



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

JOSHUA

Week 1

Before You Begin Your Journey...

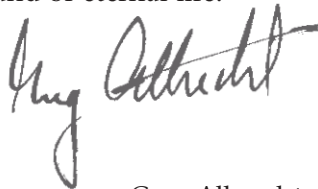
You are about to enter one of the great pivotal books of the Bible—a great dividing line of biblical history. Before Joshua, the people of Israel had no physical place to call home. After Joshua, what was the land of Canaan had become the land of Israel. God was faithful to his promise made hundreds of years earlier to Abraham, the father of Israel.

From the very beginning, the book of Joshua hammers home the basis of the old covenant—that obedience to the law God gave Israel at Sinai would be the secret of Israel's blessing in every succeeding generation. Israel cannot provide its own inheritance—God alone can provide for the nation, as the nation is obedient to God.

But perhaps the greatest significance of the book of Joshua is that the settlement of the Promised Land prepared the way for the coming of another Joshua, more than 14 centuries later—Jesus Christ. In fact, Jesus' name in Hebrew is *Joshua*, meaning “God is salvation.”

Jesus came with another kingdom—a kingdom not based on earthly real estate. His kingdom was from “another place” (John 18:36).

Jesus was born and then died in the same Promised Land to save not only the people of Israel, but also the whole world. It is this “Joshua” who fights our battles and who leads us into our Promised Land of eternal life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Albrecht". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and a long, sweeping underline.

Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

How to Use the CWR Bible Survey...

1—Read and study at your own pace. This is a devotional. It is designed to help you consider and ponder the great truths of God's written revelation. It is designed to help you worship and come to know God. If you get behind, you can always catch up.

2—We suggest you set aside a special time for the *CWR Bible Survey* every day. We recommend allowing 30-45 minutes, but even if you can only spare 15 minutes, try to make it part of your regular schedule.

3—You will need a good Bible. This might be an excellent time for you to consider purchasing a new Bible. Plain Truth Ministries recommends the *New King James Study Bible* published by Thomas Nelson and the *New International Version Study Bible* published by Zondervan.

4—Always read the assigned passage of the daily lesson in your Bible first. Each daily lesson builds upon the portion of the Bible being covered that day. You may want to begin by praying about what God has in store for you as you read, and then look at the questions and background information.

5—Consider the format of each daily lesson. Almost every daily lesson will include:

• **Opening Up to the Word** —a section designed to help you open your mind to the teaching God has inspired.

• **Digging Into the Word**—this section will encourage you to get your nose into the Bible and think deeply about what it says.

• **Living Out the Word**—here you will be challenged to consider the practical implications for your life. How does this passage help you live?

• **Window On the Word**—will offer key insights to help you more clearly understand the daily Bible passage.

6—After you finish the daily lesson, take some quiet time. You may simply think, look out the window, take a walk, or even get down on your knees. But use this time to let this daily lesson sink in. Ask God to show you what he wants you to understand from your reading and study.

7—Consider the *CWR Bible Survey* for small groups in which you may be involved. Tell your friends about it. If you are involved in a small group that meets for prayer and Bible study, introduce your group to it. Many are seeking an easy-to-read guide to help them understand the Bible and to help them know God. the *CWR Bible Survey* can do that!

8—Remember that while we may refer to the Bible as the word of God—the Eternal Word of God is noneother than Jesus, who inspired the Scriptures to be written by human instruments. Words on paper may tell us about him—but it is not the words that we worship—it is Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word.

•Abbreviations Used in the *CWR Bible Survey*—

Genesis	Ge	Nahum	Na
Exodus	Ex	Habakkuk	Hab
Leviticus	Lev	Zephaniah	Zep
Numbers	Nu	Haggai	Hag
Deuteronomy	Dt	Zechariah	Zec
Joshua	Jos	Malachi	Mal
Judges	Jdg	Matthew	Mt
Ruth	Ru	Mark	Mk
1 Samuel	1Sa	Luke	Lk
2 Samuel	2Sa	John	Jn
1 Kings	1Ki	Acts	Ac
2 Kings	2Ki	Romans	Ro
1 Chronicles	1Ch	1 Corinthians	1Co
2 Chronicles	2Ch	2 Corinthians	2Co
Ezra	Ezr	Galatians	Gal
Nehemiah	Ne	Ephesians	Eph
Esther	Est	Philippians	Php
Job	Job	Colossians	Col
Psalms	Ps	1 Thessalonians	1Th
Proverbs	Pr	2 Thessalonians	2Th
Ecclesiastes	Ecc	1 Timothy	1Ti
Song of Songs	SS	2 Timothy	2Ti
Isaiah	Isa	Titus	Tit
Jeremiah	Jer	Philemon	Phm
Lamentations	La	Hebrews	Heb
Ezekiel	Eze	James	Jas
Daniel	Da	1 Peter	1Pe
Hosea	Hos	2 Peter	2Pe
Joel	Joel	1 John	1Jn
Amos	Am	2 John	2Jn
Obadiah	Ob	3 John	3Jn
Jonah	Jnh	Jude	Jude
Micah	Mic	Revelation	Rev

JOSHUA

God's People
Enter the
Promised Land

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Introduction to Joshua

Authorship: The traditional view is that this book was originally written by Joshua with some information contributed by the priests Eleazar and Phinehas.

Date: As with many of the books of the Bible, it is not easy to assign a firm date to the writing of the book of Joshua. If, as tradition indicates, Joshua wrote the book, then the date might be around 1380 B.C. (some edits and additions were made much later). It was about this time that the various tribes inhabiting Canaan would have heard about a people called Israelites. The diverse tribes living in Canaan must have been concerned to learn that this nomadic band was now at the Jordan River opposite Jericho, intent on claiming the territory that the Israelites' God had promised their ancestors. Here is a chronology: the Exodus from Egypt took place around 1446 B.C.; the Israelites entered Canaan around 1406 B.C.; the judges began to rule around 1375 B.C.

Setting and purpose: To record Israel's historical conquest of the Promised Land. This promise was made years earlier to Abraham, that his "seed" or descendants, would one day occupy the land of Canaan (Ge 13:14-17). The land of Canaan occupied the same general geographical territory of modern-day Israel. Today some people are troubled by the notion that God would permit one group (the Israelites) to attack another and take away their land. However, the biblical view should be kept in perspective. The people of Israel were justified in seizing the land because God had promised the land to Abraham and his descendants.

Distinctive features: Joshua's book recounts the numerous miracles by which God aided the people of Israel during their invasion and seizing of the Promised Land. Some of those miracles included:

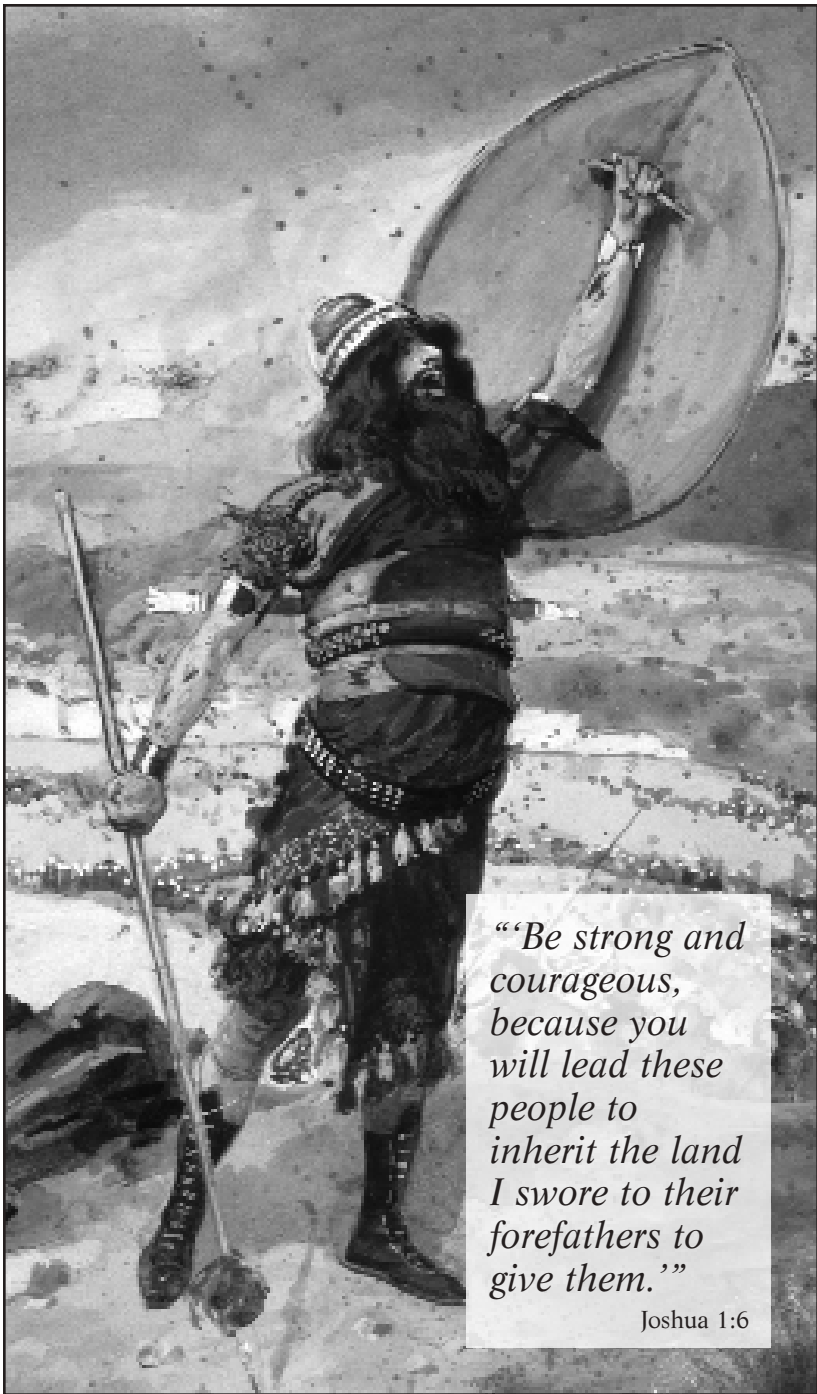
- Drying up the Jordan so the Israelites could cross safely (Jos 3:16-17).
- Bringing down the walls of Jericho (Jos 6).

- Causing the sun to stand still at Gibeon (Jos 10:13).

As you study this book, pay special attention to: (1) key people—Joshua, Rahab, Achan, Phinehas, Eleazar; (2) key places—Jericho, Ai, Mount Ebal, Mount Gerizim, Jordan River, Gibeon, Gilgal, Shiloh, Shechem, Valley of Aijalon, Hazor.

Reading Outline:

Day	Text	Theme
1-3	Joshua 1-2	Preparing to Enter the Promised Land
4-7	Joshua 3:1-5:12	Entering the Promised Land
8-15	Joshua 5:13-12:24	Conquering the Promised Land
16-26	Joshua 13:1-22:34	Dividing the Promised Land
27-40	Joshua 23:1-24:33	Joshua's Farewell



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

Joshua 1:6

Big Changes Coming

DAY 1

Joshua 1:1-9

Have you ever been in a situation where you were called to take over for someone else? Was it a smooth transition?

1. God comforted and encouraged Joshua. Why do you think this was necessary?
2. What phrases are repeated three times in verses six through nine? Why the repetition?
3. What is stressed in verses seven and eight? Why this emphasis?
4. In your Bible, highlight God's promises to Joshua.

1. Have you ever felt called by Jesus to do something special or unique? Do you believe he was challenging you, reassuring you or intimidating you? Why?

2. Joshua was Moses' assistant for 40 years. Evidently Moses prepared for a smooth transition of leadership. Can you think of a modern-day example of a leader (or a servant) preparing or training someone to take his/her place?

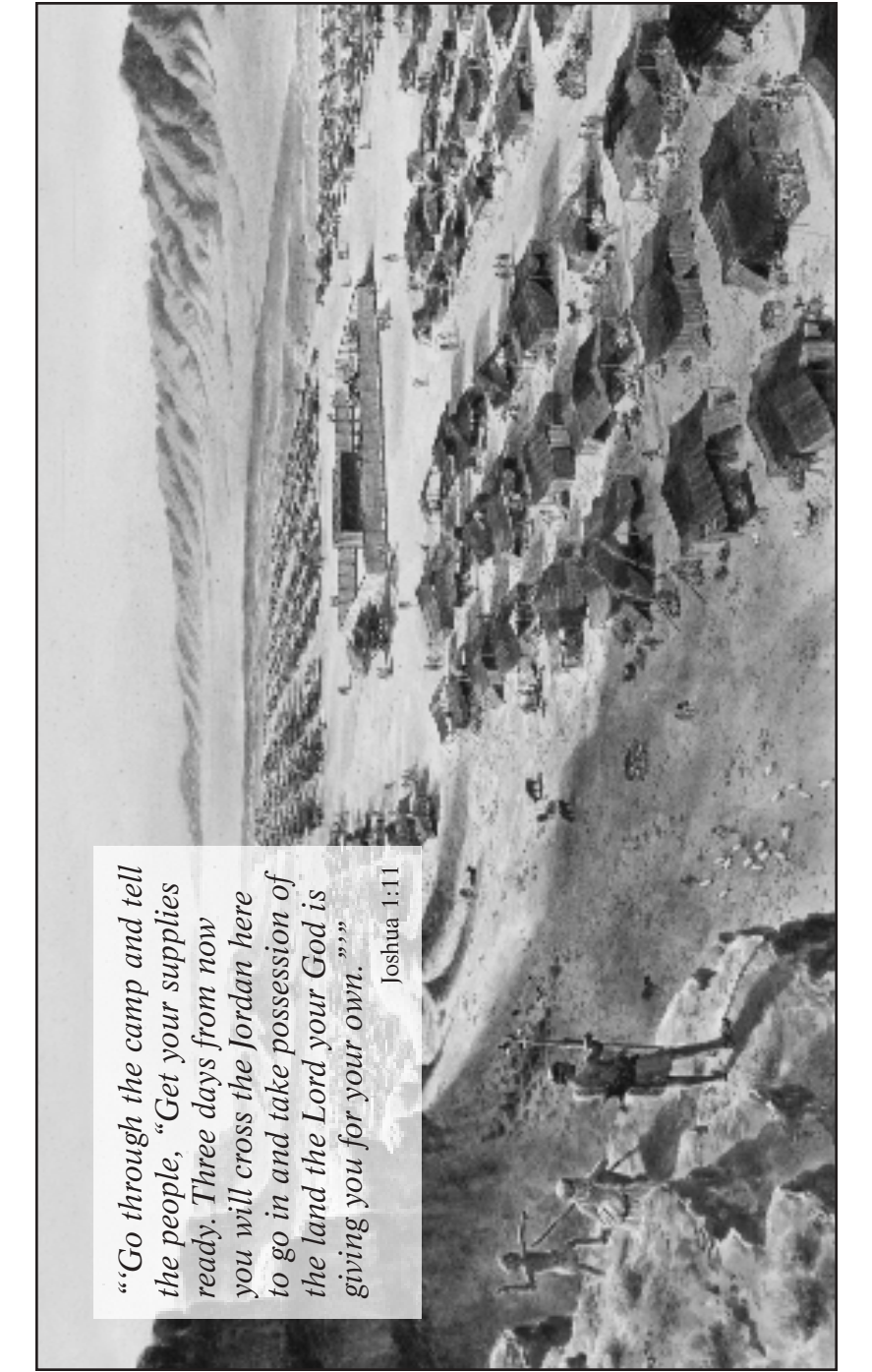
***The death of Moses** had to be a major blow for the Israelites. It was Moses who challenged the mighty Pharaoh on their behalf; it was Moses whom God used to win their exit from slavery in Egypt; it was Moses who led them through the wilderness for 40 years. He was the only leader known to an entire generation of Israelites. **Joshua** is now called to lead the people of Israel. He was both assistant to Moses and military commander of Israel. He is first mentioned shortly after the Israelites left Egypt. In Exodus 17 Moses designated Joshua to defend Israel against the Amalekites. The next time Joshua is heard from is as Moses' "assistant," the only person permitted to go with him to the "mountain of God" (Ex 24:13).*

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word



“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.””

Joshua 1:11

Get Ready!

DAY 2

Joshua 1:10-18

Has God enabled you to cross a “Jordan River” in your life?

1. What commands did Joshua give the leaders of Israel? What preparations would be involved?

2. Which tribes were called back into service? What was their obligation to the larger group of Israelites?

3. How did those tribes respond to Joshua’s call? How was their response reassuring to Joshua? In their words to Joshua, what phrase was repeated that was also used in God’s message to Joshua?

1. Are there any preparations you need to make in order to cross your spiritual Jordan River and enter the rest Christ offers you? Could you do it in three days? Three months? Three years?

2. The Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh were already living comfortably (v. 12) when they were called into service to “help your brothers.” Who are some “brothers and sisters” that you might be called upon to help? What comforts might you have to sacrifice in order to respond?

3. Verses 16-18 contain some very reassuring words for Joshua. Do you know someone who is under pressure who could use supportive or encouraging words?

***Manasseh** was the firstborn son of Joseph and his Egyptian wife Asenath (Ge 41:51). Manasseh’s descendants played a major role in the conquest of Canaan. Among the prominent members of this tribe were the judges Gideon and Jephthah.*

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word

Help From a Prostitute?

Joshua 2:1-24

OPENING
up to the Word

Has help ever come your way from a completely unexpected source? Have you ever surprised a stranger with an offer of help?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How many spies were sent by Joshua? What were their orders? Why would the Israelites need to send spies in advance of their invasion?
2. Why did the spies go to a house of prostitution? (a) it was a place where strangers were welcome, (b) it was a place where no questions were asked, (c) it was a good place to gather information.
3. Trace the steps Rahab took to protect the Israelite spies. What did she know about the people of Israel? What did Rahab request from the spies?
4. How did the spies respond to Rahab's request? What instructions did they give Rahab? Why those particular instructions?

LIVING
out the Word

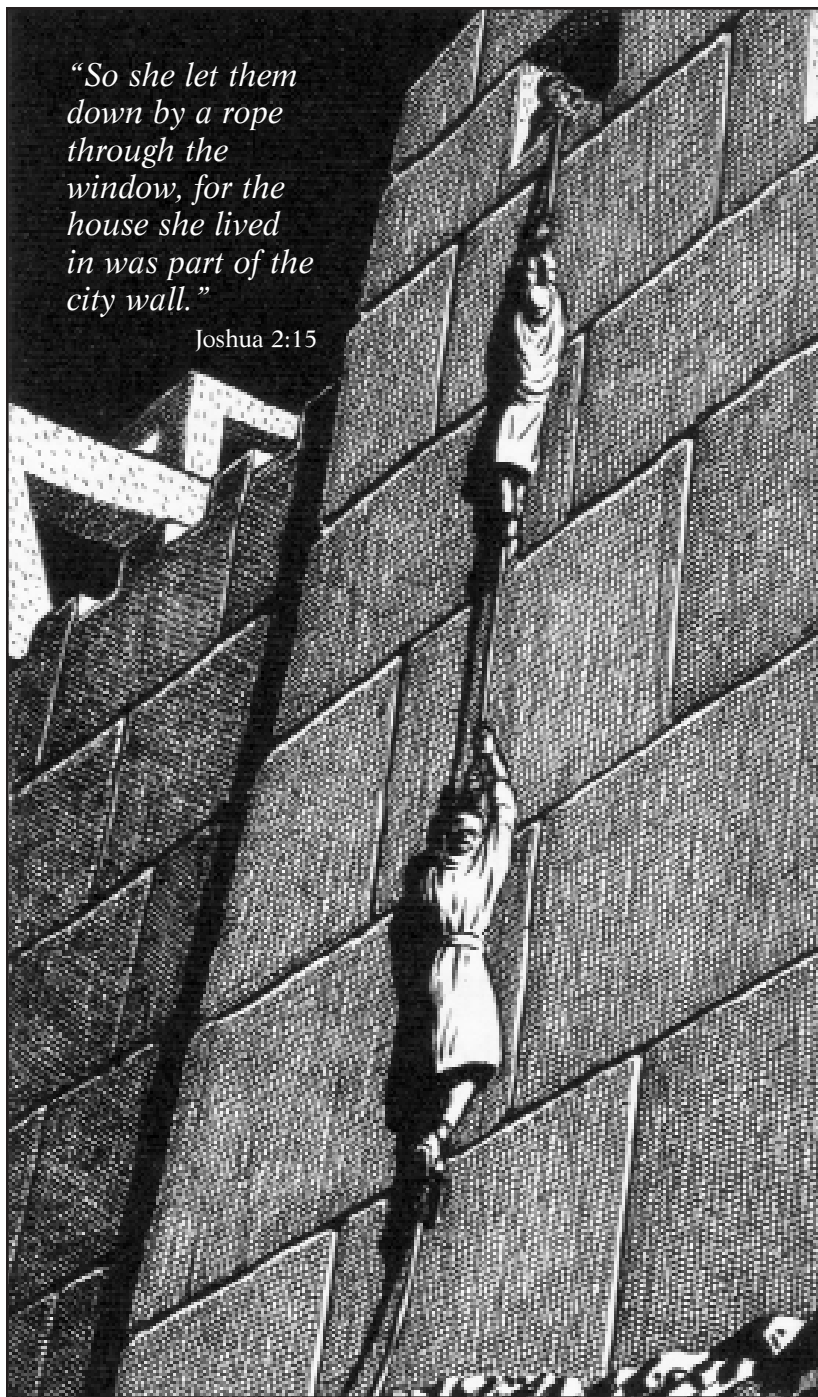
1. Take a look at Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25, where Rahab is named as a woman of faith. Given her occupation as a prostitute and the lies she told, why is she listed as virtuous? What does this tell us about the grace of God?
2. God chose to work through a prostitute. Has God brought you healing, grace or insight through someone you or Christ-less religion might tend to dismiss?
3. What would you cite as Rahab's weaknesses? By virtue of being listed in Hebrews 11, can we assume that Rahab left this profession and did not let her past prevent her from embracing faith in God?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Some scholars believe that a **house of prostitution** was the ancient equivalent of a hotel. Some visitors wanted room service; others did not. **Rahab** is one of the most fascinating characters in biblical history. As a prostitute, one would not expect her to be a vital part of God's work in history. Yet she is not only named as a woman of faith in Hebrews 11, she is also listed in Matthew 1:5 as an ancestor of David and Christ. There is speculation that her husband, Salmon, was one of the Israelite spies whose lives she saved.*

*“So she let them
down by a rope
through the
window, for the
house she lived
in was part of the
city wall.”*

Joshua 2:15



Artwork by Basil Wolverton

DAY 4

Look Both Ways Before Crossing the Jordan

Joshua 3:1-17

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever taken a great risk? Was it worthwhile? Did you experience God's help and guidance during the process?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What instructions did the military officers give the people of Israel? What instructions were given by Joshua to the people? To the priests?
2. What did God promise Joshua? Why?
3. What happened when the priests stepped into the Jordan River? Read Exodus 14:15 and compare Moses and Joshua.

LIVING
out the Word

1. Place yourself back in time. You are an Israelite, about to cross the Jordan. What are you thinking? Feeling? Hoping? Are you courageous, frightened or excited?
2. Verse 5 gives the promise that God would do "amazing things" among the Israelites. Do you believe Jesus has accomplished "amazing things" in your life?
3. How did God "exalt" Joshua (v. 7)? Has God's love and mercy exalted you?
4. Read verses 9-10 carefully. What evidence do you have that "the living God is among you"?

WINDOW
on the Word

***The Ark of the Covenant** was one of Israel's most sacred treasures. It symbolized God's presence and power. That may be why Joshua specified that approximately one half mile should separate the Ark and its priestly bearers from the main body of the Israelites. Not only was the Ark an important symbol of God's power and presence, but it actually contained God's teachings for Israel. The Ark, which was a gold-covered rectangular box with two angels facing each other on the lid, contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments that Moses received from God (Dt 10:1-5).*

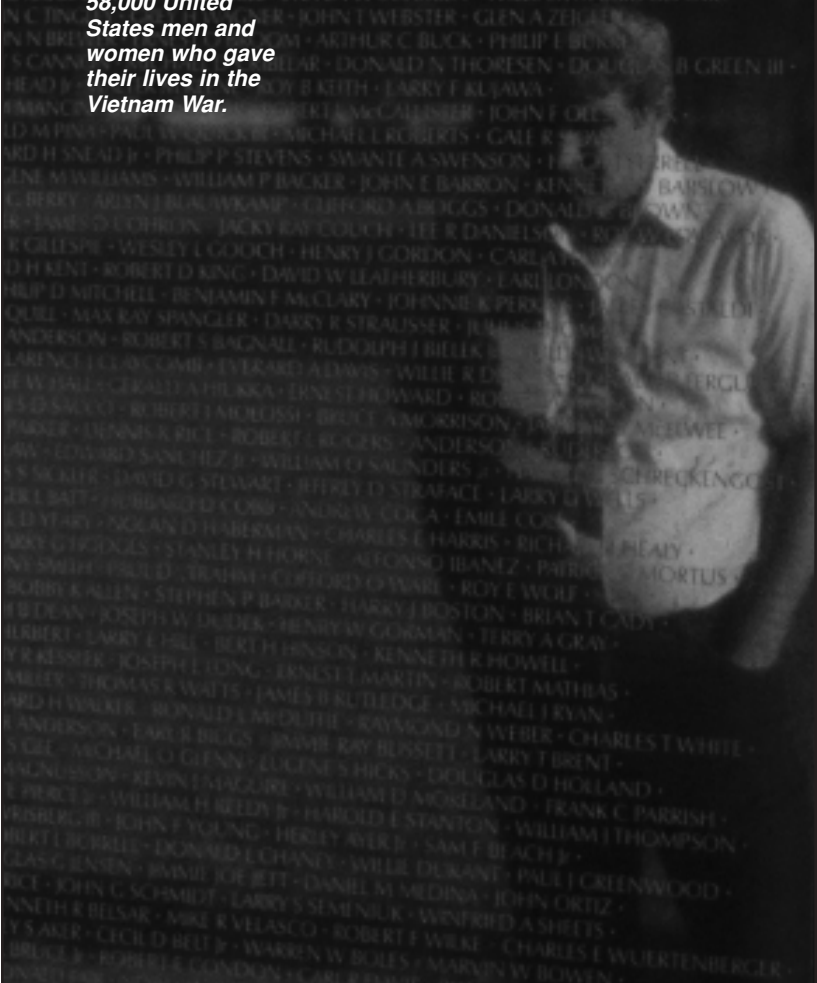
“The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.”

Joshua 3:17



Artwork by Gustave Doré

The Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. Dedicated in 1982, it is a polished black granite wall, about 500 feet long and from 11 to 2 feet high. Etched on its surface are the names of the 58,000 United States men and women who gave their lives in the Vietnam War.



Building a Memorial

DAY 5

Joshua 4:1-14

In the United States there are many political and cultural memorials—The Lincoln Memorial, The Vietnam War Memorial Wall, the Washington Monument. Are there any memorials dedicated to God's unconditional love for the whole world?

1. After successfully crossing the Jordan River, what were the first instructions given to the people of Israel by Joshua?
2. What was the purpose of the memorial (vs. 5-7)? Why do you think Joshua asked for the memorial to be established?
3. How big were the stones used to build the memorial? What size would the memorial be?
4. How many people crossed the Jordan? How long do you think this took?

1. Is there a "Jordan crossing" in your life that you could memorialize? How would you do that?
2. Make a list of some of your personal spiritual struggles and successes that God has accomplished in and through you. Can you pass some of them on to your children and grandchildren?
3. According to this account, the people of Israel crossed the river on dry ground "armed for battle" (v. 13). What might that tell us about a Christ-centered life?

Reuben was Jacob's oldest son by his first wife Leah. He was instrumental in saving Joseph's life when the other brothers were plotting his death. Reuben had four sons and, according to tradition, died in Egypt at the age of 125. Virtually nothing is known about Jacob's seventh son, Gad, though his descendants formed a sizable tribe known for their powerful, warlike spirit (See Ge 49:19 and Dt 33:20-21).

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

DAY 6

God's Agents

Joshua 4:15-24

OPENING
up to the Word

Christ-centered friends, teachers, pastors and counselors are vital for the spiritual health of God's children. Can you remember anyone whom God used to be particularly helpful to teach and nurture you?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How did the priests and Joshua work together to accomplish God's purposes?
2. Note verse 18, which indicates the river was at its peak—"flood stage." How do you think the priests felt when called upon to stand on the riverbed holding back the waters when the river was at its peak?
3. What were the Israelites to tell future generations about this experience (vs. 20-24)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. While the priests stood on the riverbed, the waters were restrained. When they left and stood on shore, the waters began to flow again. Have you experienced someone who stood with you and helped hold back a spiritual or emotional deluge? Has God rescued you from being mired in a religious swamp—enabling you to walk out safely on dry ground?
2. Reflect on verse 24—"the hand of the Lord is powerful." When was the last time you experienced God's power?

WINDOW
on the Word

The precise way God stopped the flow of the Jordan River is an intriguing question. An Arabic historian, Nowairi, tells of a time in December 1267 when the Jordan was dammed for sixteen hours by a landslide. Earthquakes are common in the Jordan Valley. In 1927, an earthquake kept parts of the riverbed dry for 21 hours. What these events indicate is that God may use natural phenomena to accomplish his purposes. Speculating about natural phenomena does not diminish the miracle God accomplished—if God did use an earthquake or landslide to accomplish his purpose and permit hundreds of thousands of people to cross the river safely, it was still a miracle.

God Has the Last Word

DAY 7

Joshua 5:1-12

Has there been a time in your life when you took a great risk? Did others ridicule you or speak disparagingly behind your back?

1. What impact did the crossing of the Jordan river have on kings in the area? Did their reaction make sense?

2. What new instructions were given by Joshua? Why?

3. Note verse 9—“Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” What does that refer to and what meaning would it have to the people of Israel (see Ex 32:12; Dt 9:28)?

4. What miracle ceased after the Israelites entered the Promised Land? Why?

1. Have you ever been intimidated by a group or even one person? Who and why?

2. What are some rites of passage in our society when people make a transition from one state of life to another? Has a rite of passage taken place in your life recently?

3. The stigma of slavery was removed from the Israelites. Have you experienced God’s rescue in your life? How did that make you feel? Was your faith affected by that event?

4. The Egyptians were skeptical that the Israelites could make it on their own in the desert. Have you ever been like the Egyptians—skeptical when another person stepped out in faith?

*The ritual of **circumcision** was once common to many nations in the ancient Near East. In Israel it took on increasing importance because it came to symbolize Israel’s unique relationship to God (see Ge 17:9-14).*

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word