

# Courageous

Claiming Canaan, Lessons from the Book of Joshua

## Lesson 1: Called

His name tells *their* story; the story of a nation whose greatest desire was to be "saved" from bondage and the oppression and affliction of cruel taskmasters. His name tells *his* story; the story of a man who depended upon God to *be* his salvation.

Hoshea, later named Joshua (Numbers 13:16), was a man marked by unwavering faith and devotion to the God of Israel. Unlike his kinsmen who heard God's words, witnessed His power, and then faltered, he knew with certainty that God could and would do all that He promised.

The making of a man fit to lead God's people into the Promised Land began in tyranny and slavery, but it didn't end there. With each revelation, Joshua chose to believe God and leave Egypt behind. In so doing, he was prepared for the task ahead—to shepherd, lead, guide, and fight for the people of Israel.

1. What does the term "called" mean to you?
2. How do you believe God makes ready the man whom He has called to His service?

## The Slave

The firstborn of an Ephraimite family who knew nothing but hard bondage (Exodus 1:14), Joshua was among those who cried out "*because of their taskmasters*" (Exodus 3:7).

3. Read Exodus 1:8-16. Describe the treatment to which generations of Israelites had been subjected.
4. It is likely that Joshua was a child when Moses, the man that many thought would be their deliverer, fled into obscurity

(Exodus 2:15). When Moses appeared some 40 years later, Joshua was a grown man.

How can waiting under hardship affect a man's faith?

5. At just the right time, Joshua, along with his brethren, witnessed God's power at the hand of Moses (Exodus 4-12).

Read Psalm 105:26-36. What might this have revealed to Joshua about the God to whom his people cried?

6. Read Exodus 11:7. What message did God seek to communicate to the Egyptians and the Israelites through the tenth, and final plague: the death of the firstborn?

What distinguished the Israelites from the Egyptians in God's eyes? (Exodus 12:23)

7. Joshua was the firstborn of his father Nun. How might the Passover have personally impacted him as a man, and later, as a leader? (Also consider Exodus 12:25 and Joshua 5:10.)

8. After the last plague, how did the Egyptians view the Israelites? Read Exodus 12:33.

9. What should the following have revealed to the Israelites, and to Joshua, about God's care?

- a. The Red Sea crossing (Exodus 14)

b. The pillar of cloud by day and fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22, 14:19-20)

c. The Manna (Exodus 16:4)

### *The Soldier*

The first mention of Joshua, the Son of Nun, is found in Exodus 17:8-16.

10. According to this passage, what skills does Joshua possess?

11. How did Joshua defeat Amalek? What does this reveal about man's abilities and his success?

12. What would be necessary to obtain future victories?

13. Why might this victory need to be recounted to Joshua? (v.14)

### *The Servant*

14. Turn now to Exodus 24 and read verses 12-18. What title had been assigned to Joshua? (v.13)

15. What is a servant? Why is servanthood essential to effective leadership?

16. What did Joshua observe about God and Moses' relationship?

### *The Worshiper*

Before their departure, Moses *"came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgements"* (Exodus 24:3). The people pledged their obedience to the Lord, an altar was built, and offerings were made. After God revealed Himself to the elders and nobles, Moses and Joshua departed for the mountain of God, leaving Aaron and Hur with oversight of the people. They were gone 40 days and nights.

17. Read Exodus 32:15-25. What did Joshua learn about the fickleness of men's hearts?

18. What did he observe about the consequences of idolatry? The influence of man? The responsibilities associated with leadership?

19. Afterward, Moses removed the tabernacle from the midst of the camp and pitched it outside its boundary. Read Exodus 33:7-11. For what reason did the people visit the tabernacle?

20. Why might Joshua have chosen not to depart from the tabernacle?

21. What does his proximity reveal about his desire for the Lord?
22. Now read Numbers 11:24-30. With what was Joshua concerned? (v.28)
23. The word "zealous" in verse 29 means "to be painfully envious of another's advantage". How would the situation *and* Moses' words have humbled Joshua?
24. Per Moses, what should the leader of God's people desire for those he leads?

### *The Spies*

Joshua was one of twelve spies sent to survey the land promised to God's people. The information gathered was to help them decide *how* to enter, not *if* to enter. Upon their return, ten of twelve spies allowed their fears to dissuade the masses from believing God's promises and obeying His voice.

25. Read Numbers 14:1-10. What did Joshua and his companion believe about the land and its peoples? (See also 13:30.) Why?

How did they come to know these things?

26. Turn now to 1 Chronicles 7:20-27, Joshua's lineage. What reason did Joshua have to fear the giants more than the rest?

27. Reread Numbers 14:10. When he was in danger, what action did God take for Joshua? What would this have communicated to Joshua?
28. What did the "*little ones*" (14:31) observe in Joshua that would enable them to follow him into the land 38 years later?

### *The Successor*

29. Read Numbers 27:12-23. What role was Joshua to fill? What set him apart from his brethren? (See Numbers 32:12.)
30. Before the new generation of Israelites reached the border of the promised land, all that prevented their parents from trusting God at Kadesh Barnea was put asunder. Read Deuteronomy 3, verses 5, 11, and 13. What was conquered?
31. Continue reading: Deuteronomy 3:21-29. What assurance was Moses to provide for the rising leader?
32. Read Deuteronomy 31:1-8. What sole reason did Joshua and the people have *not* to fear?
33. Keep reading: verses 14-15, then 16-26 of Deuteronomy 31. Why would this meeting have had more significance than the public hearings?

34. What information was Joshua given regarding the people he was called to lead?
35. Even so, Joshua chose to proceed. What does this indicate about his devotion to God?
36. Read Deuteronomy 32:44-47. What final instructions were given to all of Israel? Explain their significance.
37. Read Moses' final blessing to the family of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) in Deuteronomy 33:13-17. If you were Joshua, which of Moses' words would have had the greatest impact? Why?

Finally, turn to Deuteronomy 34 and read verses 1-12.

Thirty-eight years before he stood again at the boundary of the Promised Land, Joshua sang among his brethren: *"You in Your mercy have led forth the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation. The people will hear and be afraid; sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants... the chiefs... the mighty men... trembling will take hold of them; all the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away. Fear and dread will fall on them by the greatness of Your arm they will be as still as stone, till Your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over whom You have purchased. You will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which You have made for Your own dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established"* (Exodus 15:13-17).

Joshua still believed every word. It was time to finish what Moses began.