

1  **Studies in Joshua  
Study #3**

**“The Response of Faith”  
(A Holy Pause vs. Procrastination)**

**Joshua 1:10-18**

2

**“The cities were theirs, but they must enter them; the houses which they had not built were theirs, but they must inhabit them; the wheat fields in the rich valleys and the vineyards on the terraced slopes were theirs, but they must possess them.”**

F. B. Meyer

3  **The Response Was Essentially Immediate and Prompt!**

● ***“So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: “Go through the camp and tell the people, ‘Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.’”***

**Joshua 1:10**

4

● ***“Perform your duty immediately [when] it is clear to you. The longer we delay, the more reluctant we are to comply with God’s requirements. Delay itself is disobedience. Procrastination evidences a lack of heart for the Divine precepts and an absence of concern for the Divine glory.”***

A. W. Pink

5  **This sort of response is characteristic of true faith!**

● **When God told Abraham to go and offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on Mt. Moriah, the Scripture says: “*Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey ...*” [Gen. 22:3].**

● **Joshua took the enemy forces by surprise and caught them off guard [Josh. 10:9] because of his immediate response in attacking them; and then, once he had them on the run, he would not let up until the enemy was completely defeated!**

6  **A. W. Pink says this:**

- “‘*Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord*’ (Col. 3:23), and where there is heartiness, there will be no delay. Is it not evident then ... that the readiness or tardiness of our obedience is a good index to the state of our hearts? When we stand debating instead of doing, reasoning instead of ‘running’ (119:32), something is seriously wrong.”

## 7 ☐ A Holy Pause

- Even though the response itself, and the decision to obey, was immediate, there followed a strange pause: Joshua’s orders said: “*Three days from now you will cross the Jordan ...*” [v.11].

## 8 ☐ What is the significance of this pause?

- “*Three days*” is a recognized period in Scripture for death and resurrection:
  - Matt. 12:40 “*For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*”
  - Hosea 6:2 “*On the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him.*”

## 9 ☐

“It was, therefore, appropriate that this period should elapse before the people could pass through symbolic death over to resurrection ground.” Meyer

## 10 ☐ However, there was another practical reason for this delay, which has *enormous spiritual implications*:

- When Israel reached the Jordan river, it was the time of year when it was in flood-stage! The river was overflowing its banks and the low-lying lands that surrounded it.
- Meyer comments that this sight, i.e. the image of the overflowing flooding of the Jordan, has often been employed as “an expression of overwhelming trouble.”

## 11 ☐

- Meyer: “*Before the gaze of the assembled hosts ...*” [of the Israelites] “*... the turbid floods rushed on, swollen by melting snows far away [to the north] on [Mt.] Hermon, and carrying trunks of trees and other debris torn from the banks in their impetuous descent. Its force and velocity, as it poured down from its upper basins to the immense depression of the Dead Sea, had gained for it the name of ‘Descender’; and this title was especially appropriate at such seasons as that at which Israel first beheld it.*”

- 12  This scene portrays for us one of the greatest principles of the inner, spiritual life of the Christian.
- Meyer says: “The Jordan on the page of Scripture [as it is portrayed here especially], is constantly associated with death, ... Not the death of the body; but that baptism into death which signifies a pause in the energies of nature, and an entrance through faith on a higher and nobler level.”
- 13
- “So John baptized there; and there the Lord entered into His first identification with sins not His own. But never in all its history do the Jordan more effectually pronounce the sentence of death than on that day when it taught the people that by no strength or energy of their own could they prevail.”
- 14  **“Multitudes have come to the brink of that river, and have been left there, waiting on its banks, that they might consider the meaning of those impassible waters ...”**  
F.B. Meyer
1. **“Abraham waited there for more than twenty years, face to face with the apparent impossibility of ever having a son.”**
- 15
2. **“David waited there for almost as long; and it must have seemed that the kingdom foretold to him as a youth lay on the other side of insurmountable difficulties.”**
  3. **“The sisters of Bethany [Martha and Mary] waited there; and the stone, rolled heavily to the door of the tomb where Lazarus lay, must have been to them all that the Jordan was to Israel ...”**
- 16  **“Many a saint since then has been brought down to these same banks [of the Jordan], and has stood to witness this flowing stream.”**
- **If this is where you are, says Meyer: “Do not hasten from it. Stand still and consider, until the energy and impetuosity of your self-life dies down. You can never reach the blessed life by resolutions, or pledges, or forms of covenant; your good self is as powerless now as your bad self was formerly. You must learn that your strength is to sit still, and that the rich blessings of God stored in Christ for you are an absolute gift to be received by the outstretched hand of faith.”**

17 ☐

- ***“Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say, on the LORD.”*** Psalm 27:14
- ***“Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.”*** Psalm 37:7
- ***“I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me.”*** Philippians 4:13

18 ☐

- ***“Against all hope, Abraham believed ... Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead - since he was about a hundred years old - and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised.”*** Romans 4:18-21

19 ☐

### **Note how this pause was spent**

- Joshua 2:1 says that during this three day period, Joshua secretly sent two spies into the city of Jericho and that these spies found shelter and protection from the king of Jericho, of all places, in the home a prostitute named Rahab. [This also seems to have a spiritual significance]:
- The city of Jericho seems to represent the men and women of this world who are under the wrath of God and are the subjects of His righteous judgment!

20 ☐

- ***“As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.”*** Matt. 24:37-39

21 ☐

### **But there was one soul in Jericho who began to fear God and to exercise faith in Him and what He was doing in the world; and that was Rahab!**

- Rahab is an important example of how the mercy and grace of God is shown toward those who are the objects of His wrath, but who turn their backs on this sinful and rebellious world and cry to Him for mercy!
- Note how the truth of Phil. 1:6 was carried out in the case of Rahab

22 ☐

● Meyer: *“Wherever there is a Rahab who, amid much sin and ignorance, is living up to the truth she has, and longs for more, God will take her hand and lead her to Himself.”*

- 1) Matt. 9:21-22 & Mk. 27-34 The woman who touched Jesus’ garment
- 2) Acts 8:32-36 The Ethiopian Eunuch
- 3) Acts 10 Cornelius the Gentile centurion

23 ☐

**Rahab is also a type of the Gentile sinners who are permitted to share in the inheritance of the redeemed!**

● I Peter 2:10 *“Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*

24 ☐

● Eph. 2:12-13 & 19-20 - Once we were *“... separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.”*

● Verses 19-20 *“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.”*

25 ☐

● Rahab became a child of the promise, one who also was able to enter God’s rest! This was because of her faith, her fear of God and her willingness to separate herself from the unbelieving world. It was because of her willingness to identify herself with the people of Israel, signified by the scarlet thread [which represents the saving efficacy of the blood of the Savior].