

The New Inductive Study Series

CHOOSING VICTORY, OVERCOMING DEFEAT

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Joshua and Judges, and Ruth

How absolutely awesome it is, my friend, to know that you and I can actually choose victory. The children of the world, who are by nature sons of disobedience, do not have that option—unless of course they repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

But because we are the children of God, victory is always ours for the obedience of faith. And that is what Joshua, Judges, and Ruth is all about—choosing victory and not defeat by hearing and obeying the Word of God. Victory is faith's guarantee. No matter what comes your way, no matter what you face, you can be more than a conqueror through Him who loves you!

Choosing Victory, Overcoming Defeat is a study that will take you back to the Old Testament, which was “written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Romans 15:4). And hope you will have, if you will give yourself to this study and do it as unto the Lord!

As you interact with the Word of God day in and day out over these next weeks, you are going to find yourself face to face with history—and with the God of history. It has been said that history is “His Story.” How true! It is the account of God's dealing with and ordering the affairs of man. However, it is also the account of what happens when man chooses to believe and obey God and what happens when he doesn't. How does God respond in the face of man's disobedience? Is

there a way for man to turn around? And what if he doesn't? Does it only affect him? Can the disobedience of one man affect a family, a society, a nation?

As you study, gathering the holy manna by which man is sustained, you will find the answers to these questions and more. And you will discover for yourself how to choose victory rather than defeat!

Week 1

How Can You Be Strong and Courageous?

As you know from reading "How to Get Started," it is helpful to make a bookmark for any book of the Bible you are studying so that you can write down and remember all the key words you plan to mark in that book.

Remember that not all key words appear throughout the entire book. Some are specific to a particular chapter or section. In the book of Joshua, you will mark some words throughout the book, but with each section of the book you will add some words to your bookmark that are specific to that section. You will be given the key words for each section as you work so you can add them to your bookmark!

DAY ONE

The book of Joshua can be divided into four sections: chapters 1-5, 6-12, 13-21, and 22-24. The first section can be called "Preparing to Enter the Land." As we begin our study on this book, list the following key words on your bookmark and begin to mark them as they appear: *God, Lord, Joshua, land, strong, courageous, firm, command (commanded) covenant, possess (possession) ark of the Lord (ark of the covenant), and Israel.*

Remember to mark any pronouns or synonyms that refer to each of these words. Don't forget to underline in a special color every geographical reference. If you can't locate a city or region, it is because the exact location is unknown. As you come to any location references, look them up on the map on page 20. Watch for what you can learn about the Lord as you work through the book too! Noting how the Lord is described and what you learn about Him throughout the book of Joshua and as you study other books of the Bible will teach you much about your God! If you begin a list on what you learn about Him, be sure to leave adequate room to allow you to add to it throughout your study. To know Him is to love and trust Him. Daniel 11:32b says that the people who "know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (KJV).

Now read Joshua 1 and mark any of the key words listed on your bookmark. As you read, carefully observe who is speaking, to whom they are speaking, and what is being said. Always interrogate the text with the 5 W's and an H: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Asking these questions will give you much insight, and you will find that you can handle the Word of God with greater integrity because those questions make you stay close to what the text of Scripture says and helps keep you from interpreting the text incorrectly. When you finish reading

and marking Joshua 1, list in your notebook God's commands and promises to Joshua. You should leave several pages open so that you can add what you learn about Joshua as you continue to study!

Record the theme of this first chapter on the JOSHUA AT A GLANCE chart (page 44).

DAY TWO

It will be profitable for you to stop at this point and do a little background reading on Joshua. You will come to appreciate how Joshua came to the position he has in Joshua 1.

Read Exodus 17:8-13; 24:12,13; 32:17. (Note that Joshua was not in the camp with the people who sinned; he was at the mountain waiting for Moses to come down.) Read Numbers 13:1-16,25; 14:10,26-38; Deuteronomy 32:44; 34:1-12. Watch for every reference to Joshua, and mark these if you like. You may want to note these verses from Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy which shed more light on Joshua as cross-references in the margin of your Bible beside Joshua 1:1. Cross-referencing helps when you can't remember the location of a passage that sheds light on or correlates with the one you are studying. Cross-referencing is also very helpful when you do not have your study notes with you because your notes are right in your Bible! So, to help you later, write these cross-references in the margin of your Bible close to the appropriate text in Joshua.

Add to the list on Joshua you began yesterday in your notebook the basic facts you learn about him from these cross-references. Think about the kind of man that God chose to replace Moses. Could God have chosen you?

DAY THREE

Read Joshua 2. Once again mark any of the key words you see. However, since Rahab becomes a major character in this chapter, also mark in a special way every reference to *Rahab* and any pronouns that refer to her. Also mark the word *heard* in this chapter and then observe what was heard, by whom, and the effect it brought. (You don't need to add either reference to your bookmark.)

In your notebook, list all you learn from this chapter about Rahab and also add to your list on Joshua.

Record the theme of chapter 2 on your JOSHUA AT A GLANCE chart (page 44).

DAY FOUR

Read Joshua 3 and 4. Again mark the key words. Be sure you mark geographical locations in this chapter. Remember, all of these events take place around the Jordan River. When you go to the map on page 20 to locate these areas, find the Jordan River on your map and go from there.

Carefully observe what God does in these chapters and why He does it. Marking every reference to *Joshua* (and any pronouns referring to him) and listing what you learn in your notebook will help you see what God does!

Be sure not to miss how the Lord is described in this chapter! Add any insights to the list you began. If you haven't started it, be sure to begin one today.

If you have room in the margin of your Bible, next to Joshua 4:19, you might want to write the date and what happens on that date. There's a Jewish calendar on page 21. Note the Babylonian name for the first month and write it, along with the day, in the margin of your Bible next to 4:19.

List in your notebook any new insights on Joshua that you glean from these chapters. Also record the theme of Joshua 3 and 4 on the JOSHUA AT A GLANCE chart (page 44).

DAY FIVE

Read Joshua 5 and mark any key words listed on your bookmark. Also mark the word *circumcised* (*circumcise*, *circumcising*). I mark it this way **circumcised**. (Sometimes it helps to know how someone else marks a word since there are just so many colors and symbols you can use, so I share them to be helpful!)

It would be good to note in the margin of your Bible what happens in verses 10, 11, and 12 of chapter 5. Also mark when these things take place.

Give special attention to Joshua 5:13-15.

DAY SIX

Today you will begin a new section in Joshua. This second section can be called "The Conquest of the Land" and encompasses Joshua 6-12. Continue to mark the same key words, if they appear, that you marked in the first section, but now add these key words to your bookmark: *fear*, *fight* (*fought*, and *captured*). Mark key words as they appear in the text, and remember to mark any pronouns or synonyms which refer to these words.

Read Joshua 6. When you mark the key words, also look for the phrase *under the ban* and mark it in a distinctive way. (I just underline it several times in black.) You'll also want to mark every reference to *Rahab* as well as any pronouns or synonyms which refer to her. Mark these as you did in Joshua 2.

In this chapter observe where the ark of the covenant (ark of the Lord) is placed in the Israelites' lineup as they march around Jericho. Watch and mark time phrases in a distinctive way. You may want to put a clock like this: over the phrase and/or in the margin.

When you finish marking every reference to Rahab and observing what you learn from the text about her, read Matthew 1:5 and rejoice in the awesome grace of God.

Note the curse that is put on anyone who would try to rebuild Jericho. Although there is a modern city called Jericho, the ancient city was never rebuilt.

Make sure you have recorded the themes of chapters 5 and 6 on the JOSHUA AT A GLANCE chart (page 44).

Don't forget to add any new insights on Joshua and Rahab to your lists.

DAY SEVEN

Store in your heart: Joshua 1:7,8 (or 1:7-9). Read and discuss: Joshua 1:1-9; 2:8-14; 6:6-16.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

- What are God's commandments and promises for Joshua and the people?
 - a. What is Joshua told to do in respect to the Word of God?
 - b. What do you think it means to be "strong and courageous"?
 - c. What did you learn about Joshua from your study this week? What about Joshua caused God to put him in the position of being a leader of Israel? Was he a proven or unproven man?
 - d. At this point, what do you learn about Joshua that you can apply to your own life?
- How does God validate Joshua's leadership before the people? In what way does this action show that as God was with Moses, He was also with Joshua?
- What are the children of Israel told to do before they crossed over the Jordan and before they go against Jericho?
- What events take place at Gilgal? What is the significance of these events?
- What do you learn from Rahab about the reputation of the Israelites?
- e. How do you think this attitude affected the inhabitants of Jericho when they saw the Israelites marching around Jericho?
- f. What kind of a reputation does Rahab have? Yet, what does God do with Rahab and why?
 - What do you think the children of Israel learned about God from the battle of Jericho? What did you learn about God from Joshua 1-6?

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

When God says something, He stands by His Word to perform it. The promises of God are "yea" and "Amen" (2 Corinthians 1:20 KJV). In Genesis 15, God told Abram (Abraham) that his descendants, the Israelites, would be strangers in Egypt, enslaved and oppressed for 400 years. He further told him that in the fourth generation they would return to the land God had promised to him and his descendants forever. However, because the iniquity of the Amorites (the people who lived in Canaan) was not yet complete (Genesis 15:1-16), this promise would not be

fulfilled for 400 years! Now the 400 years were complete, and God was about to fulfill His Word.

You and I can always trust God! What God says will come to pass, but only in His time and in His way. Your responsibility is to know His Word! You are not to simply hear it and then “let it depart out of your mouth.” Rather, you are to meditate on it day and night, and do all that He commands you. What God commands, at times, may not be the way you would accomplish something. After all, who would attack a city by marching around it six times, expecting the walls to come down after the seventh time around by blowing trumpets and shouting?

Your place is not to question God, nor doubt Him—but to obey Him. When you obey the Word of God, no matter how things look or seem, you are being strong and courageous.

You become strong and courageous when you meditate on God’s Word. Knowing the Word will help you to not turn to the right or to the left. Instead, you will walk in God’s straight and narrow path, and then you will have success and prosper in God’s way. We will possess what God has ordained for us. Who could want anything more!

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