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A NavPress Bible study on the book of

JOSHUA

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SERIES EDITOR: KAREN LEE-THORP

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Objectives

Most guides in the LIFECHANGE series of Bible studies cover one book of the Bible. Although the LIFECHANGE guides vary with the books they explore, they share some common goals:

1. To provide you with a firm foundation of understanding and a thirst to return to the book;
2. To teach you by example how to study a book of the Bible without structured guides;
3. To give you all the historical background, word definitions, and explanatory notes you need, so that your only other reference is the Bible;
4. To help you grasp the message of the book as a whole;
5. To teach you how to let God's Word transform you into Christ's image.

Each lesson in this study is designed to take 60 to 90 minutes to complete on your own. The guide is based on the assumption that you are completing one lesson per week, but if time is limited you can do half a lesson per week or whatever amount allows you to be thorough.

Flexibility

LIFECHANGE guides are flexible, allowing you to adjust the quantity and depth of your study to meet your individual needs. The guide offers many optional questions in addition to the regular numbered questions. The optional questions, which appear in the margins of the study pages, include the following:

Optional Application. Nearly all application questions are optional; we hope you will do as many as you can without overcommitting yourself.

For Thought and Discussion. Beginning Bible students should be able to handle these, but even advanced students need to think about them. These questions frequently deal with ethical issues and other biblical principles. They often offer cross-references to spark thought, but the references do not give

obvious answers. They are good for group discussions.

For Further Study. These include: a) cross-references that shed light on a topic the book discusses, and b) questions that delve deeper into the passage. You can omit them to shorten a lesson without missing a major point of the passage.

If you are meeting in a group, decide together which optional questions to prepare for each lesson, and how much of the lesson you will cover at the next meeting. Normally, the group leader should make this decision, but you might let each member choose his or her own application questions.

As you grow in your walk with God, you will find the LIFECHANGE guide growing with you—a helpful reference on a topic, a continuing challenge for application, a source of questions for many levels of growth.

Overview and Details

The study begins with an introduction to the book of Joshua. The key to interpretation is context—what is the whole passage or book *about*?—and the key to context is purpose—what is the author’s *aim* for the whole work? In lesson one you will lay the foundation for your study of Joshua by asking yourself, “Why did the author (and God) write the book? What did they want to accomplish? What is the book about?”

In lessons two through fifteen you will analyze successive passages of Joshua in detail.

In lesson sixteen you will review Joshua, returning to the big picture to see whether your view of it has changed after closer study. Review will also strengthen your grasp of major issues and give you an idea of how you have grown from your study.

Kinds of Questions

Bible study on your own—without a structured guide—follows a progression. First you observe: What does the passage *say*? Then you interpret: What does the passage *mean*? Lastly you apply: How does this truth *affect* my life?

Some of the “how” and “why” questions will take some creative thinking, even prayer, to answer. Some are opinion questions without clearcut right answers; these will lend themselves to discussions and side studies.

Don’t let your study become an exercise of knowledge alone. Treat the passage as God’s Word, and stay in dialogue with Him as you study. Pray, “Lord, what do You want me to see here?” “Father, why is this true?” “Lord, how does this apply to my life?”

It is important that you write down your answers. The act of writing clarifies your thinking and helps you to remember.

Study Aids

A list of reference materials, including a few notes of explanation to help you make good use of them, begins on page 169. This guide is designed to include enough background to let you interpret with just your Bible and the guide. Still, if you want more information on a subject or want to study a book on your own, try the references listed.

Scripture Versions

Unless otherwise indicated, the Bible quotations in this guide are from the New International Version of the Bible. Other versions cited are the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the Good News Bible: Today’s English Version (TEV), and the King James Version (KJV).

Use any translation you like for study, preferably more than one. A paraphrase such as The Living Bible is not accurate enough for study, but it can be helpful for comparison or devotional reading.

Memorizing and Meditating

A psalmist wrote, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Psalm 119:11). If you write down a verse or passage that challenges or encourages you, and reflect on it often for a week or more, you will find it beginning to affect your motives and actions. We forget quickly what we read once; we remember what we ponder.

When you find a significant verse or passage, you might copy it onto a card to keep with you. Set aside five minutes during each day just to think about what the passage might mean in your life. Recite it over to yourself, exploring its meaning. Then, return to your passage as often as you can during your day, for a brief review. You will soon find it coming to mind spontaneously.

For Group Study

A group of four to ten people allows the richest discussions, but you can adapt this guide for other sized groups. It will suit a wide range of group types, such as home Bible studies, growth groups, youth groups, and businessmen’s studies. Both new and experienced Bible students, and new and mature Christians, will benefit from the guide. You can omit or leave for later years any questions you find too easy or too hard.

The guide is intended to lead a group through one lesson per week. However, feel free to split lessons if you want to discuss them more thoroughly. Or, omit some questions in a lesson if preparation or discussion time is limited. You can always return to this guide for personal study later. You will be able to discuss only a few questions at length, so choose some for

discussion and others for background. Make time at each discussion for members to ask about anything they didn't understand.

Each lesson in the guide ends with a section called "For the group." These sections give advice on how to focus a discussion, how you might apply the lesson in your group, how you might shorten a lesson, and so on. The group leader should read each "For the group" at least a week ahead so that he or she can tell the group how to prepare for the next lesson.

Each member should prepare for a meeting by writing answers for all of the background and discussion questions to be covered. If the group decides not to take an hour per week for private preparation, then expect to take at least two meetings per lesson to work through the questions. Application will be very difficult, however, without private thought and prayer.

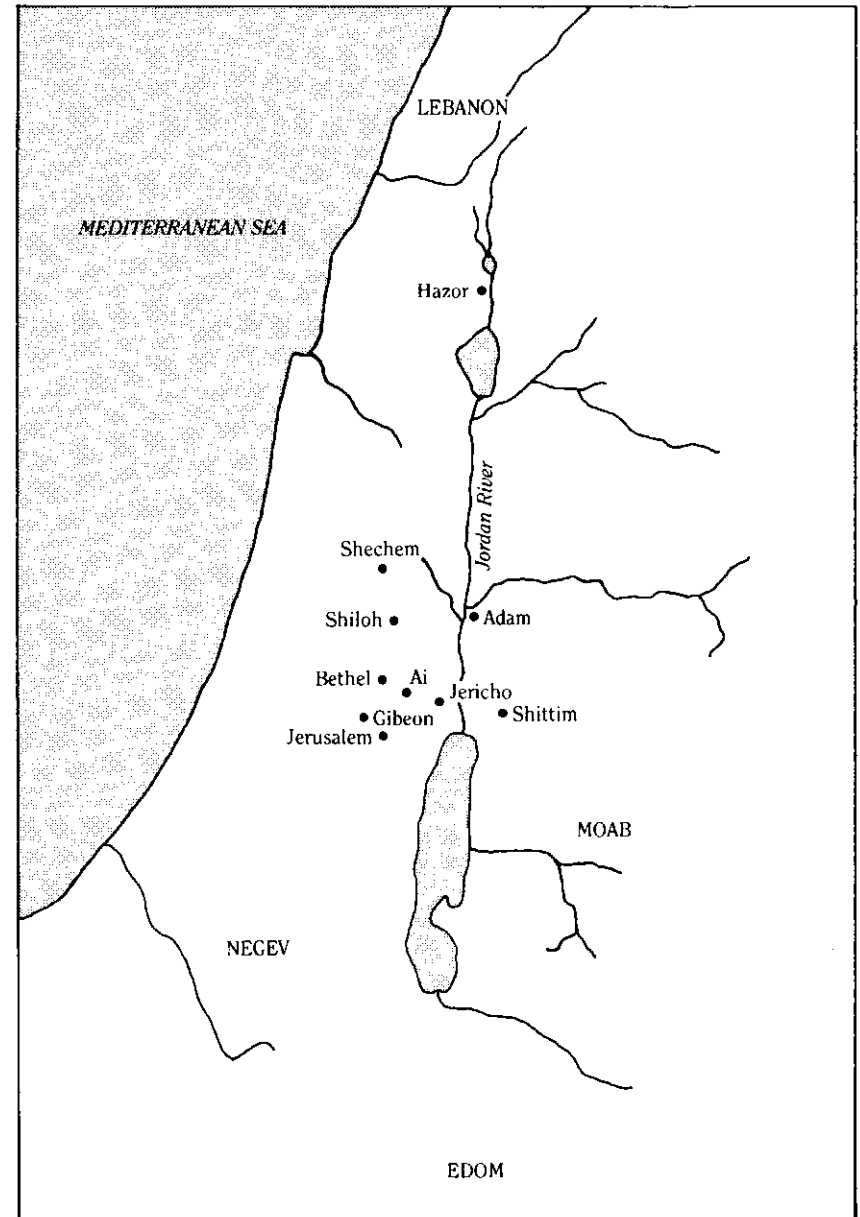
Two reasons for studying in a group are accountability and support. When each member commits in front of the rest to seek growth in an area of life, you can pray with one another, listen jointly for God's guidance, help one another to resist temptation, assure each other that the other's growth matters to you, use the group to practice spiritual principles, and so on. Pray about one another's commitments and needs at most meetings. Spend the first few minutes of each meeting sharing any results from applications prompted by previous lessons. Then discuss new applications toward the end of the meeting. Follow such sharing with prayer for these and other needs.

If you write down each other's applications and prayer requests, you are more likely to remember to pray for them during the week, ask about them at the next meeting, and notice answered prayers. You might want to get a notebook for prayer requests and discussion notes.

Notes taken during discussion will help you to remember, follow up on ideas, stay on the subject, and clarify a total view of an issue. But don't let notetaking keep you from participating. Some groups choose one member at each meeting to take notes. Then someone copies the notes and distributes them at the next meeting. Rotating these tasks can help include people. Some groups have someone take notes on a large pad of paper or erasable marker board (preformed shower wallboard works well), so that everyone can see what has been recorded.

Pages 172-173 lists some good sources of counsel for leading group studies. The *Small Group Letter*, published by NavPress, is unique, offering insights from experienced leaders every other month.

The Promised Land



Timeline—Egypt to Babylon

(Dates are approximate, based on *The NIV Study Bible*)

Patriarchs (Genesis 12-50)

Jacob (Israel) and family to Egypt (Genesis 46)

1876 BC

Exodus and Conquest (Exodus 1:1-Joshua 24:29)

Moses leads Israelites out of Egypt and across the Red Sea

1446

Book of Joshua begins

1406

Southern and northern campaigns completed (Joshua 24:28)

1399

Joshua dies (Joshua 24:29)

1375

Judges (Judges 1-1 Samuel 9)

1375-1050

United Kingdom (1 Samuel 10-1 Kings 11)

Saul becomes king of Israel

1050

David becomes king of Israel

1010

Solomon becomes king of Israel

970

Solomon dies; Israel and Judah split

930

Divided Kingdom (1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17)

930-722

Assyria destroys Israel

722

Babylonian captivity begins; the nobility of Judah are taken to Babylon

605

Jerusalem falls to Babylon; the rest of the Jews go into exile

586

INTRODUCTION

What Is Joshua?

Francis Schaeffer called the book of Joshua “a bridge, a link between the Pentateuch (the writings of Moses) and the rest of Scripture.”¹ Precisely where the last book of Moses—Deuteronomy—leaves off in the tale of Israel’s formation, the book of Joshua begins. And where Joshua closes, Judges takes up the story that points toward the New Testament and does not end until the book of Revelation.

Prophetic history

The Hebrew Bible is divided into three sections: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. Joshua through 2 Chronicles (minus Ruth) comprise the Former Prophets, and Isaiah through Malachi (minus Daniel) are the Latter Prophets. Christians sometimes call the Former Prophets the books of history, but we should remember that they are written as *prophecy*. This means that they are not intended to be thorough, scientific histories of the centuries they cover. Instead, their aim “is to present an interpretive (prophetic) history of God’s dealings with his covenant people Israel, from the time of Moses’ death until the Babylonian captivity.” The stress here is *interpretive*. The human authors of these books were prophets guided by the Holy Spirit to unfold the fabric “that holds these events together and gives them their true meaning.”² This prophetic history is chiefly about what *God did* in each event, and only secondarily about what human beings did. (For a compact example of prophetic history, see Joshua 24:2-13, which begins with the prophet’s formula: “Thus saith the LORD God of Israel” [KJV].)

This is not to say that Joshua and the other human characters in the book are unimportant. But the supporting cast is always there to glorify the Star of the show. If we keep this in mind, we can better see why the author of Joshua details some scenes and brushes by others, and why he exhaustively records some matters that seem irrelevant to us.

The author

We've said "the author of Joshua" because we don't know who the human author was. Jewish tradition says that Joshua himself wrote all of the book except the accounts of his and Eleazar's deaths at the end. Modern critical scholars have dissected the book into sources from periods ranging from Joshua's time to six or eight hundred years later. Conservative scholars have suggested dates from just after Joshua's death to the time of David. The author apparently used some documents written by Joshua himself (8:32, 24:26), as well as survey records (18:9), and other sources (10:13). Many of the scenes have the vividness of eyewitness accounts; others seem to have the perspective of some distance. The book's thematic unity argues in favor of a single author, who may have been a younger contemporary of Joshua. Certainly the book's optimistic mood evokes either the time of Joshua or of David. But since the date of writing is not crucial to our understanding the message, we can set it aside for now.³

From Genesis to Joshua

Joshua records the fulfillment of promises God had been making for centuries. After Adam sinned, God began to prepare a family through whom He could redeem mankind. Genesis 1-11 records the early stages of that work and culminates in God's choice of one man, Abraham, to be the father of that family. In Genesis 12 and later, God makes three promises to Abraham: his children will inherit the land of Canaan (15:7); his children will become a great nation (12:2); and through his offspring will come a blessing to all the families of the earth (12:3, 22:18). The rest of Genesis tells the stories of Abraham, his son Isaac, and his grandson Jacob living as aliens in Canaan, never owning more than a burial plot for their dead but continuing to trust God's promises. The end of Genesis finds Jacob (also called Israel), his twelve sons, and their whole household moving to Egypt to escape a famine in Canaan. At every step, God has been at work shaping and protecting His people.

The book of Exodus begins several hundred years later. The descendants of Jacob-Israel have become slaves to a cruel Pharaoh of Egypt. But God intervenes ironically so that an Israelite named Moses is raised as a son of Pharaoh's daughter. As an adult he flees Egypt, and after forty years in the wilderness, God commissions him to lead Israel out of Egypt. God works miracles to free His people, including ten plagues on the Egyptians and the parting of the Red Sea. Through all this He proves that He, not the gods of Egypt, rules the forces of nature and the fates of men.

Moses leads Israel to Mount Sinai, where God makes a covenant—a royal treaty and an intimate pact—with His people. They swear to serve Him as His subjects, and He swears to rule them justly, protect them, and keep His promises to Abraham. God also gives His redeemed people a Law by which to live (this is recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers). Then He sends them to take the land He has promised.

But after hearing of the formidable foes already living in Canaan, Israel is afraid to invade it. God is furious, and swears that none of that generation but the two who are willing to take Canaan will enter it. Those two are Joshua and Caleb. For thirty-eight more years, Israel is obliged to wander the desert between Egypt and Canaan (the book of Numbers tells of this wandering). Every Israelite over the age of twenty except Joshua, Caleb, and Moses dies. Finally Israel is allowed to reach the border of Canaan, on the plains of Moab east of the Jordan River. There Moses addresses Israel for the last time, recounting and reaffirming the covenant between God and Israel (these speeches comprise Deuteronomy). After this, Moses passes the leadership to Joshua and ascends Mount Nebo to die.

This is where the book of Joshua begins. The generation that refused to trust God's promises is now dead, and the new generation is at Canaan's doorstep. God is about to fulfill His promises to give Israel the land and make it a great nation. The third promise of Genesis 12—to bless all the earth through Israel—receives only glimpses in Joshua, for it will find its fullness only in Christ.

General Joshua

Even though the book is not mainly about the man Joshua, it is helpful to know a little about him. Right after the crossing of the Red Sea, Israel met its first enemy: Amalek. Joshua led the Lord's army in that battle (Exodus 17:8-16). When Moses and the elders of Israel ascended Mount Sinai to see God and to eat in His presence, Joshua was among them, and Joshua went still further up with Moses (Exodus 24:9-13). As early as this, Joshua saw God's power and glory. Joshua was also alone with Moses on the mountain when Aaron was below in the camp letting Israel fall into idolatry and debauchery (Exodus 32:17-35). Joshua had to watch the people decimated for this sin. Only Joshua stayed with Moses in the tabernacle when the Lord spoke with Moses face to face (Exodus 33:7-11).

Moses was Joshua's mentor, and the young man was naturally tempted to idolize his leader. But Moses taught Joshua that only the Lord's glory mattered, not his own. When Joshua was concerned that some elders were prophesying apart from Moses, the older man replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets. . . !" (Numbers 11:24-29).

The real crux for Joshua came when he and eleven others went to spy out Canaan. Joshua and Caleb reported that the land was rich and ripe for taking by God's strength, but the other ten infected Israel with fear. The result was disaster: Israel was condemned to spend thirty-eight more years in the desert (Numbers 13:1-14:45). So Joshua served Moses until the time came for Israel to enter Canaan (Numbers 27:18-23, Deuteronomy 31:2-8, 14-15). Joshua was equipped to lead Israel, for he was "filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him" (Deuteronomy 34:9). God passed His Spirit from Moses to Joshua, having trained Joshua through Moses for forty years.

Interpreting Joshua

In lesson one you'll get a chance to decide for yourself what the book of Joshua is about and how it is relevant to you. You might want to consider some of the ways people have used the book in the past.

In Joshua, Israel conquers a piece of land by God's promise and power. God gives the right to possess it and the power to take it. The previous inhabitants are called wicked and have no rights to the land. Some Christians have seen this story as justification when they have conquered lands and exterminated or subjugated the natives. Today, many Christians challenge this application of the book. Likewise, "Some Israeli Jews today find in Joshua a mandate for repossessing Palestine without regard for Palestinians on the land, while others are deeply troubled by this interpretation."⁴

These are literal military applications. In addition, "Missionaries have used triumphalist language reminiscent of the Joshua story in speaking about 'occupying' and 'possessing' mission lands for Christ."⁵ Some people find this language appropriate and inspiring, while others consider it insensitive to the people being evangelized.

Many people dislike the tone of Joshua on any level because God commands mass killings and seems to encourage hatred of foreigners. Moreover, "the long lists of cities and boundary lines [seem] boring."⁶ The solution for some is to spiritualize the text: the book teaches individuals how to fight personal struggles against spiritual enemies, or how groups of believers should wage the Church's spiritual war. Some interpreters see Joshua conquering Canaan for Israel as a *type* (foreshadow) of Jesus conquering the earth for His people (both "Joshua" and "Jesus" reflect the same Hebrew name, *Yehoshua*.)

For others, the solution lies in defining the enemy. From the viewpoint of liberation theology, Joshua "tells us of

the faithfulness of God to his oppressed people;
the struggle for a place to live (land);
a successful movement of the disinherited against oppression, injustice,
and tyranny;
the beginning of a new society based on justice, freedom, and loyalty."⁷

On this reading, the enemy is "the very powers that destroy life in our contemporary world," whether human, institutional, or spiritual.⁸

Where does this leave us? We begin with careful study of Scripture, acknowledging our biases but praying for God's guidance. Crucial biblical concepts for understanding Joshua are *covenant*, *rest*, *inheritance*, *redemption*, *warfare* and *the Kingdom of God*. In Old Testament times, God redeemed Israel, made a covenant with the people, promised rest in an inheritance, and led Israel to fight against enemies to claim an inheritance. In the New Testament we find a new covenant, a fuller redemption, a renewed promise of rest in our inheritance, and more warfare to establish the Kingdom of God. As we go through the book of Joshua, we will look at some of these key ideas in both Testaments to let you decide how to apply Joshua.

But we will begin with the book itself. For it is first of all an account of God's dealings with a particular people at a unique moment of history to achieve certain ends. As with all the Former Prophets, the tale is told so that "This is how you will know that the living God is among you" (Joshua 3:10).

1. Francis A. Schaeffer, *Joshua and the Flow of Biblical History* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1975), page 9.
2. Marten H. Woudstra, *The Book of Joshua* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), page 3.
3. For a survey of attempts to date the book, along with extensive footnotes, see Woudstra, pages 5-16.
4. E. John Hamlin, *Joshua: Inheriting the Land* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), page xi.
5. Hamlin, page xi.
6. Hamlin, page xi.
7. Hamlin, page xvi.
8. Hamlin, page xiii.

LESSON ONE

OVERVIEW

The Book of Joshua

You may have heard some of the exciting stories of Joshua—the crossing of the Jordan River, the battle of Jericho—but you may never have read the whole book before. You may have only a vague idea of its contents. This is the purpose of an overview: to give you a broad acquaintance with the themes and flavor of a book so that you can study each passage in light of the whole.

In this lesson you'll be reading most or all of Joshua at least once, as well as the Introduction on pages 11-15. If you are a slow reader or if you have never used a LIFECHANGE study guide before, you may want to take extra time for this overview. Also, be sure to look at the "How to Use This Study" section on pages 5-8.

1. Read the Introduction on pages 11-15. If you have any questions about it, write them here so that you will remember them. You can pursue answers later.

2. Now read the whole of Joshua once. Don't stop to untangle all the details or reflect on an interesting passage. Simply try to form a first impression of what the book is about. (You might want to skim chapters 12 through 21 just enough to get the gist of what they contain.) Keep questions 3 and 4 in mind as you do so.

3. What are your first impressions of the book? (For example, is it like a sermon, a series of stories, facts and figures, a logical argument to prove a point, poetry, or more than one of these? Is it dull or exciting or both in different places? Is it easy or confusing to follow? What mood does it seem to convey—upbeat, enthusiastic, depressing, cynical, angry, joyful . . . ?)

4. Repetition is a clue to the ideas an author wants to emphasize. What are some of the words, phrases, and ideas that recur in the book of Joshua?

5. An outline or chart often helps one see a book as a whole. To make a broad outline for an overview, begin by giving a title to each chapter.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

8 _____

9 _____

10 _____

11 _____

12 _____

13 _____

14 _____

15 _____

16 _____

17 _____

18 _____

19 _____

20 _____

21 _____

22 _____

23 _____

24 _____

6. Now group the chapters into larger sections. What is each of the following sections mainly about? What title would you give to each?

1:1-5:15 _____

6:1-12:24 _____

13:1-21:45 _____

22:1-24:33 _____

7. Finally, what would you say the book of Joshua as a whole is about? What themes (ideas that recur throughout the book) do you see? What do you think is God's purpose in giving His people this book?

8. Your overview may have suggested issues you want to explore and questions you want to answer as you study in more depth. If so, jot them down to serve as personal objectives for the rest of your study. What do you want to understand better by the time you are finished?

Study Skill—Application

Second Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture . . . is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Paul also writes, "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4), and "These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us . . ." (1 Corinthians 10:11). Therefore, when you study Joshua, you should keep asking yourself, "What difference should this passage make in my life? How should it make me want to think or act? How does it encourage, warn, correct, or set me an example?"

Application will require time, thought, prayer, and perhaps even discussion with another person. You may sometimes find it more productive to concentrate on one specific application, giving it careful thought and prayer, than to list several potential applications without really reflecting on them or committing yourself to them. At other times, you may want to list many implications that a passage has for your life. Then you can choose one or two of these to act or meditate upon.

9. In your first reading of Joshua, did you find any truths that are relevant to your life? If so, was there anything you would like to commit to memory, pray about, or act on? If so, write down your plans.

For Further Study:
a. Compare the book of Joshua to the New Testament book of Acts. Acts recounts how God began to conquer the world for His Kingdom, using His people as a kind of army empowered by His Spirit. Acts also pauses periodically to assess the progress made (Acts 2:41, 4:4, 6:7, 9:31, 19:20). How is Joshua like and unlike Acts?
b. Compare the books of Joshua and Revelation, and the missions of Joshua and Jesus. In what ways, if any, do you think Joshua foreshadows Jesus?

For the group

This “For the group” section and the ones in later lessons are intended to suggest ways of structuring your discussions. Feel free to select what suits your group. The main goals of this lesson are to get to know the book of Joshua as a whole and the people with whom you are going to study it.

Worship. Some groups like to begin with prayer and/or singing. Some share requests for prayer at the beginning but leave the actual prayer until after the study. Others prefer just to chat and have refreshments for a while, then open the study with a brief prayer for the Holy Spirit’s guidance, and leave worship and prayer until the end.

Warm-up. The beginning of a new study is a good time to lay a foundation for honest sharing of ideas, to get comfortable with each other, and to encourage a sense of common purpose. One way to establish common ground is to talk about what each person hopes to get out of your study of Joshua, and out of any prayer, singing, sharing, outreach, or anything else you might do together. You can also share what you hope to give as well as get. If you have someone write down each member’s hopes and expectations, then you can look back at these goals later to see if they are being met. Goal-setting at the beginning can also help you avoid confusion when one person thinks the main point of the group is to learn the Scripture, while another thinks it is to support each other in daily Christian life, and another thinks prayer or outreach is the chief business.

How to Use This Study. Advise group members to read the “How to Use This Study” section on pages 5-8 if they have not already done so. You might go over important points that you think the group

should especially notice. For example, point out the optional questions in the margins. These are available as group discussion questions, ideas for application, and suggestions for further study. It is unlikely that anyone will have the time or desire to answer all the optional questions and do all the applications. A person might do one “Optional Application” for any given lesson. You might choose one or two “For Thought and Discussions” for your group discussion, or you might spend all your time on the numbered questions. If someone wants to write answers to the optional questions, suggest that he use a separate notebook. It will also be helpful for discussion notes, prayer requests, answers to prayers, application plans, and so on.

Invite everyone to ask questions about the “How to Use This Study” section.

Overview. Ideally, everyone should have read the whole book of Joshua and the Introduction before you meet together. However, some may not have done so, and others may not retain much of what they read quickly. So, ask a few questions to draw out the main points of the Introduction, such as:

1. What do you remember of Israel’s history up to the point where the book of Joshua picks it up?
2. What do you know about Joshua the man?
3. Who are the main characters in the book? Who do you think is *the* main character? Why?
4. What is “prophetic history”? How is it helpful for you to know that Joshua is a prophetic book?

You may have to explain that Joshua is not necessarily prophetic in the sense of foretelling the future (although some people think it foreshadows Christ’s work) but it is prophetic in the sense of interpreting history from a prophet’s perspective. That is, the story is told with a focus on God.

Now go on to lesson one. Let group members share their first impressions of the book. Together, make a list of repeated words. What do they tell you about the ideas the author wanted to emphasize?

Compare your titles for each chapter and each larger section to those in some commentaries, study

Bibles, or handbooks. What similarities and differences do you see? Which approach do you find most helpful? Irving Jensen offers the following titles for four main divisions of the book:¹

Preparation (1:1-5:15)
Conquest (6:1-12:24)
Inheritances (13:1-22:9)
Consecration (22:10-24:33)

What do you think of this view?

Next, make a list of the themes you can trace throughout the book. Try to come up with a clear, concise statement of what the book of Joshua is about, and another clear statement of what its purpose in the Bible might be.

Let everyone share questions he or she has about the book. Come back to them at the end to see if you have answered all of them.

Don't spend a lot of time on application in this lesson. Later lessons will attempt to guide those who are unsure how to apply Scripture to their lives. However, to give everyone something to think about, do share any ways you did find Joshua relevant to your lives.

Wrap-up. Briefly tell the group what to expect in lesson two. Whet everyone's appetite, and ask the group to think about any optional questions that you plan to discuss.

Worship. Many groups like to end with singing and/or prayer. This can include songs or prayers that respond to what you've learned in Bible study, or prayers for specific needs of group members. Some people are shy about sharing personal needs or praying aloud in groups, especially before they know the other people well. If this is true of your group, then a song and/or some silent prayer and a short closing prayer spoken by the leader might be an appropriate ending.

For instance, thank God for giving you this account of Israel's conquest of the land God had promised to give them. Thank Him for what it reveals about His nature and the whole story of His molding of a people for Himself. Thank Him for the opportunity to study His Word together.

1. Irving L. Jensen, *Rest-Land Won* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966).