STUDY ON Life of Joshua: God's Faithfulness Revisited (Joshua 3:1-5:12)

Journey Together 2025 Weekly Sermon Series

Follow up from last week's homework: Did you manage to do last week's task to revisit and track back at old journal entries or reflections? What about old photos of yourself? What were you like? What reflections are worth mentioning to the group today about them?
Warming Up: Show the group photos of you from 10 years ago and 5 years ago. What were you doing then? What were you like?

Aims & Objectives of today's session:
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Fundamental Truths

1. Read Joshua 3. Explain what you know about the following words mentioned in this chapter: Ark, 12 Tribes, Exalt, Nation.

2. Now read Joshua 4. How does it similar to when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea in Exodus 14? What do we learn or get reminded of concerning God's power?

3. Why was Joshua "exalted" as a leader? See Joshua 3:7 and 4:14. Why is this important to note?

4. Read Joshua 5:1-12. Is there anything interesting to note here? Why did circumcision have to happen?

5. With all that went on in this section of Joshua–how can we be encouraged by what we have just read and discussed so far?

Challenging Depth

1. Recap last week's lifegroup session, what did you learn from Joshua 1-2?
2. Read the whole of Joshua chapter 3 together. Provide a short sentence summary for what was just read.
3. What do you know about the "Ark of the Covenant"? Why was it important for them to keep a distance?
4. What did Joshua mean in 3:5? What does "consecrate" mean? Do you consecrate yourself? When? Why? Why not?
5. Looking at 3:8-17, is there anything out of the ordinary in this section worth mentioning or dissecting? How can these things be explained?
6. Now read the whole chapter 4 together. Provide a short summary of what was just read.
7. What are some similarities and differences with the Israelites crossing the Red Sea and this time crossing the River Jordan?
8. Joshua was exalted as a leader (3:7 and 4:14). What does this mean? Why was he exalted? Why is this important for the narrative to mention this?
9. Read Joshua 5:1-12, what is the significance of v1?
10. Share with the group what you know about circumcision from the bible times? Why did they have to circumcise here?
11. What does 5:12 tell us? How did God provide for the Israelites? Why did it come to an end?
12. How can we be encouraged by what we have just read or discussed so far?

Context of the passage: The "*Ark of the Covenant*" was not some magical object, but rather it symbolised holiness and reverence, even touching it would be fatal (example 2 Sam 6:6-7 Uzzah touched it and died). The ark represents God's covenant with Israel, His law and His presence. The distance served two purposes: visual marker to follow the lead and direction of where the Ark was going because they "have never been this way before" (3:4). And to protect the Israelites from getting too close and protecting them from touching it.

Another interesting thing to note is the first time Israel people is finally referred to as a "*nation*" in 3:17, as they enter the promised land.

Some similarities of crossing the Red Sea with the River Jordan: both times, it was God's direct intervention; both times a path was made through water, so they walked on dry ground; both times God led through the pillar of cloud/fire and this time through the Ark of the covenant–both times God's presence was evident and both times many people across different groups feared and were scared of the Israelites–while the nation of Israel were amazed. The only differences were that the Egyptian enemies were destroyed in the Red Sea by drowning, but when crossing the Jordan-no enemies were present; and different leaders Moses and Joshua leading the group.

Re: Circumcision – refer to Genesis 17 too. This time it was a reinstitution of a ritual, covenantal sign as a reminder of being God's people.

Homework / Challenge for this week

Set aside and spend a spare 1 hour this week, to really dedicate that time to the Lord. This might mean worshiping God alone, going for a nature walk alone, or simply soaking in the Lord's presence in prayer. Reflect on all the good things He has done for you.

Concluding in Prayer

How is God good in the high moments? How is God *still* good in the low moments? How can we be sure of God being faithful and good to us? Share.
Pastor Ansy in her sermon mentioned we should continue to "remember God-defining moments". How would you define "God-defining moments"? What's one that has recently happened for you? Share with the large group, or in 2s or 3s. Spend some time giving thanks to God for this.

Ending with prayer

Our Faithful Father, would you daily remind us just how real and faithful you are, may we be secure in knowing that you are faithful through and through and we can daily count on you. God you are good in the high moments and in the low moments you are still good–because you are faithful and you love us. Amen.