

## August 5

**Scriptures:** Joshua 1 & 2

**Key Verse:** “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it... then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)

### Overview

“After the death of Moses... the Lord spoke to Joshua” (1:1). Indeed, even though great men of God die, God’s work never dies. The Lord always raises up another to carry on His ministry, for He never leaves Himself without a witness. Enough mourning (Deuteronomy 34:8), it was now time for Israel to move on in obedience to God.

Joshua had been Moses’ assistant in both spiritual and military leadership for many years, but now that Moses was gone, the Lord assured him: “as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you” (1:5). These words would give Joshua strength to fulfill his divine commission to arise, go forth, and take the land of Canaan. God also strongly encouraged him three times with the words: “be strong and of good courage” (1:6, 7, 9). This strength according to all the law” (1:7) and constantly keep it in mind. This would be the way to success in every area of his life, not only on the battlefield (1:8).

Charged by God, Joshua immediately started to organize and prepare for conquest. Firstly, he reminded the tribes of Reuben, God, and half Manasseh (remaining in the land east of the Jordan, Numbers 32:20-22, 33) of their obligatory oath to cross over and help the other tribes in battle until they were peacefully settled. These three tribes enthusiastically agreed and pledged allegiance to Joshua, just as they had to Moses, thus providing both the military and spiritual morale necessary for all Israel.

Next, Joshua sent out the two spies on an intelligence-gathering mission. Of course God would be with Israel and fight for them, but they first had to do their part and be a well-prepared and organized army. The spies were probably sent to find out how the army could best cross the Jordan (since it was the time of flooding, 3:15; 1 Chron.12:15) and how they could best overtake the city of Jericho, as well as discover the inhabitants’ state of mind.

The spies headed for Jericho, an oasis about eight kilometers west of the Jordan River. It is natural for one to question why they would go to the home of Rahab, the harlot. There is no indication of any immorality on their part. Rahab also have run a cafe or an inn where strangers in town would be less likely noticed; in such a public place the spies might easily find out the information they were seeking.

In that pagan culture, her occupation was not considered wrong or immoral. In fact, their heathen religion even had temple prostitutes! Yet in her conversation, Rahab showed evidence of a Israel. This led to her salvation, both physically and later spiritually, for she became a believer and a servant of the God of Israel. Her life illustrates the grace and forgiving mercy of God. Indeed, God can change even the vilest of sinners. Rahab was mentioned as a heroine of faith (heb.11:31)

and praised for her good works (James 2:25). She is one of the three women whose name are listed in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt.1:5).

After giving Rahab a vow of protection and the scarlet cord that would identify and save her household, the spies escaped from her window that was a part of the city wall (excavations of the ancient city at Jericho have proved that homes built in such a way actually existed). Following her good advice, the spies set out to hide for three days in the cliffs that are about one kilometer west of Jericho—the opposite direction of their camp, but a wise move, for the king's soldiers were probably looking for them east of the city. When it was safe, they returned with an encouraging report, telling Joshua about Rahab's words concerning the fear Israel had brought upon the Canaanites. The people of God were now ready to obey God and conquer.

### **Prayer**

Lord, we thank You for leading us into this two-year journey through Your Word. We, like Joshua, are discovering the Promised Land of Your special written revelation. Please keep me faithful in meditating in Your Word day and night, observing to do according to all that is written in it, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.