

Lesson 7: Loyalty



Old Testament

New Testament

Where in the Bible?

Joshua is the sixth book of the Bible, at the start of a new section.

The Old Testament: History

The book of Joshua begins a new section of the Old Testament, the books of **History**. These take us through the period of the Conquest, through the time of the Judges, and into the days of the Monarchy. The narrative turns from simple family stories to broader political intrigue.

Biblical Time Period: Conquest

The Book of Joshua tells what happened when the Israelites first entered into the Promised Land. This period is known as the Conquest, when God led the people to many victories over the tribes of Canaan.

Though the people of Israel ultimately gained control of the general region, they never completely defeated the people of the land. This set them up for years of influence and competition from the pagan religions that were practiced by the Canaanite peoples.

Introduction

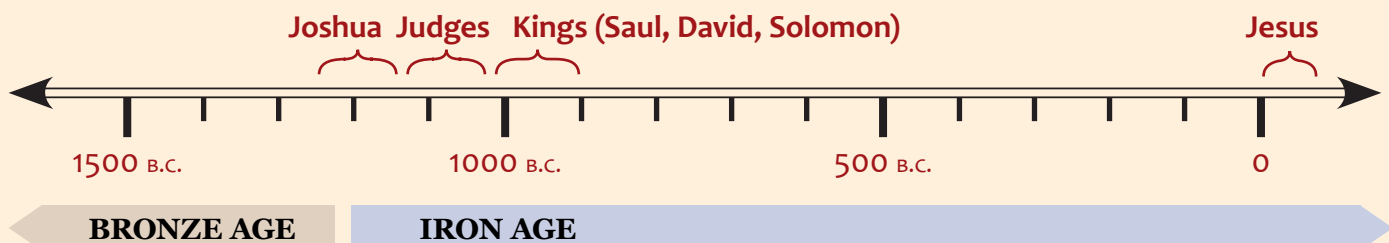
After the death of Moses, God chose Joshua to be the new leader of his people, to lead them into the Promised Land. The city of Jericho was one of the strongest that stood in their way. So Joshua sent spies into the city to observe their defenses.

Read: Joshua 2:1-24

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

When in Time?

The transition from the Pentateuch into the History books of Scripture roughly corresponds to the transition from the historical Bronze Age into the historical Iron Age (around 1200 B.C.). Changes in technology and metalworking brought about the decline of long-standing civilizations and gave birth to new ones. It was in this time that Israel grew to be an independent nation.



Discuss: Joshua 2:1-24

1. Israel officially entered the Promised Land when the people crossed the Jordan River. How can following God's lead in your life be both exciting and scary at the same time? Can you give an example?
2. Why did Joshua send two men as spies into Jericho? what were they sent there to do? Do you think they expected to find help when they got there?
3. Where did Rahab get the idea that these men were on God's side? What had she heard about them and their God?
4. What did Rahab ask the men to do in exchange for hiding them? Did they agree to her request? In what sense was this mutual promise a saving covenant? For what did they need to depend on one another?
4. How did the two spies escape from Jericho? What did Rahab do to show the Israelite armies that she was on their side? How did that protect her and her family?
5. In the Bible, the color red (scarlet) often brings to mind the image of blood. In what sense does the blood of Jesus mark us as his own and spare us from the wrath of God?
6. Read Mark 4:21-25. What is Jesus telling us here about the need to be bold and courageous? How is it that the things we do — good or bad — have a way of coming back around to us?
7. Even though the spies had to enter enemy territory, God was with them, preparing the way. Why is it important to remember that God goes before us?

Where in the World?

The map shows a closeup of the Promised Land and the direction the Israelites came from the wilderness in the south into the land of Canaan.

A few of the major cities in this region are shown. All of these were later conquered by the Israelites.

- a) On the map, identify and label the following bodies of water with the names they were called in the Old Testament (modern name is in parentheses):
 1. **The Great Sea** (Mediterranean Sea)
 2. **Chinnereth Sea** (Sea of Galilee)
 3. **The Salt Sea** (Dead Sea)
- b) Circle the city where the spies in today's lesson encountered the woman Rahab.
- c) What river did the Israelites have to cross to enter the Promised Land (Canaan)?

