

CROSSINGS

LIFE LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

LESSON 1

Trained by the Best

Introduction

*"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*

Hello ladies! Welcome to *Crossings*! Isn't this so exciting?! As we step into our study of God's Word, we step into new territory. We will follow Israel as the nation and individuals step into their Promised Land! I pray that through these next weeks we will be encouraged and equipped to step into our new land. We may be shaking in our boots, yet God's promises will lead us to new places where we will pitch our tents on firm, strong spiritual soil.

Crossings is the study of crossing into new territory. It is Abraham's story, Moses' story, Joshua's story, David's story, Peter's story, Paul's story – and it is your story. We are all crossing into something, out of something, over to something; **seasons of crossings are the points that dot our life journey**. We will study the man who was Moses' faithful aide and God's assigned leader to cross the Jordan and lead the people into their Promised Land – Joshua.

Day One – The Land Promised

Let's begin with an understanding of the land given to Israel. It is named Caanan, the Promised Land, Israel – actual dirt on planet Earth. The promise from God to Abraham still stands today, and although this promise to Abraham and his descendants is for actual earth, there is a spiritual sidebar for us. God has land for us – new places and new stages in our journey with Him throughout our lives. Woven into God's promise of Caanan are the lessons and insights for our own journey.

The first mention of the Promised Land is in Genesis 12. Let's backtrack slightly and catch up with Abraham in Genesis 11. Read Genesis 11: 26 – 32.

1. What was the land of Abram's (later changed to Abraham) birth and what do you know of this land?

2. Who led the initial trek from Ur?
3. Which family members were on this journey and where were they traveling?
4. Where did they stop?
5. Whether from Ur or from Haran, God spoke to Abram and called him to a new place. Read Genesis 12: 1- 9.
6. Fill in the blanks from Genesis 12: 1.
The Lord _____ to Abram, “ _____ your _____, your _____ and your _____ and go to the _____ I will _____ you.”
7. From Genesis 12: 4 what did Abram do?
8. Where was he going and who accompanied him?
9. What impresses you regarding Abram’s decisions?
10. As soon as he got into the land, who did he see (v. 6)?
11. What was the Lord’s message?

Before we leave Abraham, we will look at one more passage and review the second major covenant in the Bible. This covenant was a royal land grant made between God and Abraham and was an unconditional divine promise to fulfill the grant of the land. Read Genesis 15.

12. What was God’s part of the covenant (vs. 4-7)?
13. Were there any conditions to the covenant?
14. What did Abraham do?
15. How was the covenant ratified?
The remainder of Genesis tracks the patriarchal families and ends with Jacob and all twelve sons living in Egypt to survive a terrible famine. Fast forward to Exodus where God brings Moses to the scene. Read Exodus 3: 1 – 10.

16. Fill in the blanks from Exodus 3: 8.

So I have come down to _____ them from the hand of the _____ and to bring them out of that _____ into a _____ and _____, a land flowing with _____ and _____ - the home of the _____ ...

Lastly, read Exodus 6: 2 – 8.

17. To whom had God previously appeared and established His covenant?

18. What seven “I will” statements (vs. 6-8) did God make?

19. Fill in the blanks from Exodus 6: 8.

And I will bring you to the _____ I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. _____ will give it to _____ as a _____. I _____ the _____.

20. From this brief review, what are your impressions of the importance of the land?

Day Two – Joshua: Pictures from his Past

Today we begin to get to know Joshua. In the next six weeks we are going to gain a trusted new friend and mentor. Joshua has been said to be one of the world’s greatest leaders and military strategists, but the man is almost tucked away into obscurity. If the sixth book of the Bible did not bear his name, we might miss this man of great character and devotion to God.

The first biblical mention of Joshua is in Exodus 17: 9. Read Exodus 17: 9-15.

1. Where were the Israelites camped?
2. To whom did Moses entrust the battle orders?
3. Explain in your own words how the one-day battle went.
4. Who won?
5. Fill in the blanks from Exodus 17: 14.

Then the _____ said to _____, "Write on a _____ as something to be _____ and make sure that _____ hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

6. We can be sure that Moses relayed the message to Joshua. What do you think spoke to Joshua personally through God's message?

I love it when God makes sure we hear something. As I write this on the heels of Easter, I believe you might enjoy reading about another time God made sure someone heard... Read Mark 16: 1 – 8 and Luke 24: 9 – 12.

7. Who delivered God's message and who did God specifically make sure heard it?

8. What was the message?

9. Why was this message so important to this specific hearer?

10. Is there anything recently that God has made sure you heard?

Day Three – Joshua: In Moses' Shadow

Camped at the base of Mount Sinai, God again confirmed his covenant to Moses. Moses, Aaron, Aaron's two sons and seventy elders were invited by God to share a covenant meal on the mountain. They did not see God in His Supreme Glory, however they did see a glorifying likeness of God through a clear pavement of crystal blue sapphire. It must have been exquisite! Read Exodus 24: 12 – 18.

1. Where did God want Moses to go?

2. Who did Moses take with him?

3. What was Joshua's title?

4. Don't miss verse 14 – Moses speaking to the elders says, "Wait here for _____ until _____ come back to you."

5. To whom was Moses referring?

6. On the seventh day God called to Moses to enter the cloud of Glory. How long was Moses inside the cloud of God's Glory?

7. Where do you think Joshua was?

8. What was God telling Moses all this time (flip through Exodus 25 – 31)?

Read Exodus 32: 7-8, 15-20.

9. Where do you think Moses met up with Joshua?

10. What precious cargo was Moses carrying?

11. What do you think they might have talked about on the way back to camp?

12. As they approached camp, what did Joshua think all the commotion was about?

13. What was actually going on back at camp?

One more look at Joshua. Read Exodus 33: 7 – 11.

14. When Moses returned to camp from the Tent of Meeting, what did Joshua do?

15. Think back on the snapshots we've seen of Joshua. From his youth Joshua was Moses' trusted aide. He became Moses' skilled army sergeant. Why do you think Joshua would want to stay at the Tent of Meeting?

Finishing up for today, think back over how God placed Joshua next to Moses for most of his life.

16. Name the ones God has placed you beside, for most of your life or even for a season, who have imparted lessons of spiritual impact.

17. Take it one step further and identify a few of your personal traits, skills, or attributes that flow directly from the influence of a 'Moses' in your life.

I'll get you started...

My personal attribute
a deeper prayer life

has been influenced by

a 'Moses' in my life
my mother in law, Bee

Day Four – Joshua: Reconnaissance Mission

Today we will study the well-known mission to explore the land of Caanan. The full account is in Numbers 13 – 14 but further information is in Deuteronomy. Read Numbers 13: 1 – 20 and Deuteronomy 1: 19 – 23.

1. Who ordered the mission and what were the instructions?

2. Who was Joshua's father and what was his family name?

We will see throughout Joshua's life that he learned well this lesson: Do Your Homework. Strong leaders have the tenacity and skill to get the facts before making a decision.

3. What is your current decision that requires a little homework?

Read Numbers 13: 21 – 29 and Deuteronomy 1: 26 – 28.

4. How long was their mission?

5. What were their findings from the land of Caanan?

6. Fill in the blanks from Numbers 13: 28.

_____ the people who live there are _____ and the cities are _____ and very large. We even saw _____ of _____ there.

Anak sired a race of legendary giants and the Anakites were certainly a force to be reckoned with. Yet, God had clearly given Israel the land and told them to go. What to do? The dilemma is between what God says and how things appear. In spite of the fertile earth and abundant produce, their initial report reflected their own fear, not trust in God.

Read on through Numbers 13: 30 – 14: 9; Numbers 14: 26 - 35 and Deuteronomy 1: 29 – 40.

7. How did the ten Israelite spies view themselves?

8. What two men disagreed?
9. What verses mention Joshua?
10. What was Moses' reaction?
11. What was God's decision?

12. Fill in the blanks from Deuteronomy 1: 40.

_____ as for you, _____ and set out toward the _____ along the route to the Red Sea.

All land gained was lost.

Day Five – On the Shores of the Jordan

The Israelites have lived and died through forty years of wandering in a vast desert and going nowhere. Now the forty year period was coming to a close. As we wrap up this week, let's begin with an unusual exercise – please read the first sentence of these three chapters: Deuteronomy 7, 19, and 26.

1. What is the first word of each chapter?

Are we getting the message? Would you believe that the word 'when' is used 97 times in the Book of Deuteronomy! Did you notice that God emphasizes 'the land you are entering to possess' and 'the land the Lord is giving you'?

2. How often do you think the Israelites abandoned hope of ever getting to the Promised Land?

3. What causes you to give up hope of ever reaching the place God has for you?

Are you pretty low on hope right this minute? Don't despair! *Crossings* is especially for you. God may have said 'when' the 98th time and is ready for you to cross over into new territory.

Now read Numbers 27: 12 – 23 and Deuteronomy 3: 21 – 29.

4. What did God make sure Moses realized?

5. What did Moses and Aaron do to lose the privilege of entering the Promised Land?

6. What were Moses' requirements for the man who would be his successor?

7. What were Joshua's qualifications to inherit such a position?

Make no mistake, the Israelites are going to enter the land. Moses would not be the one to lead them in (that particular story is saved on the blog). God ordained Joshua to be their leader. Moses knew it and Joshua knew it, and the people needed to know it. Their allegiance needed to transfer from Moses to Joshua, so God plans Joshua's commissioning.

Read Deuteronomy 31: 1 – 23.

8. Write down the various Names of God used in this passage. My favorite is in verse 8.

9. Write the verse number each time these words are mentioned:

cross or crossing -

possess or possession –

Joshua –

10. From verse 23, what was God's specific command to Joshua?

God commands Moses to write a song, teach it to the Israelites and sing it. The song (Deuteronomy 32) is to be a witness of God's faithfulness to His Word.

Read Deuteronomy 32: 44 – 47.

11. What were the recited words to be?

12. Make careful note of the end of verse 47. What did Moses make very clear they were going to do?

return by previous route

live long in the land

cross the Jordan

possess the land

All week we have been studying Moses' writings, so we might as well finish out the book! Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, Genesis through Deuteronomy, call the Pentateuch. Yet, it is believed that Moses' writing ended with Deuteronomy 34: 9 and years later Joshua penned the final three verses. Read the last chapter Moses wrote: Deuteronomy 34.

13. How does Moses describe himself?

14. How old was he?

15. What can you discern regarding his strength, his eyesight, his general health?

16. What do you think he saw when God allowed him to view the Promised Land?

17. Who buried Moses?

18. What do you think Joshua was doing?

19. Through this week's study we have concisely reviewed Isreal's history. We have been introduced to Joshua and watched him walk beside Moses most of his life. He has learned much from his mentor. What do you think was the single greatest lesson Joshua learned from Moses' side?

Perhaps it is Joshua's devotion to God. Maybe it is his incredible leadership skills. Possibly his stand on God's Word. We're just beginning to know the man who God trusted with promise fulfillment.

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