

09/13/2026

SUNDAY SCHOOL Section Review

Generations: From Canaan to Jerusalem

From Nomadic Tribes to Settled People

■ 9/6: Joshua 1:1 – 11

Joshua has been tasked with bringing the nomadic people into the Promised Land. He must show courage in both administration and in personal integrity

Mount Zion A.M.E. Church of New Brunswick, NJ
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By Paul T. Bennett Church School Superintendent

Generations: From Canaan to Jerusalem
From Nomadic Tribes to Settled People

Israel Remembers God's Deeds

Joshua 4:14 – 24

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Background

- Joshua was born Hoshea, meaning 'salvation' or 'he saves', the son of Nun from the tribe of Ephriam.
- Moses renamed him 'Joshua' – meaning 'Yahweh is salvation' (Numbers 13:16)

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Background

- In **Joshua 2** (which we will study on 9/27), spies were sent to survey the land of Jericho
- God promised to make Joshua a great leader in the eyes of the people (**Joshua 3:7**).

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Background

- The priests used the Ark of the Covenant to cross the Jordan just as Moses led the people out of Egypt
- His commands to both the priests and the people confirmed that promise.

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ On that day the Lord exalted^[a] Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:15 – 17 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Then the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying, ¹⁶ "Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan." ¹⁷ Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan."

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Lesson Text



JOSHUA 4:18a (NKJV)

¹⁸ And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord had come from the midst of the Jordan,

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:18b (NKJV)

¹⁸ and the soles of the priests' feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before.

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:19 – 20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. ²⁰ And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:21 (NKJV)

21 Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What are these stones?'

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:22 (NKJV)

22 then you shall let your children know, saying, 'Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land';

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:23 (NKJV)

²³ for the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over,

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Lesson Text

JOSHUA 4:24 (NKJV)

24 that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God ^[b]forever."





“The river upstream stopped. It dammed up a good distance to the north, at a town called Adam.” Joshua 3: 16

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Commentary: Remembrance

- When the Jews crossed the Red Sea, while there were songs of praise and dances (**Exodus 15**), there were no monuments built to remember the crossing

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Commentary: Remembrance

- This could have been because the crossing was supposed to be a temporary event. It was not the Promised Land.
- Now the crossing would be remembered by placing of stones on both dry land and in the river (v. 9)

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*Context Text



JOSHUA 4:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Joshua also set up another pile of twelve stones **in the middle of the Jordan**, at the place where the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant were standing. And they are there to this day.

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Commentary: Leadership Transfer

- Moses, despite his battles with the people he led out of Egypt was still a revered figure in the eyes of the people who were born after his death or were too young (under 20) to appreciate

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Commentary: Leadership Transfer

- Joshua was anointed to be a leader and the successor to Moses (**Numbers 27:18 – 23; Deuteronomy 31:1-7**)
- The confirmation of that transfer would be through his leadership at the river crossing

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Commentary: Leadership Transfer

- He won the trust of 3 pillars of the community:
 - The priests
 - The military
 - The general population
- Leadership isn't just given; like trust it is earned

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Commentary: History and Culture

- In taking the people from nomads to a nation, the establishment of monuments and memorials becomes part of their history that is both confirmed and transferrable to future generations. Oral history has its limits

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Commentary: History and Culture

- Despite the African tradition of oral history, it is important to have physical reminders
- Today in our nation, there are attempts to remove or change monuments, memorials, and museums concerning Black American history

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Commentary: History and Culture

- There are also calls to restore Confederate history, through monuments and the naming of institutions
- It is therefore important to fight to preserve our history and accomplishments all by the will of God

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Commentary: Epilogue

- Sociologists claim that a society aspiring to endure must become “a community of memory and hope” (Waltke, B. K., “Joshua,” New Bible Commentary: 21st-century Edition, ed. by D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, and G. J. Wenham, Inter-Varsity Press, 1994, p. 241)

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Commentary: Epilogue

- Today there is no sighting of this memorial that the Israelites built and those that remain are hotly contested and fought for.
- Preserving history is important but we must not make it idolatrous

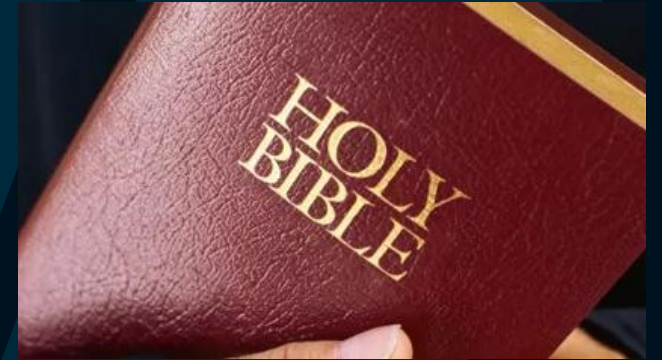
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Commentary: Epilogue

- As Christians God is not about a place or memorial. God is Spirit, and we must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth (**John 4:24**)
- We serve a living God of the present and the future. In Him we trust

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Scripture References



John 4:19 – 24

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Church School Creed

Our Church School must grow & grow
And we must help to make it so
Every member a Christian
Every Christian a worker
Every worker trained
A worker that will not be ashamed
This we ask in Jesus' name

-AMEN

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Church School Benediction

We have come

We have studied

We have learned

So until our next coming together

To study God's word

May His rich blessings reside with you

And may His Grace be eternally yours

-AMEN