

Yahweh's Charge to Joshua (c. 1 Nisan [March/April] 1406 BC)

Joshua 1:1–9

1 After the death of Moses the servant of Yahweh, Yahweh said to Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses, saying,
 2 “My servant Moses *is* dead. Get up and cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I *am* giving to them, to the Israelites.
 3 Every place that the soles of your feet will tread, I have given it to you, as I promised to Moses.
 4 From the wilderness and the Lebanon, up to the great river, the river Euphrates, all of the land of the Hittites, and up to the great sea in the west, will be your territory.
 5 No one will stand before you all the days of your life. *Just* as I was with Moses, *so* will I be with you; I will not fail you, and I will not forsake you. [[Heb 13:5](#)]
 6 Be strong and courageous, for you will give the people this land as an inheritance that I swore to their ancestors to give them.
 7 Only be strong and very courageous to observe diligently the whole law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn aside from it, *to* the right or left, so that you may succeed wherever you go.
 8 The scroll of this law will not depart from your mouth; you will meditate on it day and night so that you may observe diligently all that is written in it. For then you will succeed *in* your ways and prosper.
 9 Did I not command you? Be strong and courageous! Do not fear or be dismayed, for Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go.”

Joshua Sends Two Spies to Jericho (4–9 Nisan [March/April] 1406 BC)

Joshua 1:10–3:5

Day 1—Joshua Gives Instructions to Prepare to Cross the Jordan (4 Nisan)

1:10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,
 11 “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people: ‘Prepare your provisions; in three days you *are to* cross the Jordan to go possess the land that Yahweh your God *is* giving you to possess.’”
 12 To the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said,
 13 “Remember the word that Moses Yahweh’s servant commanded you, saying, ‘Yahweh your God *is* giving rest to you, and he is giving you this land.’
 14 Your wives, your little children, and your livestock, they will remain in the land that Moses gave to you beyond the Jordan. All of the best fighting men will cross armed in front of your families; they will help you
 15 until Yahweh gives rest to your families as well as to you. They will take possession of the land that Yahweh your God *is* giving to them. Then you will return to your own land and take possession of it, *the land* that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you beyond the Jordan to the east.”
 16 And they answered Joshua, saying, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you will send us we will go.
 17 Just as we obeyed Moses, so will we obey you. Only may Yahweh your God be with you, as he was with Moses.
 18 Whoever rebels against your orders and does not obey your words according to what you commanded us will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”

Day 1—Joshua Sends Two Spies to Jericho (4 Nisan)

2:1 Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two men from Acacia Grove *as* spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” So they went, and entered the house of a prostitute whose name *was* Rahab, and spent the night there.
 2 The king of Jericho was told, “Look, *some* men from the Israelites have come here tonight to search out the land.”
 3 And the king of Jericho sent *for* Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who came to you, the ones who have entered your house, for they have come to search out the whole land.”
 4 But the woman took the two men and hid them. And she said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they *were* from.
 5 And when *it was time* to shut the gate for the night, the men left, and I do not know where they went. Chase after them quickly, for you may catch up *to* them.”
 6 (But she had taken them to the roof and had hidden them in the stalks of flax that she had spread out on the roof.)
 7 So the men chased after them on the way to the Jordan at the fords; and they shut the gate behind the pursuers that had gone out after them.
 8 Before they went to sleep, she came up to them on the roof
 9 and said to the men, “I know that Yahweh has given you the land, and that dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away *in fear* because of your presence.
 10 For we have heard how Yahweh dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when you went out from Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that *were* beyond the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.
 11 We heard *this*, and our hearts melted, and no courage was left in anyone because of your presence. For Yahweh your God *is* God in the heavens above and on the earth below.

12 So then please swear to me by Yahweh, because I have shown loyalty to you, and you will also show loyalty to my family. You must give me a sign of good faith,
 13 and you will spare my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all that belongs to them; you will deliver our lives from death.”
 14 And the men said to her, “Our lives for yours. If you do not report this business of ours, we will show you loyalty and faithfulness when Yahweh gives us the land.”
 15 Then she lowered them with a rope through the window, as her house *was* on the outer side of the wall, and she *was* residing in the wall.
 16 And she said to them, “Go to the mountain, so that the pursuers will not find you, and hide yourselves there three days until the pursuers return, and afterward you may go on your way.”
 17 The men said to her, “We *will be* released from this oath of yours that you made us swear.
 18 *When* we come to the land, you must tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you must gather your father and mother, and your brothers, and your whole family to your house.
 19 If anyone goes outside the doors of your house, they will be responsible for their own death, and we *will be* innocent. Anyone who will be with you in the house, we will be responsible for their death if a hand is laid on them.
 20 But if you report this business of ours, we will be released from your oath that you made us swear.”
 21 And she said, “According to your word it *will be*.” Then she sent them away, and they went, and she tied the scarlet cord in the window. [[James 2:25](#)]
 22a They departed and came to the mountain,

Day 2—Hiding in the Hills (5 Nisan)

22b and they stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers searched all along the way but did not find *them*.

Day 3—The Spies Return (6 Nisan)

23 The two men returned and went down from the mountain, and they crossed *over* and came to Joshua son of Nun, and they told him everything that happened to them.
 24 They said to Joshua, “Surely Yahweh has given all the land into our hand; also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away *in fear* because of our presence.”

Day 4—Journey to the Jordan River (7 Nisan)

3:1a Joshua rose early in the morning, and they set out from Acacia Grove. And they came up to the Jordan, he and all the Israelites,

Day 5—Beside the Jordan (8 Nisan)

1b and they spent the night there before they crossed *over*.

Day 6—Preparations for the Crossing (9 Nisan)

2 At the end of the three days the officers passed through the midst of the camp,
 3 and they commanded the people: “When you see the Levitical priests carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God you must set out from your place and go after it.
 4 *But* there will be a distance between you and it of about two thousand cubits in measurement. Do not come near it, so that you may know the way that you must go, for you have not passed on *this* way before.”
 5 And Joshua said to the people, “Sanctify yourselves, because tomorrow Yahweh will do wonders in your midst.”

Crossing the Jordan (10 Nisan [April] 1406 BC)

Joshua 3:6–4:24

Day 7—Crossing the Jordan (10 Nisan)

3:6 And Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and cross *over* ahead of the people.” And they took up the ark of the covenant and went ahead of the people.
 7 Then Yahweh said to Joshua, “This day I will begin exalting you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that I was with Moses, and I will be with you.
 8 You will command the priests carrying the ark of the covenant, saying, ‘At the moment that you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you will stand *still* in the Jordan.’”
 9 And Joshua said to the Israelites, “Come here, and hear the words of Yahweh your God.”
 10 Joshua said, “By this you will know that *the* living God *is* in your midst, and he will certainly drive out the Canaanites from before you, and the Hittites, Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites.
 11 Look! The ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth *is about to cross over* ahead of you into the Jordan.
 12 So then, take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe.

13 When the soles of the feet of the priests carrying the ark of Yahweh, Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off upstream, and they will stand *still in* one heap.

14 And it happened, when the people set out from their tents to cross *over* the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant were ahead of the people.

15 When those carrying the ark came up to the Jordan, and the priests carrying the ark dipped their feet in the edge of the water (the Jordan was flowing over its banks during all the days of harvest),

16 the waters flowing down from above stood *still*; they stood up *in* one heap very far from Adam, the city that *is* beside Zarethan, while *the waters* flowing down to the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off; and the people crossed *over* opposite Jericho.

17 And the priests carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh stood firmly on the dry land in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation finished crossing the Jordan.

Memorial Commemorating the Crossing

4:1 After all the nation finished crossing the Jordan, Yahweh said to Joshua,

2 "Take twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe,

3 and command them, saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan where the priests' feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you, and set them up in the place where you will camp tonight.'"

4 So Joshua summoned the twelve men whom he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe.

5 And Joshua said to them, "Cross *over* before the ark of Yahweh your God to the middle of the Jordan, and each one of you lift up a stone on your shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites,

6 so that this may be a reminder among you. When your children ask in the future, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?'

7 you will say to them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off from before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones will be as a memorial for the Israelites for eternity."

8 Thus the Israelites did as Joshua commanded. They took twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan as Yahweh told Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, and they carried them over with them to the camp, and they put them there.

9 Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests carrying the ark of the covenant *stood*, and they are there to this day.

10 The priests carrying the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything that Yahweh commanded Joshua to tell the people was finished, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua. And the people hastily crossed *over*.

11 And it happened, when all the people had finished crossing, the ark of Yahweh and the priests crossed *over* in front of the people.

Eastern Tribes Keep Their Word

12 The children of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed *over* armed before the Israelites, as Moses told them.

13 About forty thousand armed for fighting crossed *over* before the presence of Yahweh to the plains of Jericho for battle.

14 On that day Yahweh exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they respected him as they respected Moses all the days of his life.

15 Then Yahweh said to Joshua, saying,

16 "Command the priests carrying the ark of the testimony to come up from the Jordan."

17 So Joshua commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan."

18 And it happened that when the priests carrying the ark came up from the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet touched dry land, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and flowed over all its banks as before.

First Camp at Gilgal

19 And the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the eastern edge of Jericho.

20 And those twelve stones that they took from the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.

21 And he said to the Israelites, "When your children ask in the future their parents, 'What is the meaning of these stones?'

22 you will let your children know *by* saying, 'Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.'

23 For Yahweh your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you, until you had crossed, just as Yahweh your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up before us until we had crossed over,

24 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of Yahweh *is* strong, so that you may fear Yahweh your God forever."

Circumcision of the New Generation (April 1406 BC)

Joshua 5:1-12

Fear Grips the Enemy Nations

1 And it happened, when all the kings of the Amorites who *were* beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who *were* by the sea heard that Yahweh dried up the waters of the Jordan in front of the Israelites until they crossed *over*, their

hearts melted, and there was no courage left in them because of the presence of the Israelites.

The New Generation Circumcised

2 At that time Yahweh said to Joshua, “Make for yourself knives of flint, and circumcise the Israelites a second time.”

3 So Joshua made knives of flint, and he circumcised the Israelites at the hill of the foreskins.

4 This *is* the reason why Joshua circumcised all the people: all the males who went out from Egypt, all the warriors, died in the wilderness as they went out from Egypt on the journey.

5 For all the people who left were circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness on the journey *after* they left from Egypt were not circumcised.

6 For forty years the Israelites traveled in the wilderness until all the nation, the warriors that left Egypt, perished, because they did not listen to the voice of Yahweh. To them Yahweh swore that they would not see the land that he swore to their ancestors to give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

7 And it was their children *whom* he raised in their place that Joshua circumcised, for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the journey.

8 And it happened, when all the nation had finished circumcising, they remained where they were in the camp until they recovered.

9 And Yahweh said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the disgrace of Egypt from you.” Therefore, the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

First Passover in Canaan (14 Nisan)

10 And the Israelites camped at Gilgal, and they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, on the plains of Jericho.

11 On the next day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate from the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and roasted corn.

12 And the manna ceased the day after, when they *started* eating the produce of the land, and there was no longer manna for the Israelites. They ate from the crop of the land of Canaan in that year.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The chronological headings in today’s reading follow the arrangement suggested by David M. Howard in his article, “‘Three Days’ in Joshua 1–3: Resolving a Chronological Conundrum,” *JETS* 41/4 (Dec 1998), 539–550.