

**Into the Promised Land**  
**Joshua's Story**  
**Lesson #1 – On the Mountain**  
**• HANDOUT •**

▶ Joshua is a larger-than-life individual in our Old Testament scriptures. Joshua is considered one of the Bible's greatest military strategists. He led the successful seven-year conquest of the Promised Land. Even to this day, Joshua is proclaimed to be a model of effective and practical leadership and perhaps one of the greatest generals to have ever lived.

The first mention of Joshua is in connection with the Amalekites attacking Israel at Rephidem [*pronounced ref'-fi-dem*] in Exodus 17. By this time, Moses has already led the Israelites miraculously out of Egypt, through the Red Sea and they are on their way to Mount Sinai, where Israel will become The Covenant People chosen by God. The journey to Mt. Sinai will take three months.

When the Amalekites attacked Israel, Moses instructed his young Aide, Joshua, to “select some men and go fight the Amalekites.” Joshua did as requested and they ended up “overwhelming King Amalek and his people.” However, the Biblical account makes it abundantly clear that the victory didn't happen because of their military skill. We read in verse 11:

Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. Eventually, Moses' arms grew so weary that a stone had to be brought for him to sit on and Aaron and Hur held his hands up.

This incident graphically demonstrated to all of Israel, and to Joshua personally, that God, alone, is the One who brings the victory. Even when everything looks impossible, when God intervenes He makes the impossible, possible.

Joshua was the Son of Nun, from the Tribe of Ephraim. That means that Joshua's lineage was out of Joseph, Jacob's 11<sup>th</sup> son. Joshua was Moses' “second in command” acting as the “aide de camp” and, in the end, was the one who inherited the job of leading the Israelites into the Promised Land after Moses' death.

Even though we will encounter some of Joshua's military campaigns, the focus of our study is to learn about Joshua, the man, not the larger-than-life military strategist. Our goal is to discover Joshua's Story and how his incredible relationship of trust and faith in God developed. Though Joshua's deep trust in the Lord was probably seeded at Rephidem, we will begin our journey with what happened at Mount Sinai and let the story develop from there.

**We only get a glimpse or two of the young Joshua when Israel was camped at Mount Sinai  
But it is during those two years that Joshua's heart developed a hunger for the Lord.  
The events at Mt. Sinai were monumental in the history of the world.  
God was creating, for Himself, a new nation with new laws and a new way of life.  
The Lord showed Himself to be a God who desires not only to communicate  
but to forge a relationship with His people.  
By giving us The Law, God revealed His holiness, defined sin, and provided guardians  
who would eventually bring us to God's Son, Jesus, the Christ.  
Moses and Joshua were such guardians.**

Exodus 19:1-3a • On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt – on that very day – they came to the Desert of Sinai.

After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the Mountain. Then Moses went up to God ...

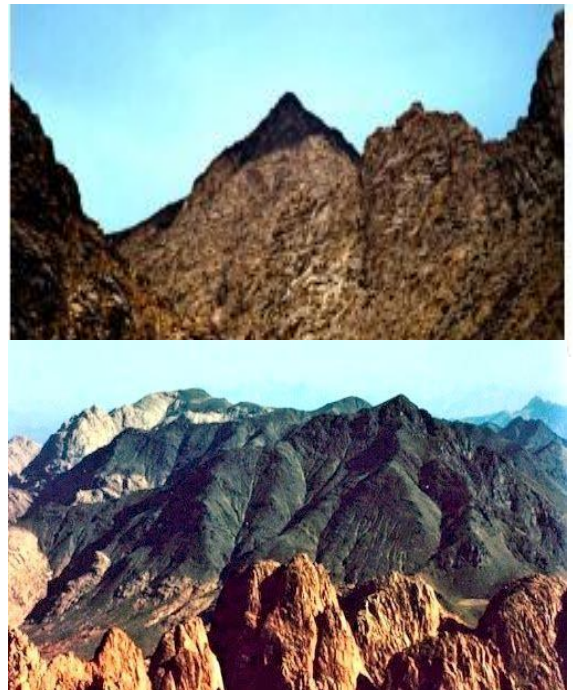
Q: What is significant about the statement that they camped in front of “the Mountain?”

Exodus 3:12b • So He said to Moses: And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this Mountain.”

Q: Where is The Mountain – Mt. Sinai?

Q: What are the problems with the traditional location of Mt. Sinai?

Q: If the traditional site has problems, is there an alternative site that also has a scriptural basis for the alternative?



Q: While encamped at Mt Sinai, how many times did Moses ascend in order to speak with God?

**We are going to spend several weeks  
filling in many of the details associated with these Ascents.  
We'll start with what God said to Moses on his very first Ascent.**

Exodus 19:3-7 • Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the Mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now *if* you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

Q: What is the implication about God saying: "*I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.*"

Q: For what purpose does God bring Israel to Himself?

Q: What are the implications that "Israel shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation?"

**As a kingdom of priests:**

**As a holy nation:**

Q: What is significant about God saying "the whole earth is mine?"

Q: What were the conditional provisions of these Covenant promises?

**Moses returns to the top of the Mountain with Israel's response to the Lord's message.  
This is Moses second time up the Mountain.  
Preparations for the Coming of the Lord to the Mountain.  
[The scripture passage has been a bit truncated to provide main highlights ...]**

Exodus 19:8b-15 [the following scripture passage has been truncated] • So Moses brought their answer back to the Lord . The Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you." ... "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes and be ready by the third day, because on that day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, 'Be careful that you do not approach the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches the mountain is to be put to death. ... Only when the ram's horn sounds a long blast may they approach the mountain.'" After Moses had gone down the mountain to the people, he consecrated them, and they washed their clothes. Then he said to the people, "*Prepare yourselves for the third day. Abstain from sexual relations.*"

Q: What are the specific ways God told Moses to prepare the people for God's coming to the Mountain?

Q: Why were boundaries put around the Mountain, preventing the people from even touching it?

Q: Why would sounding the ram's horn lift the perimeter limits?

Q: Why would God tell the people to abstain from sexual relations before meeting with the Lord? Does that imply that sexual relations is sinful and makes us unclean?

**We will continue to look at some of the details associated with the Ascents.  
Next, we will look specifically at the "Third Day."  
This is where we will begin next time.**



Next Time • Lesson #2  
"The Third Day and the Ascents"

