaz would marry Ruth, and from them would come David and later Jesus Christ

Matthew 1:4-6
4 Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon.
5 Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,
6 and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.
12 Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."

13 So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you."

v.12-13 After expressing her belief in the true God, her interest is directed to saving her family

v. 14 The spies made an agreement with Rahab—if they would keep silent about the spies, they would see to their protection upon taking the land
15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall.

16 And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way."

17 So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home.

18 So it shall be that whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him.

19 And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear."

20 Then she said, "According to your words, so be it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window.

v. 15 “her house was on the city wall”
(Expositors) “Houses, such as Rahab’s, constructed within the wall have been discovered by archaeologists in the ruins of ancient Jericho”

v. 16 “Get to the mountain”
(Parallel) “the Jebel Kuruntul mountain range to the west would have been the only mountains in sight. The mountain is honeycombed with hundreds of caves, and they could have easily hid for three days in one of those caves.”

v. 18 “scarlet cord”—parallel with marking the houses in Egypt with blood to escape death
They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought them all along the way, but did not find them.

So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and crossed over; and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them.

And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."

After hiding for three days the spies brought to Joshua a very similar report that he had brought to Moses some thirty-eight years earlier when Joshua was one of the spies to originally scope out the land (Numbers 14)
Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over.

So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; and they commanded the people, saying, "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.

v. 1-5 Joshua leads Israel across the Jordan

v. 1 “from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan”—about a half days journey

v. 3 The ark represented God’s presence—God was leading the way as they crossed the Jordan
Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before."

And Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

v. 4 “two thousand cubits”—about three thousand feet
v. 4 [last part] “you have not passed this way before”—unknown territory but God would guide them
v. 5 “Sanctify yourselves”
(Parallel) “The sanctification here was not ceremonial, but spiritual. They were to prepare themselves to see the mighty hand of God moving among them in a way heretofore unknown.”
7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day 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.

8 You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.' "

v. 7 “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel”—fulfillment described in chapter 4: 14

Joshua 4:14

14 On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.
9 So Joshua said to the children of Israel, "Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God."

10 And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites:

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan.

12 Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe.

13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap."
So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people,

and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest),

that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

v. 15 “time of harvest”
(Parallel) “The time of harvest mentioned here is the barley harvest, which took place about the tenth day of Nisan....the waters (of the Jordan) are usually sixteen to twenty feet above flood stage.”

(Tyndale) “The time was in the spring of the year, when the river is in its flood stage...the southern flow of the Jordan is turbulent.”

v. 16 “Adam”—The location of Adam was about sixteen miles north of Jericho
“Since Jericho is a few miles north of the Dead Sea, the area in which the water was completely removed from the bed of the Jordan would cover approximately twenty miles.”

v. 17 “and all Israel crossed over on dry ground”—a miracle
(BKC) “By this great miracle, the crossing of the Jordan river at flood stage by a nation of about 2 million people, God was glorified, Joshua was exalted, Israel was encouraged, and the Canaanites were terrorized.”
Lessons

The threefold call to courage from God to Joshua is important for us to consider today:

- Be strong and courageous by focusing on God’s promises
- Be strong and courageous—being careful to obey God’s law
- Be strong and courageous by means of God’s presence

Matthew 28:20

20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.