

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

Joshua 1:1–9

1 Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying,
 2 "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel.
 3 Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses.
 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory.
 5 No man will *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. [\[Heb 13:5\]](#)
 6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.
 7 Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go.
 8 This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.
 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD 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, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, to possess it.'"
 12 To the Reubenites and to the Gadites and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said,
 13 "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God gives you rest and will give you this land.'
 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle shall remain in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but you shall cross before your brothers in battle array, all your valiant warriors, and shall help them,
 15 until the LORD gives your brothers rest, as *He gives* you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to your own land, and possess that which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise."
 16 They answered Joshua, saying, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.
 17 Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you; only may the LORD your God be with you as He was with Moses.
 18 Anyone who rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death; only be strong and courageous."

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

2:1 Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there.
 2 It was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land."
 3 And the king of Jericho sent *word* to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land."
 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.
 5 It came about when *it was time* to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them."
 6 But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof.
 7 So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate.
 8 Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof,
 9 and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you.
 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.
 11 When we heard *it*, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He

is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

12 Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth,

13 and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death."

14 So the men said to her, "Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."

15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall.

16 She said to them, "Go to the hill country, so that the pursuers will not happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way."

17 The men said to her, "We *shall be* free from this oath to you which you have made us swear,

18 unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father's household.

19 It shall come about that anyone who goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *shall be* free; but anyone who is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is *laid* on him.

20 But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear."

21 She said, "According to your words, so be it." So she sent them away, and they departed; and she tied the scarlet cord in the window. [[James 2:25](#)]

22a They departed and came to the hill country,

Day 2—Hiding in the Hills (5 Nisan)

22b and remained there for three days until the pursuers returned. Now the pursuers had sought *them* all along the road, but had not found *them*.

Day 3—The Spies Return (6 Nisan)

23 Then the two men returned and came down from the hill country and crossed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they related to him all that had happened to them.

24 They said to Joshua, "Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover, all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us."

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

3:1a Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and he and all the sons of Israel set out from Shittim and came to the Jordan,

Day 5—Beside the Jordan (8 Nisan)

1b and they lodged there before they crossed.

Day 6—Preparations for the Crossing (9 Nisan)

2 At the end of three days the officers went through the midst of the camp;

3 and they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God with the Levitical priests carrying it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.

4 However, there shall be between you and it a distance of about 2,000 cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you shall go, for you have not passed this way before."

5 Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

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

Joshua 3:6–4:24

Day 7—Crossing the Jordan (10 Nisan)

3:6 And Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over ahead of the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went ahead of the people.

7 Now the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you.

8 You shall, moreover, command the priests who are carrying the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand *still* in the Jordan.'"

9 Then Joshua said to the sons of Israel, "Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God."

10 Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Gergashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over ahead of you into the Jordan.

12 Now then, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe.

13 It shall come about when the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off, *and* the waters which are flowing down from above will stand in one heap.”

14 So when the people set out from their tents to cross the Jordan with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people,

15 and when those who carried the ark came into the Jordan, and the feet of the priests carrying the ark were dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest),

16 the waters which were flowing down from above stood *and* rose up in one heap, a great distance away at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those which were flowing down toward the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. So the people crossed opposite Jericho.

17 And 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 crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan.

Memorial Commemorating the Crossing

4:1 Now when all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying,

2 “Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe,

3 and command them, saying, ‘Take up for yourselves twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you and lay them down in the lodging place where you will lodge tonight.’”

4 So Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel, one man from each tribe;

5 and Joshua said to them, “Cross again to the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel.

6 Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, ‘What do these stones mean to you?’

7 then you shall say to them, ‘Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.’ So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever.”

8 Thus the sons of Israel did as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, just as the LORD spoke to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel; and they carried them over with them to the lodging place and put them down there.

9 Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan at the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant were standing, and they are there to this day.

10 For the priests who carried the ark were standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything was completed that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. And the people hurried and crossed;

11 and when all the people had finished crossing, the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed before the people.

Eastern Tribes Keep Their Word

12 The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over in battle array before the sons of Israel, just as Moses had spoken to them;

13 about 40,000 equipped for war, crossed for battle before the LORD to the desert plains of Jericho.

14 On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; so that they revered him, just as they had revered Moses all the days of his life.

15 Now the LORD said to Joshua,

16 “Command the priests who carry the ark of the testimony that they come up from the Jordan.”

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

18 It came about when the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come up from the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up to the dry ground, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place, and went over all its banks as before.

First Camp at Gilgal

19 Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth of the first month and camped at Gilgal on the eastern edge of Jericho.

20 Those twelve stones which they had taken from the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal.

21 He said to the sons of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What are these stones?’

22 then you shall inform your children, saying, ‘Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.’

23 For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed, just as the LORD your God had done to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed;

24 that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, so that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”

Circumcision of the New Generation (April 1406 BC)

Joshua 5:1–12

Fear Grips the Enemy Nations

1 Now it came about 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 how the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the sons of Israel until they had crossed, that their hearts melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the sons of Israel.

The New Generation Circumcised

2 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make for yourself flint knives and circumcise again the sons of Israel the second time.”

3 So Joshua made himself flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.

4 This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, died in the wilderness along the way after they came out of Egypt.

5 For all the people who came out were circumcised, but all the people who were born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

6 For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, *that is*, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished because they did not listen to the voice of the LORD, to whom the LORD had sworn that He would not let them see the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

7 Their children whom He raised up in their place, Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them along the way.

8 Now when they had finished circumcising all the nation, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed.

9 Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” So the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

First Passover in Canaan (14 Nisan)

10 While the sons of Israel camped at Gilgal they observed the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the desert plains of Jericho.

11 On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched *grain*.

12 The manna ceased on the day after they had eaten some of the produce of the land, so that the sons of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan during 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.