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The Spirit to Succeed: Overcoming the Past to Embrace the Future

Narrative events of Sefer Yehoshua, Chapters 1 – 5

1 God's 3X charge to Yehoshua after Moshe's death: חזק ואמץ. Yehoshua's command to the officers to prepare people for crossing Yarden in 3 days time. Yehoshua's charge to Reuven, Gad and ½ Menashe.

2 Yehoshua sends 2 spies to Yericho. With Rachav's help, they evade capture and return with a glowing report.

3 The journey to the Yarden commences with specific instructions to Israel – "follow the ark", and to Kohanim – "carry ark before the people". 12 men are appointed. The Kohanim enter the water, the river stops flowing, the waters form a wall and the people cross.

4 God tells Yehoshua that the 12 men must remove 12 commemorative stones from under the feet of the Kohanim to be conveyed to the place of lodging. They do so and Yehoshua puts 12 other stones in their place. The people complete the passage, the Kohanim emerge on the other side and the stones are conveyed to Gilgal.

5 The Canaanites are alarmed by news of the Yarden's halt. God tells Yehoshua to prepare knives of flint in order to circumcise the people who were not circumcised at the time of the Exodus. This is done and the site is called Gilgal in commemoration. The people celebrate the Pesach and the miraculous manna ceases on the next day. An angelic messenger appears to Yehoshua at the outskirts of Yericho and bids Yehoshua to remove his shoes.

1. עברו בקרב המחנה וצוו את העם לאמר הכינו לכם צידה כי בעוד שלשת ימים אתם עברים את הירדן הזה (א:יא)=====ויאפו את הבצק אשר הוציאו ממצרים עגת מצות כי לא חמץ כי גרשו ממצרים ולא יכלו להתמהמה וגם צדה לא עשו להם (יב:לט).

2. וישכם יהושע בבקר ויסעו מהשטים ויבאו עד הירדן הוא וכל בני ישראל וילנו שם טרם יעברו (ג:א)=====ויהי בחצי הלילה וה' הכה כל בכור בארץ מצרים...ותחזק מצרים על העם למהר לשלחם מן הארץ...(יב:כט-לג).

3. ויאמר יהושע אל הכהנים לאמר שאו את ארון הברית ועברו לפני העם...(ג:ו)=====ויסע מלאך האלקים ההלך לפני מחנה ישראל וילך מאחריהם...(יד:יט).

4. ויאמר יהושע בזאת תדעון כי א-ל חי בקרבכם והורש יוריש מפניכם את הכנעני...הנה ארון הברית אדון כל הארץ עבר לפניכם בירדן (ג:י-יא)=====ויאמר ה' אל משה מה תצעק אלי דבר אל בני ישראל ויסעו (יד:טו).

5. ויבאו בני ישראל בתוך הים ביבשה והמים להם חומה מימנם ומשמאלם (יד:כב)=====ויעמדו המים הירדים מלמעלה קמו נד אחד הרחק מאד מאדם העיר אשר מצד צרתן...(ג:טז).

פירוש ר' אברהם בן עזרא לשמות יד:יג

התיצבו וראו את ישועת ה' - כי אתם לא תעשו מלחמה רק תראו את ישועת ה' אשר יעשה לכם היום . יש לתמוה איך יירא מחנה גדול של שש מאות אלף איש מהרודפים אחריהם? ולמה לא ילחמו על נפשם ועל בניהם ? **התשובה :כי המצרים היו אדונים לישראל וזה הדור היוצא ממצרים למד מנעוריו לסבול עול מצרים ונפשו שפלה. ואיך יוכל עתה להלחם עם אדוניו**? והיו ישראל נרפים ואינם מלומדים למלחמה. הלא תראה כי עמלק בא בעם מועט ולולי תפלת משה היה חולש את ישראל. **והשם לבדו שהוא עושה גדולות. ולו נתכנו עלילות. סבב שמתו כל העם היוצא ממצרים הזכרים. כי אין כח בהם להלחם בכנענים, עד שקם דור אחר דור המדבר שלא ראו גלות. והיתה להם נפש גבוהה כאשר הזכרתי בדברי משה בפרשת ואלה שמות.**

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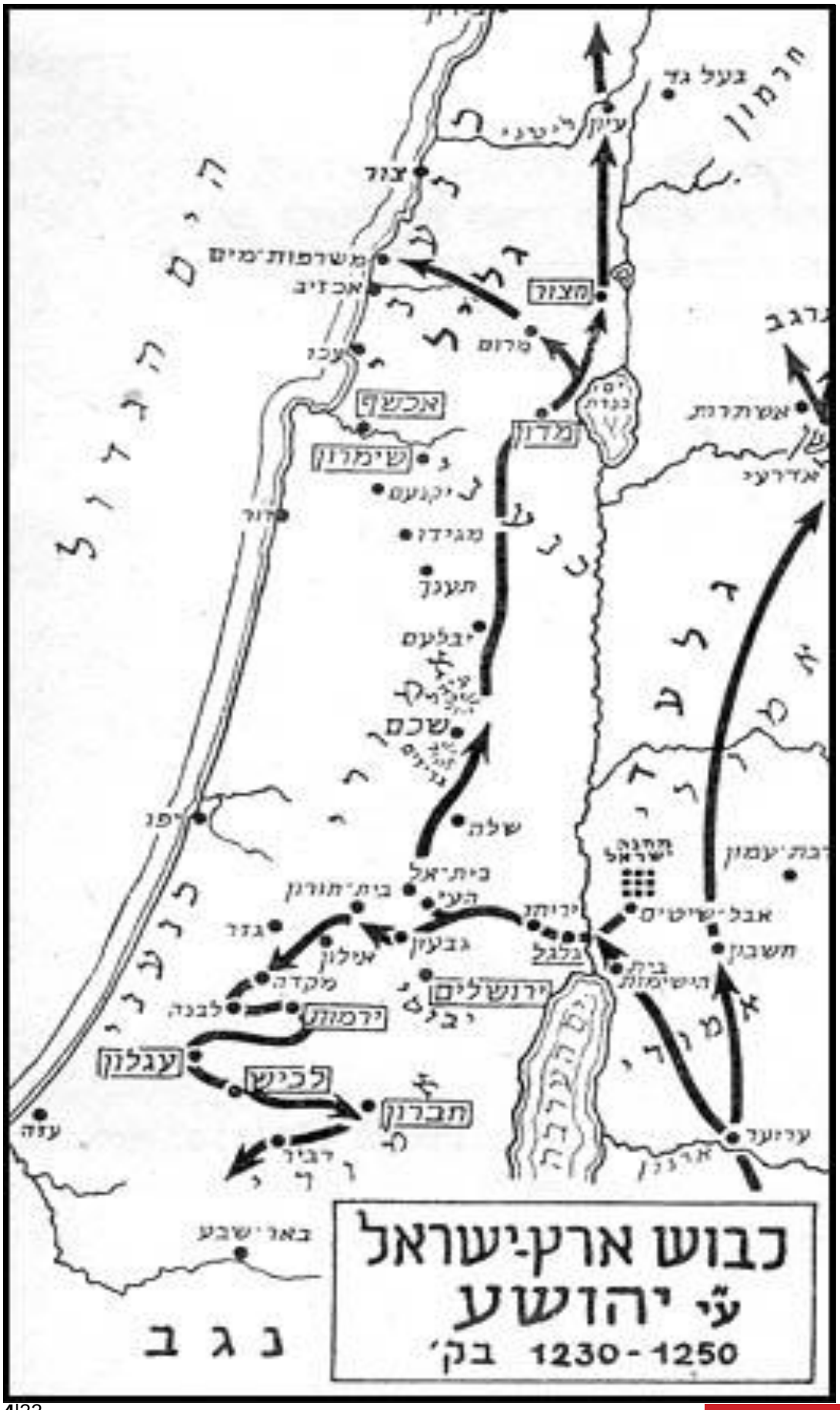
Rambam – Guide to the Perplexed 3:32

…There occurs in the Torah a passage that contains exactly the same idea; it is the following: "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said: Lest the people have a change of heart when they see war and return to Egypt. God led the people round about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea"... (Exod. 13:17). Here God led the people about, away from the direct road that He originally intended, because He feared that they might meet on that way with hardships too great for their ordinary strength; He took them by another road in order to obtain His original goal. In the same manner God refrained from prescribing what the people by their natural disposition would be incapable of obeying, and gave the above-mentioned commandments as a means of securing His chief objective – to spread a knowledge of Him [among the people], and to cause them to reject idolatry. It is contrary to man's nature that he should suddenly abandon all the different kinds of Divine service and the different customs in which he has been brought up, and which have been so general, that they were considered as a matter of course; **it would be just as if a person trained to work as a slave with mortar and bricks, or similar things, should interrupt his work, clean his hands, and at once fight with real giants.**

It was the result of God's wisdom that the Israelites were led about in the wilderness until they acquired courage. For it is a well-known fact that travelling in the wilderness and privation of bodily enjoyments such as bathing, produce courage, while the reverse is the source of faint-heartedness: besides, another generation rose during the wanderings that had not been accustomed to degradation and slavery. All the travelling in the wilderness was regulated by Divine commands through Moses…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אשתרות
אדרעי
רבת-עמון
חרמון

א׳1

וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד ה' וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן־נוּן מְשָׁרֵת מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:	After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' attendant:
מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי מֵת וְעַתָּה קוּם עְבֹר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה אַתָּה וְכָל־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָהֶם לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:	"My servant Moses is dead. Prepare to cross the Jordan, together with all this people, into the land that I am giving to the Israelites.
כָּל־מָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְרֹךְ כַּף־רַגְלְכֶם בּוֹ לָכֶם נְתַתִּיו כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל־מֹשֶׁה:	Every spot on which your foot treads I give to you, as I promised Moses.
מֵהַמִּדְבָּר וְהַלְּבָנוֹן הַזֶּה וְעַד־הַנָּהָר הַגָּדוֹל נְהַר־פְּרָת כֹּל אֶרֶץ הַחִתִּים וְעַד־הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל מְבוֹא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ יִהְיֶה גְּבוּלְכֶם:	Your territory shall extend from the wilderness and the Lebanon to the Great River, the River Euphrates [on the east]—the whole Hittite country—and up to the Mediterranean Sea on the west.
לֹא־יִתְיַצֵּב אִישׁ לְפָנֶיךָ כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי עִם־מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ לֹא אַרְפְּךָ וְלֹא אֶעָזְבֶךָּ:	No one shall be able to resist you as long as you live. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you.
חֲזַק וֶאֱמָץ כִּי אַתָּה תַּנְחִיל אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לַאֲבוֹתָם לָתֵת לָהֶם:	**"Be strong and resolute, for you shall apportion to this people the land that I swore to their fathers to assign to them.**
רַק חֲזַק וֶאֱמַץ מְאֹד לִשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל־הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי אַל־תָּסׇר מִמֶּנּוּ יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאול לְמַעַן תַּשְׂכִּיל בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ:	**But you must be very strong and resolute to observe faithfully all the Teaching that My servant Moses enjoined upon you. Do not deviate from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.**
לֹא־יָמוּשׁ סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ וְהָגִיתָ בּוֹ יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה לְמַעַן תִּשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל־הַכָּתוּב בּוֹ כִּי־אָז תַּצְלִיחַ אֶת־דְּרָכֶךָ וְאָז תַּשְׂכִּיל:	Let not this Book of the Teaching cease from your lips, but recite it day and night, so that you may observe faithfully all that is written in it. Only then will you prosper in your undertakings and only then will you be successful.
הֲלֹוא צִוִּיתִיךָ חֲזַק וֶאֱמָץ אַל־תַּעֲרֹץ וְאַל־תֵּחָת כִּי עִמְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ: (פ)	**"I charge you: Be strong and resolute; do not be terrified or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."**
וַיְצַו יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־שֹׁטְרֵי הָעָם לֵאמֹר:	Joshua thereupon gave orders to the officials of the people:

עִבְרוּ ׀ בְּקֶרֶב הַמַּחֲנֶה וְצַוּוּ אֶת־הָעָם לֵאמֹר הָכִינוּ לָכֶם צֵדָה כִּי בְּעוֹד ׀ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה לָבוֹא לָרֶשֶׁת אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָכֶם לְרִשְׁתָּהּ׃ (ס)	"Go through the camp and charge the people thus: Get provisions ready, for in three days' time you are to cross the Jordan, in order to enter and possess the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession."
וְלָרְאוּבֵנִי וְלַגָּדִי וְלַחֲצִי שֵׁבֶט הַמְנַשֶּׁה אָמַר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר׃	Then Joshua said to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,
זָכוֹר אֶת־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶתְכֶם מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־ה' לֵאמֹר ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם מֵנִיחַ לָכֶם וְנָתַן לָכֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת׃	"Remember what Moses the servant of the LORD enjoined upon you, when he said: 'The LORD your God is granting you a haven; He has assigned this territory to you.'
נְשֵׁיכֶם טַפְּכֶם וּמִקְנֵיכֶם יֵשְׁבוּ בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָכֶם מֹשֶׁה בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן וְאַתֶּם תַּעַבְרוּ חֲמֻשִׁים לִפְנֵי אֲחֵיכֶם כֹּל גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל וַעֲזַרְתֶּם אוֹתָם׃	Let your wives, children, and livestock remain in the land that Moses assigned to you on this side of the Jordan; but every one of your fighting men shall go across armed in the van of your kinsmen. And you shall assist them
עַד אֲשֶׁר־יָנִיחַ ה' ׀ לַאֲחֵיכֶם כָּכֶם וְיָרְשׁוּ גַם־הֵמָּה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָהֶם וְשַׁבְתֶּם לְאֶרֶץ יְרֻשַּׁתְכֶם וִירִשְׁתֶּם אוֹתָהּ אֲשֶׁר ׀ נָתַן לָכֶם מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד ה' בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִזְרַח הַשָּׁמֶשׁ׃	until the LORD has given your kinsmen a haven, such as you have, and they too have gained possession of the land that the LORD your God has assigned to them. Then you may return to the land on the east side of the Jordan, which Moses the servant of the LORD assigned to you as your possession, and you may possess it."
וַיַּעֲנוּ אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־צִוִּיתָנוּ נַעֲשֶׂה וְאֶל־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁלָחֵנוּ נֵלֵךְ׃	They answered Joshua, "We will do everything you have commanded us and we will go wherever you send us.
כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַעְנוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה כֵּן נִשְׁמַע אֵלֶיךָ רַק יִהְיֶה ה' אֱ-לֹהֶיךָ עִמָּךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִם־מֹשֶׁה׃	We will obey you just as we obeyed Moses; let but the LORD your God be with you as He was with Moses!
כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יַמְרֶה אֶת־פִּיךָ וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע אֶת־דְּבָרֶיךָ לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־תְּצַוֶּנּוּ יוּמָת רַק חֲזַק וֶאֱמָץ׃ (פ)	**Any man who flouts your commands and does not obey every order you give him shall be put to death. Only be strong and resolute!"**

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Yehoshua's Biography

Exodus 17:8 – 16	Amalek	**Warrior**
Exodus 24:12 – 18	Ascent to Sinai	**Apprentice**
Exodus 32:15 – 19	Golden Calf	**Loyalist**
Exodus 33:7 – 11	Aftermath	**Devoted Pupil**
Numbers 11:23 – 30	Crisis	**Defender**
Numbers 13:1 – 14:10	Spies	**Braveheart**
Numbers 27:12 – 23	Initiation	**Inspired**
Deuteronomy 31(7,23)	Inauguration	**חזק ואמץ X 2**
Deuteronomy 34	Moshe's death	**Wise**

Talmud Bavli, Tractate *Bava Batra* 15a

The verse states that "There Moshe the servant of God died" (Deuteronomy 34:5). Is it possible that Moshe had died and yet he wrote the verses that follow?

Rather, Moshe composed up to this point, and Yehoshua completed the Torah. So says Rabbi Yehuda.

Said to him Rabbi Shimon: Is it possible that the Torah lacked even a single letter when Moshe commanded the Levites to "take this book of the Torah and place it next to the ark of the covenant of God your Lord…" (Deuteronomy 31:26)? Rather, up until this point (describing Moshe's death) God dictated the text and Moshe repeated it and wrote. After this point, God dictated the text and Moshe wrote it while in tears.

ב׳2

וַיִּשְׁלַ֨ח יְהוֹשֻׁ֜עַ בִּן־נ֗וּן מִן־הַשִּׁטִּים֙ שְׁנַ֣יִם־ אֲנָשִׁ֔ים מְרַגְּלִ֖ים חֶ֣רֶשׁ לֵאמֹ֑ר לְכ֣וּ רְא֗וּ אֶת־ הָאָ֙רֶץ֙ וְאֶת־יְרִיח֔וֹ וַיֵּלְכ֕וּ וַיָּבֹ֖אוּ בֵּית־אִשָּׁ֣ה זוֹנָ֑ה וּשְׁמָ֖הּ רָחָ֥ב וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ־שָֽׁמָּה׃	Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim, saying, “Go, reconnoiter the region of Jericho.” So they set out, and they came to the house of a harlot named Rahab and lodged there.
וַיֵּאָמַ֥ר לְמֶֽלֶךְ־יְרִיח֖וֹ לֵאמֹ֑ר הִנֵּ֨ה אֲנָשִׁ֤ים בָּ֙אוּ֙ הֵ֣נָּה הַלַּ֔יְלָה מִבְּנֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל לַחְפֹּ֥ר אֶת־הָאָֽרֶץ׃	The king of Jericho was told, “Some men have come here tonight, Israelites, to spy out the country.”
וַיִּשְׁלַ֣ח מֶֽלֶךְ־יְרִיח֗וֹ אֶל־רָחָב֙ לֵאמֹ֔ר הוֹצִ֕יאִי הָאֲנָשִׁ֥ים הַבָּאִ֖ים אֵלַ֑יִךְ אֲשֶׁר־בָּ֣אוּ לְבֵיתֵ֔ךְ כִּ֥י לַחְפֹּ֖ר אֶת־כָּל־הָאָ֥רֶץ בָּֽאוּ׃	The king of Jericho thereupon sent orders to Rahab: “Produce the men who came to you and entered your house, for they have come to spy out the whole country.”
וַתִּקַּ֥ח הָאִשָּׁ֛ה אֶת־שְׁנֵ֥י הָאֲנָשִׁ֖ים וַתִּצְפְּנָ֑ו וַתֹּ֣אמֶר ׀ כֵּ֣ן בָּ֣אוּ אֵלַ֣י הָאֲנָשִׁ֔ים וְלֹ֥א יָדַ֖עְתִּי מֵאַ֥יִן הֵֽמָּה׃	The woman, however, had taken the two men and hidden them. “It is true,” she said, “the men did come to me, but I didn’t know where they were from.
וַיְהִ֣י הַשַּׁ֗עַר לִסְגֹּ֛ר בַּחֹ֖שֶׁךְ וְהָאֲנָשִׁ֣ים יָצָ֑אוּ לֹ֣א יָדַ֔עְתִּי אָ֥נָה הָלְכ֖וּ הָאֲנָשִׁ֑ים רִדְפ֥וּ מַהֵ֛ר אַחֲרֵיהֶ֖ם כִּ֥י תַשִּׂיגֽוּם׃	And at dark, when the gate was about to be closed, the men left; and I don’t know where the men went. Quick, go after them, for you can overtake them.”—
וְהִ֣יא הֶעֱלָתַ֔ם הַגָּ֖גָה וַתִּטְמְנֵ֣ם בְּפִשְׁתֵּ֣י הָעֵ֔ץ הָעֲרֻכ֥וֹת לָ֖הּ עַל־הַגָּֽג׃	Now she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under some stalks of flax which she had lying on the roof.—
וְהָאֲנָשִׁ֞ים רָדְפ֣וּ אַחֲרֵיהֶ֗ם דֶּ֚רֶךְ הַיַּרְדֵּ֔ן עַ֖ל הַמַּעְבְּר֑וֹת וְהַשַּׁ֗עַר סָגְר֛וּ אַחֲרֵ֥י כַּאֲשֶׁ֖ר יָצְא֥וּ הָרֹדְפִ֖ים אַחֲרֵיהֶֽם׃	So the men pursued them in the direction of the Jordan down to the fords; and no sooner had the pursuers gone out than the gate was shut behind them.
וְהֵ֣מָּה טֶ֔רֶם יִשְׁכָּ֖בוּן וְהִ֣יא עָלְתָ֑ה עֲלֵיהֶ֖ם עַל־ הַגָּֽג׃	The spies had not yet gone to sleep when she came up to them on the roof.
וַתֹּ֣אמֶר אֶל־הָאֲנָשִׁ֗ים יָדַ֙עְתִּי֙ כִּֽי־נָתַ֣ן ה׳ לָכֶ֔ם אֶת־הָאָ֖רֶץ וְכִֽי־נָפְלָ֣ה אֵימַתְכֶ֣ם עָלֵ֑ינוּ וְכִ֣י נָמֹ֗גוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵ֛י הָאָ֖רֶץ מִפְּנֵיכֶֽם׃	**She said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given the country to you, because dread of you has fallen upon us, and all the inhabitants of the land are quaking before you.**
כִּ֣י שָׁמַ֗עְנוּ אֵ֚ת אֲשֶׁר־הוֹבִ֣ישׁ ה׳ אֶת־מֵ֣י יַם־ סוּף֮ מִפְּנֵיכֶם֒ בְּצֵאתְכֶ֣ם מִמִּצְרָ֔יִם וַאֲשֶׁ֣ר עֲשִׂיתֶ֔ם לִשְׁנֵ֥י מַלְכֵ֖י הָאֱמֹרִ֑י אֲשֶׁ֤ר בְּעֵבֶר֙ הַיַּרְדֵּ֔ן לְסִיחֹ֖ן וּלְעֹ֣וג אֲשֶׁ֣ר הֶחֱרַמְתֶּ֔ם אוֹתָֽם׃	**For we have heard how the LORD dried up the waters of the Sea of Reeds for you when you left Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite**

	kings across the Jordan, whom you doomed.
וַנִּשְׁמַע וַיִּמַּס לְבָבֵנוּ וְלֹא־קָמָה עוֹד רוּחַ בְּאִישׁ מִפְּנֵיכֶם כִּי ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם הוּא אֱ-לֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת׃	**When we heard about it, we lost heart, and no man had any more spirit left because of you; for the LORD your God is the only God in heaven above and on earth below.**
וְעַתָּה הִשָּׁבְעוּ־נָא לִי בַּה' כִּי־עָשִׂיתִי עִמָּכֶם חָסֶד וַעֲשִׂיתֶם גַּם־אַתֶּם עִם־בֵּית אָבִי חֶסֶד וּנְתַתֶּם לִי אוֹת אֱמֶת׃	Now, since I have shown loyalty to you, swear to me by the LORD that you in turn will show loyalty to my family. Provide me with a reliable sign
וְהַחֲיִתֶּם אֶת־אָבִי וְאֶת־אִמִּי וְאֶת־אַחַי וְאֶת־אחותי [אַחְיוֹתַי] וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם וְהִצַּלְתֶּם אֶת־נַפְשֹׁתֵינוּ מִמָּוֶת׃	that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and save us from death."
וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ הָאֲנָשִׁים נַפְשֵׁנוּ תַחְתֵּיכֶם לָמוּת אִם לֹא תַגִּידוּ אֶת־דְּבָרֵנוּ זֶה וְהָיָה בְּתֵת־ה' לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְעָשִׂינוּ עִמָּךְ חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת׃	The men answered her, "Our persons are pledged for yours, even to death! If you do not disclose this mission of ours, we will show you true loyalty when the LORD gives us the land."
וַתּוֹרִדֵם בַּחֶבֶל בְּעַד הַחַלּוֹן כִּי בֵיתָהּ בְּקִיר הַחוֹמָה וּבַחוֹמָה הִיא יוֹשֶׁבֶת׃	She let them down by a rope through the window—for her dwelling was at the outer side of the city wall and she lived in the actual wall.
וַתֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הָהָרָה לֵכוּ פֶּן־יִפְגְּעוּ בָכֶם הָרֹדְפִים וְנַחְבֵּתֶם שָׁמָּה שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים עַד שׁוֹב הָרֹדְפִים וְאַחַר תֵּלְכוּ לְדַרְכְּכֶם׃	She said to them, "Make for the hills, so that the pursuers may not come upon you. Stay there in hiding three days, until the pursuers return; then go your way."
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הָאֲנָשִׁים נְקִיִּם אֲנַחְנוּ מִשְּׁבֻעָתֵךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁבַּעְתָּנוּ׃	But the men warned her, "We will be released from this oath which you have made us take
הִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ בָאִים בָּאָרֶץ אֶת־תִּקְוַת חוּט הַשָּׁנִי הַזֶּה תִּקְשְׁרִי בֶּחַלּוֹן אֲשֶׁר הוֹרַדְתֵּנוּ בּוֹ וְאֶת־אָבִיךְ וְאֶת־אִמֵּךְ וְאֶת־אַחַיִךְ וְאֵת כָּל־בֵּית אָבִיךְ תַּאַסְפִי אֵלַיִךְ הַבָּיְתָה׃	**[unless,] when we invade the country, you tie this length of crimson cord to the window through which you let us down. Bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your family together in your house;**
וְהָיָה כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא מִדַּלְתֵי בֵיתֵךְ ׀ הַחוּצָה דָּמוֹ בְרֹאשׁוֹ וַאֲנַחְנוּ נְקִיִּם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה אִתָּךְ בַּבַּיִת דָּמוֹ בְרֹאשֵׁנוּ אִם־יָד תִּהְיֶה־בּוֹ׃	and if anyone ventures outside the doors of your house, his blood will be on his head, and we shall be clear. But if a hand is laid on anyone who remains in the house with you, his blood shall be on our heads.

וְאִם־תַּגִּידִי אֶת־דְּבָרֵנוּ זֶה וְהָיִינוּ נְקִיִּם מִשְּׁבֻעָתֵךְ אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁבַּעְתָּנוּ׃	And if you disclose this mission of ours, we shall likewise be released from the oath which you made us take.”
וַתֹּאמֶר כְּדִבְרֵיכֶם כֵּן־הוּא וַתְּשַׁלְּחֵם וַיֵּלֵכוּ וַתִּקְשֹׁר אֶת־תִּקְוַת הַשָּׁנִי בַּחַלּוֹן׃	She replied, “Let it be as you say.” She sent them on their way, and they left; and she tied the crimson cord to the window.
וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ הָהָרָה וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים עַד־שָׁבוּ הָרֹדְפִים וַיְבַקְשׁוּ הָרֹדְפִים בְּכָל־הַדֶּרֶךְ וְלֹא מָצָאוּ׃	They went straight to the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers turned back. And so the pursuers, searching all along the road, did not find them.
וַיָּשֻׁבוּ שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּרְדוּ מֵהָהָר וַיַּעַבְרוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן־נוּן וַיְסַפְּרוּ־לוֹ אֵת כָּל־הַמִּצְאוֹת אוֹתָם׃	Then the two men came down again from the hills and crossed over. They came to Joshua son of Nun and reported to him all that had happened to them.
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּי־נָתַן ה' בְּיָדֵנוּ אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וְגַם־נָמֹגוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ מִפָּנֵינוּ׃ (ס)	They said to Joshua, “The LORD has delivered the whole land into our power; in fact, all the inhabitants of the land are quaking before us.”

Moshe’s Spies versus Yehoshua’s Spies
Numbers 14 – 15 vs. Joshua 2

- God’s command vs. Yehoshua’s initiative
- 12 (1 from each tribe) vs. 2
- Named “leaders of the people” vs. anonymous men
- Lengthy, detailed mission vs. short, general mission
- Public send-off vs. secret dispatch
- No report of enemy threats vs. detection, hunt and hiding
- Public return bearing trophy fruit and report to Moshe, Aharon and entire people vs. private return and report only to Yehoshua
- Frightened diagnosis of defeat vs. confident verdict of victory
- FAILURE VS. SUCCESS

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From Harlot to Heroine – Rachav's Remarkable Transformation

(1) מכילתא דר׳ ישמעאל – פרשת יתרו – יח:יא

יא. עתה ידעתי כי גדול ה׳ מכל האלהים. עד עכשיו לא הודה לו בדבר כי גדול ה׳, אמר, מתחלה לא היה עבד יכול לברוח ממצרים שהיתה סוגרת ומסוגרת, ועכשיו הוציא ששים ריבוא בני אדם ממצרים, לכך נאמר כי גדול ה׳. ומה ת״ל מכל האלהים, אמרו: לא הניח יתרו עבודה זרה בכל העולם, שלא חזר עליה ועבדה, שנאמר מכל האלהים. ונעמן הודה בדבר יותר ממנו, שנא׳ (מל״ב ה) הנה נא ידעתי כי אין אלהים בכל הארץ כי אם בישראל. **וכן רחב הזונה אומרת [לגירסת איפת צדק – ״הודה אותן ביותר״], (יהושע ב) ה׳ אלקיכם הוא אלקים בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת.** כי בדבר אשר זדו עליהם. אמר: מכירו הייתי לשעבר ועכשיו ביותר שנתגדל שמו בעולם, שבמה שחשבו מצרים לאבד את ישראל, בו בדבר נפרע מהם המקום, שנאמר כי בדבר אשר זדו עליהם.

Exodus Chapter 12 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: 2 This month shall mark for you the beginning of the months; it shall be the first of the months of the year for you. 3 Speak to the whole community of Israel and say that on the tenth of this month each of them shall take a lamb to a family, a lamb to a household. 4 But if the household is too small for a lamb, let him share one with a neighbor who dwells nearby, in proportion to the number of persons: you shall contribute for the lamb according to what each household will eat. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a yearling male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 You shall keep watch over it until the fourteenth day of this month; and all the assembled congregation of the Israelites shall slaughter it at twilight. 7 **They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they are to eat it.** 8 They shall eat the flesh that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. 9 Do not eat any of it raw, or cooked in any way with water, but roasted—head, legs, and entrails—over the fire. 10 You shall not leave any of it over until morning; if any of it is left until morning, you shall burn it.

11 This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly: it is a passover offering to the Lord. 12 For that night I will go through the land of Egypt and strike down every first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and I will mete out punishments to all the gods of Egypt, I the Lord. 13 **And the blood on the houses where you are staying shall be a sign for you: when I see the blood I will pass over you, so that no plague will destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.**

(2) תלמוד בבלי – מסכת מגילה יד:

אמר רב נחמן חולדה מבני בניו של יהושע היתה כתיב הכא (מלכים ב כב) בן חרחס וכתיב התם (יהושע כד) בתמנת חרס. איתיביה רב עינא סבא לרב נחמן שמונה נביאים והם כהנים יצאו מרחב הזונה ואלו הן: נריה ברוך ושריה מחסיה ירמיה חלקיה חנמאל ושלום, רבי יהודה אומר אף חולדה הנביאה מבני בניה של רחב הזונה היתה. כתיב הכא בן תקוה וכתיב התם (יהושע ב) את תקות חוט השני. אמר ליה עינא סבא ואמרי לה פתיא אוכמא, מיני ומינך תסתיים שמעתא, דאיגיירא ונסבה יהושע.

ג׳ 3

וַיַּשְׁכֵּם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּסְעוּ מֵהַשִּׁטִּים וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־הַיַּרְדֵּן הוּא וְכָל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּלִנוּ שָׁם טֶרֶם יַעֲבְרוּ:	Early next morning, Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and marched to the Jordan. They did not cross immediately, but spent the night there.
וַיְהִי מִקְצֵה שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים וַיַּעַבְרוּ הַשֹּׁטְרִים בְּקֶרֶב הַמַּחֲנֶה:	Three days later, the officials went through the camp
וַיְצַוּוּ אֶת־הָעָם לֵאמֹר כִּרְאוֹתְכֶם אֶת אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־ה׳ אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם וְהַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם נֹשְׂאִים אֹתוֹ וְאַתֶּם תִּסְעוּ מִמְּקוֹמְכֶם וַהֲלַכְתֶּם אַחֲרָיו:	and charged the people as follows: “When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God being borne by the levitical priests, you shall move forward. Follow it—
אַךְ ׀ רָחוֹק יִהְיֶה בֵּינֵיכֶם וּבינו [וּבֵינָיו] כְּאַלְפַּיִם אַמָּה בַּמִּדָּה אַל־תִּקְרְבוּ אֵלָיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר־תֵּדְעוּ אֶת־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר תֵּלְכוּ־בָהּ כִּי לֹא עֲבַרְתֶּם בַּדֶּרֶךְ מִתְּמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם: (ס)	but keep a distance of some two thousand cubits from it, never coming any closer to it—so that you may know by what route to march, since it is a road you have not traveled before.”
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הָעָם הִתְקַדָּשׁוּ כִּי מָחָר יַעֲשֶׂה ה׳ בְּקִרְבְּכֶם נִפְלָאוֹת:	And Joshua said to the people, “Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform wonders in your midst.”
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים לֵאמֹר שְׂאוּ אֶת־אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית וְעִבְרוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית וַיֵּלְכוּ לִפְנֵי הָעָם: (ס)	Then Joshua ordered the priests, “Take up the Ark of the Covenant and advance to the head of the people.” And they took up the Ark of the Covenant and marched at the head of the people.
וַיֹּאמֶר ה׳ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אָחֵל גַּדֶּלְךָ בְּעֵינֵי כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יֵדְעוּן כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי עִם־מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ:	The LORD said to Joshua, “This day, for the first time, I will exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so that they shall know that I will be with you as I was with Moses.
וְאַתָּה תְּצַוֶּה אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים נֹשְׂאֵי אֲרוֹן־הַבְּרִית לֵאמֹר כְּבֹאֲכֶם עַד־קְצֵה מֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן בַּיַּרְדֵּן תַּעֲמֹדוּ: (פ)	For your part, command the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant as follows: When you reach the edge of the waters of the Jordan, make a halt in the Jordan.”
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל גְּשׁוּ הֵנָּה וְשִׁמְעוּ אֶת־דִּבְרֵי ה׳ אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם:	And Joshua said to the Israelites, “Come closer and listen to the words of the LORD your God.
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּזֹאת תֵּדְעוּן כִּי אֵ-ל חַי בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְהוֹרֵשׁ יוֹרִישׁ מִפְּנֵיכֶם אֶת־הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְאֶת־הַחִתִּי וְאֶת־הַחִוִּי וְאֶת־הַפְּרִזִּי וְאֶת־הַגִּרְגָּשִׁי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַיְבוּסִי:	By this,” Joshua continued, “you shall know that a living God is among you, and that He will dispossess for you the

	Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites:
הִנֵּה֙ אֲרֹ֣ון הַבְּרִ֔ית אֲדֹ֖ון כָּל־הָאָ֑רֶץ עֹבֵ֥ר לִפְנֵיכֶ֖ם בַּיַּרְדֵּֽן׃	the Ark of the Covenant of the Sovereign of all the earth is advancing before you into the Jordan.
וְעַתָּ֕ה קְח֥וּ לָכֶ֖ם שְׁנֵ֣י עָשָׂ֑ר אִ֚ישׁ מִשִּׁבְטֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל אִישׁ־אֶחָ֖ד אִישׁ־אֶחָ֥ד לַשָּֽׁבֶט׃	Now select twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from each tribe.
וְהָיָ֗ה כְּנ֤וֹחַ כַּפּוֹת֙ רַגְלֵ֣י הַכֹּהֲנִ֔ים נֹשְׂאֵ֖י אֲרֹ֣ון ה' אֲדֹ֑ון כָּל־הָאָ֣רֶץ בְּמֵ֤י הַיַּרְדֵּן֙ מֵ֣י הַיַּרְדֵּ֔ן יִכָּרֵ֖תוּן הַמַּ֣יִם הַיֹּרְדִ֑ים מִלְמָ֣עְלָ֔ה וְיַעַמְד֖וּ נֵ֥ד אֶחָֽד׃	When the feet of the priests bearing the Ark of the LORD, the Sovereign of all the earth, come to rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan—the water coming from upstream—will be cut off and will stand in a single heap.”
וַיְהִ֗י בִּנְסֹ֤עַ הָעָם֙ מֵאָ֣הֳלֵיהֶ֔ם לַעֲבֹ֖ר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּ֑ן וְהַכֹּהֲנִ֗ים נֹשְׂאֵי֙ הָאָרֹ֣ון הַבְּרִ֔ית לִפְנֵ֖י הָעָֽם׃	When the people set out from their encampment to cross the Jordan, the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant were at the head of the people.
וּכְבֹ֗וא נֹשְׂאֵי֙ הָאָרֹ֣ון עַד־הַיַּרְדֵּ֔ן וְרַגְלֵ֥י הַכֹּהֲנִ֖ים נֹשְׂאֵ֣י הָאָרֹ֑ון נִטְבְּל֣וּ בִקְצֵ֔ה הַמָּ֖יִם וְהַיַּרְדֵּ֥ן מָלֵ֛א עַל־כָּל־גְּדוֹתָ֖יו כֹּ֥ל יְמֵי־קָצִֽיר׃	Now the Jordan keeps flowing over its entire bed throughout the harvest season. But as soon as the bearers of the Ark reached the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the Ark dipped into the water at its edge,
וַיַּעַמְד֣וּ הַמַּ֗יִם הַיֹּרְדִים֮ מִלְמַ֣עְלָה֒ קָ֣מוּ נֵ֤ד־אֶחָד֙ הַרְחֵ֣ק מְאֹ֔ד באדם [מֵאָדָ֖ם] הָעִ֣יר אֲשֶׁ֣ר מִצַּ֣ד צָרְתָ֑ן וְהַיֹּרְדִ֗ים עַ֚ל יָ֣ם הָעֲרָבָ֔ה יָ֖ם־הַמֶּ֣לַח תַּ֑מּוּ נִכְרֵ֣תוּ וְהָעָ֔ם עָבְר֖וּ נֶ֥גֶד יְרִיחֹֽו׃	the waters coming down from upstream piled up in a single heap a great way off, at Adam, the town next to Zarethan; and those flowing away downstream to the Sea of the Arabah (the Dead Sea) ran out completely. So the people crossed near Jericho.
וַיַּעַמְד֣וּ הַכֹּהֲנִ֗ים נֹשְׂאֵי֙ הָאָרֹ֣ון בְּרִית־ה' בֶּחָרָבָ֔ה בְּתֹ֖וךְ הַיַּרְדֵּ֣ן הָכֵ֑ן וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵ֗ל עֹבְרִים֙ בֶּחָרָבָ֔ה עַ֚ד אֲשֶׁר־תַּמּ֣וּ כָל־הַגֹּ֔וי לַעֲבֹ֖ר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּֽן׃	**The priests who bore the Ark of the LORD’s Covenant stood on dry land exactly in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel crossed over on dry land, until the entire nation had finished crossing the Jordan.**

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The Sea of Reeds versus the Jordan River: Exodus 14 – 15 vs. Joshua 3

Hasty and unanticipated exodus vs. plodding and planned crossing

Unexpectedly diverted route vs. dependable guidance to destination

Enemy pursuit and Israelite outcry vs. embrace of destiny and Israelite calm

Moshe's spontaneous reaction vs. Yehoshua's deliberateness

Eastern wind vs. feet of Kohanim

Tunnel-like passage vs. riverbed expanse

Emergence into wilderness of Shur vs. entry into Promised Land

PANICKED OBJECTS VS. CONFIDENT SUBJECTS

Psalms 114

When Israel went forth from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange speech,

Judah became His holy one, Israel, His dominion.

The sea saw them and fled, Jordan ran backward,

mountains skipped like rams, hills like sheep.

What alarmed you, O sea, that you fled, Jordan, that you ran backward,

mountains, that you skipped like rams, hills, like sheep?

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob,

who turned the rock into a pool of water, the flinty rock into a fountain.

ד׳4

וַיְהִי֙ כַּאֲשֶׁר־תַּ֣מּוּ כָל־הַגּ֔וֹי לַעֲבֹ֖ר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּ֑ן (פ) וַיֹּ֣אמֶר ה' אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁ֥עַ לֵאמֹֽר׃	When the entire nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua,
קְח֣וּ לָכֶ֗ם מִן־הָעָם֮ שְׁנֵ֣ים עָשָׂ֣ר אֲנָשִׁ֔ים אִ֥ישׁ־אֶחָ֖ד אִ֣ישׁ־אֶחָ֑ד מִשֵּׁ֖בֶט׃	“Select twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe,
וְצַוּ֥וּ אוֹתָ֖ם לֵאמֹ֑ר שְׂא֣וּ־לָכֶ֗ם מִזֶּ֛ה מִתּ֥וֹךְ הַיַּרְדֵּ֖ן מִמַּצַּ֣ב רַגְלֵ֣י הַכֹּהֲנִ֔ים הָכִ֥ין שְׁתֵּים־עֶשְׂרֵ֖ה אֲבָנִ֑ים וְהַעֲבַרְתֶּ֣ם אוֹתָ֗ם עִמָּכֶם֙ וְהַנִּחֻתֶּ֣ם אוֹתָ֔ם בַּמָּל֕וֹן אֲשֶׁר־תָּלִ֥ינוּ בּ֖וֹ הַלָּֽיְלָה׃ (ס)	and instruct them as follows: Pick up twelve stones from the spot exactly in the middle of the Jordan, where the priests’ feet are standing; take them along with you and deposit them in the place where you will spend the night.”
וַיִּקְרָ֣א יְהוֹשֻׁ֗עַ אֶל־שְׁנֵ֤ים עָשָׂר֙ הָאֲנָשִׁ֔ים אֲשֶׁ֥ר הֵכִ֖ין מִבְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל אִ֣ישׁ אֶחָ֔ד אִ֥ישׁ־אֶחָ֖ד מִשֵּֽׁבֶט׃	Joshua summoned the twelve men whom he had designated among the Israelites, one from each tribe;
וַיֹּ֣אמֶר לָהֶ֗ם יְהוֹשֻׁ֛עַ עִבְר֥וּ לִפְנֵ֖י אֲרוֹן֙ ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶ֔ם אֶל־תּ֖וֹךְ הַיַּרְדֵּ֑ן וְהָרִ֤ימוּ לָכֶם֙ אִ֣ישׁ אֶ֔בֶן אַחַ֖ת עַל־שִׁכְמֹ֑ו לְמִסְפַּ֗ר שִׁבְטֵי֙ בְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל׃	and Joshua said to them, “Walk up to the Ark of the LORD your God, in the middle of the Jordan, and each of you lift a stone onto his shoulder—corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel.
לְמַ֣עַן תִּהְיֶ֤ה זֹּאת֙ אֹ֣ות בְּקִרְבְּכֶ֔ם כִּֽי־יִשְׁאָל֥וּן בְּנֵיכֶ֖ם מָחָ֣ר לֵאמֹ֑ר מָ֚ה הָאֲבָנִ֣ים הָאֵ֔לֶּה לָכֶֽם׃	**This shall serve as a symbol among you: in time to come, when your children ask, ‘What is the meaning of these stones for you?’**
וַאֲמַרְתֶּ֣ם לָהֶ֔ם אֲשֶׁ֣ר נִכְרְת֗וּ מֵימֵי֙ הַיַּרְדֵּ֔ן מִפְּנֵ֖י אֲרֹ֣ון בְּרִית־ה' בְּעָבְרֹ֖ו בַּיַּרְדֵּ֑ן נִכְרְתוּ֙ מֵ֣י הַיַּרְדֵּ֔ן וְהָי֥וּ הָאֲבָנִ֛ים הָאֵ֥לֶּה לְזִכָּר֖וֹן לִבְנֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵ֛ל עַד־עֹולָֽם׃	**you shall tell them, ‘The waters of the Jordan were cut off because of the Ark of the LORD’s Covenant; when it passed through the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.’ And so these stones shall serve the people of Israel as a memorial for all time.”**
וַיַּעֲשׂ֣וּ־כֵ֔ן בְּנֵ֥י־יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל כַּאֲשֶׁ֣ר צִוָּ֣ה יְהוֹשֻׁ֑עַ וַיִּשְׂא֣וּ שְׁתֵּֽי־עֶשְׂרֵ֤ה אֲבָנִים֙ מִתֹּ֣וךְ הַיַּרְדֵּ֔ן כַּאֲשֶׁ֥ר דִּבֶּ֖ר ה' אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁ֑עַ לְמִסְפַּ֗ר שִׁבְטֵי֙ בְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל וַיַּעֲבִרוּם֙ עִמָּ֔ם אֶל־הַמָּלֹ֖ון וַיַּנִּיחוּ֥ם שָֽׁם׃	The Israelites did as Joshua ordered. They picked up twelve stones, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel, from the middle of the Jordan—as the LORD had charged Joshua—and they took them along with them to their night encampment and deposited them there.
וּשְׁתֵּ֤ים עֶשְׂרֵה֙ אֲבָנִ֔ים הֵקִ֖ים יְהוֹשֻׁ֑עַ בְּתֹ֣וךְ הַיַּרְדֵּ֗ן תַּ֚חַת מַצַּ֣ב רַגְלֵ֣י הַכֹּהֲנִ֔ים נֹשְׂאֵ֖י אֲרֹ֣ון הַבְּרִ֑ית וַיִּהְיוּ֙ שָׁ֣ם עַד־הַיֹּ֔ום הַזֶּ֖ה׃	Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the spot where the feet of the priests bearing the Ark of

	the Covenant had stood; and they have remained there to this day.
וְהַכֹּהֲנִים נֹשְׂאֵי הָאָרֹון עֹמְדִים ׀ בְּתֹוךְ הַיַּרְדֵּן עַד תֻּם כָּל־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה ה' אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לְדַבֵּר אֶל־הָעָם כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיְמַהֲרוּ הָעָם וַיַּעֲבֹרוּ׃	The priests who bore the Ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until all the instructions that the LORD had ordered Joshua to convey to the people had been carried out. And so the people speedily crossed over, just as Moses had assured Joshua in his charge to him.
וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר־תַּם כָּל־הָעָם לַעֲבֹור וַיַּעֲבֹר אֲרֹון־ה' וְהַכֹּהֲנִים לִפְנֵי הָעָם׃	And when all the people finished crossing, the Ark of the LORD and the priests advanced to the head of the people.
וַיַּעַבְרוּ בְּנֵי־רְאוּבֵן וּבְנֵי־גָד וַחֲצִי שֵׁבֶט הַמְנַשֶּׁה חֲמֻשִׁים לִפְנֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֲלֵיהֶם מֹשֶׁה׃	The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh went across armed in the van of the Israelites, as Moses had charged them.
כְּאַרְבָּעִים אֶלֶף חֲלוּצֵי הַצָּבָא עָבְרוּ לִפְנֵי ה' לַמִּלְחָמָה אֶל עַרְבֹות יְרִיחֹו׃ (ס)	About forty thousand shock troops went across, at the instance of the LORD, to the steppes of Jericho for battle.
בַּיֹּום הַהוּא גִּדַּל ה' אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּעֵינֵי כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתֹו כַּאֲשֶׁר יָרְאוּ אֶת־מֹשֶׁה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּיו׃ (פ)	On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, so that they revered him all his days as they had revered Moses.
וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר׃	The LORD said to Joshua,
צַוֵּה אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים נֹשְׂאֵי אֲרֹון הָעֵדוּת וְיַעֲלוּ מִן־הַיַּרְדֵּן׃	“Command the priests who bear the Ark of the Pact to come up out of the Jordan.”
וַיְצַו יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים לֵאמֹר עֲלוּ מִן־הַיַּרְדֵּן׃	So Joshua commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan.”
וַיְהִי בעלות [כַּעֲלוֹת] הַכֹּהֲנִים נֹשְׂאֵי אֲרֹון בְּרִית־ה' מִתֹּוךְ הַיַּרְדֵּן נִתְּקוּ כַּפּוֹת רַגְלֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶל הֶחָרָבָה וַיָּשֻׁבוּ מֵי־הַיַּרְדֵּן לִמְקוֹמָם וַיֵּלְכוּ כִתְמוֹל־שִׁלְשׁוֹם עַל־כָּל־גְּדוֹתָיו׃	As soon as the priests who bore the Ark of the LORD’s Covenant came up out of the Jordan, and the feet of the priests stepped onto the dry ground, the waters of the Jordan resumed their course, flowing over its entire bed as before.
וְהָעָם עָלוּ מִן־הַיַּרְדֵּן בֶּעָשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן וַיַּחֲנוּ בַּגִּלְגָּל בִּקְצֵה מִזְרַח יְרִיחֹו׃	**The people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho**.
וְאֵת שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר לָקְחוּ מִן־הַיַּרְדֵּן הֵקִים יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בַּגִּלְגָּל׃	And Joshua set up in Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken from the Jordan.

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וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאֲלוּן בְּנֵיכֶם מָחָר אֶת־אֲבוֹתָם לֵאמֹר מָה הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה:	He charged the Israelites as follows: "In time to come, when your children ask their fathers, 'What is the meaning of those stones?'
וְהוֹדַעְתֶּם אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם לֵאמֹר בַּיַּבָּשָׁה עָבַר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה:	tell your children: 'Here the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry land.'
אֲשֶׁר־הוֹבִישׁ ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם אֶת־מֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן מִפְּנֵיכֶם עַד־עָבְרְכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם לְיַם־סוּף אֲשֶׁר־הוֹבִישׁ מִפָּנֵינוּ עַד־עָבְרֵנוּ:	For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you crossed, just as the LORD your God did to the Sea of Reeds, which He dried up before us until we crossed.
לְמַעַן דַּעַת כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ אֶת־יַד ה' כִּי חֲזָקָה הִיא לְמַעַן יְרֵאתֶם אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם כָּל־הַיָּמִים: (ס)	Thus all the peoples of the earth shall know how mighty is the hand of the LORD, and you shall fear the LORD your God always."

The Twelve Stone Motif

from *Joshua: The Challenge of the Promised Land* by Michael Hattin, Koren Publishers, Jerusalem, 2015.

The significance of twelve stones is obvious and is indicated by the text itself: they represent the twelve tribes of Israel (4:4). In fact, this motif is found in at least two other places in Tanakh that shed much light on the usage here. The first occurs in the immediate aftermath of the revelation at Sinai some forty years before. As the people stood at the foot of the mountain and Moshe prepared to ascend to its peak, God concluded a special covenant with the people of Israel and they agreed to observe His teachings. The passage in Sefer Shemot 24 relates that:

Moshe came and told the people all of God's words and the laws, and the people answered with a single voice saying "we will perform all of the things that God has said". Moshe transcribed all of God's words, arose early the next morning and erected an altar at the foot of the mountain, and placed **twelve standing stones to represent the twelve tribes of Israel**..." (Shemot/Exodus 24:3-11).

In this passage, the twelve stones standing sentinel-like and steadfast next to the altar memorialize the acceptance of God's covenant by the people of Israel.

In a very different passage, from the period of the Aramean empire's ascendancy some five hundred and fifty years after the entry into the land, the twelve stones were again utilized to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. By this time, the people of Israel had shed their tribal divisions to become a nation, but a nation nonetheless divided into two disparate kingdoms. The southern kingdom, populated in the main by the tribe of Yehuda, was ruled by the descendents of David from Jerusalem the capital. The northern kingdom of Israel, comprised of the so-called Ten Tribes, had already began its precipitous descent into idolatry and immorality, a downward spiral that would conclude with its destruction and

exile. A lone voice still dared to proclaim the truth of God's teachings in the face of a hostile king and an estranged people.

The sybaritic message of the false prophets of Baal, who made no appeals for social justice or moral development and in their place offered the numbing balm of empty ceremonial, was forcefully opposed by the fiery Eliyahu (Elijah), who single-handedly confronted eight hundred and fifty of them at Mount Carmel. With the people of Israel massed around the combatants, Eliyahu chided the false prophets who, try as they might, could not persuade Baal to send fire from the heavens to consume their sacrifice. After their noisy but unsuccessful attempts, it was Eliyahu's turn to stand before the people and petition God to respond:

Eliyahu said to all of the people "draw close to me", and all of the people drew close to him. He then repaired the ruined altar of God. Eliyahu took **twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of Ya'acov, whom God had addressed by saying: "Israel shall be your name". He built the stones into an altar in the name of God**..." (Melachim1:18:30-32).

In this context, the twelve stones of Israel constitute the very foundations of the altar, symbol of the Divine service and of the noble attempt to bridge the daunting distance between humanity and the Creator.

Both passages thus link twelve stones with the twelve tribes, as if this ancient and evocative division of the people of Israel, Yaacov's own sons, could somehow be petrified into permanence. In glaring contrast to Moshe's twelve stone pillars, however, that embodied all of the promise of Israel's future, Eliyahu's altar stones are a sad and pathetic reminder of a different time, an earlier epoch before Israel had succumbed to the wiles of idolatry and renounced the Torah that was their heritage. And while Moshe's stones stand apart and separate, Eliyahu's are lovingly brought together to become a cohesive unity.

Returning now to our passage in Sefer Yehoshua, we can better appreciate the symbolism of the twelve stones. Heaped up under the feet of the Kohanim, the twelve stones speak of preserving the transcendent moment when the people of Israel stood united in purpose and unified in trust. The miracle of the Yarden's traversal was made possible by Israel's faith. At the banks of the Yarden, the often uncomfortable dialectic between human enterprise and Divine intervention was harmoniously resolved: guided by His ark, the people of Israel followed with conviction and resolve, and God did not disappoint. The waters ceased to flow, the people took the lead and entered the riverbed, and emerged into Canaan as a nation.

But the crossing of the Yarden was not intended to become a moment frozen in time and an ancient memory. Instead, traversing the river unleashed the dynamic of founding a state. Therefore, the stones could not remain rooted to the riverbed but had to also be borne into Canaan to accompany the people on their journey. Where the people lodged, the stones lodged with them, to indicate that life's most precious lessons of faith must not be reduced to static commemorations.

ה׳5

וַיְהִי כִשְׁמֹעַ כָּל־מַלְכֵי הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן יָמָּה וְכָל־מַלְכֵי הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַיָּם אֶת אֲשֶׁר־הוֹבִישׁ ה' אֶת־מֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד־עברנו [עָבְרָם] וַיִּמַּס לִבָּם וְלֹא־הָיָה בָם עוֹד רוּחַ מִפְּנֵי בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל: (ס)	When all the kings of the Amorites on the western side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites near the Sea, heard how the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the sake of the Israelites until they crossed over, they lost heart, and no spirit was left in them because of the Israelites.
בָּעֵת הַהִיא אָמַר ה' אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עֲשֵׂה לְךָ חַרְבוֹת צֵרִים וְשׁוּב מֹל אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל שֵׁנִית:	**At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and proceed with a second circumcision of the Israelites."**
וַיַּעַשׂ־לוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ חַרְבוֹת צֵרִים וַיָּמָל אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־גִּבְעַת הָעָרְלוֹת:	So Joshua had flint knives made, and the Israelites were circumcised at Gibeath-haaraloth.
וְזֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־מָל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כָּל־הָעָם הַיֹּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם הַזְּכָרִים כֹּל	אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה מֵתוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרָיִם:	This is the reason why Joshua had the circumcision performed: All the people who had come out of Egypt, all the males of military age, had died during the desert wanderings after leaving Egypt.
כִּי־מֻלִים הָיוּ כָּל־הָעָם הַיֹּצְאִים וְכָל־הָעָם הַיִּלֹּדִים בַּמִּדְבָּר בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם לֹא־מָלוּ:	Now, whereas all the people who came out of Egypt had been circumcised, none of the people born after the exodus, during the desert wanderings, had been circumcised.
כִּי	אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה הָלְכוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּמִּדְבָּר עַד־תֹּם כָּל־הַגּוֹי אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה הַיֹּצְאִים מִמִּצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל ה' אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע ה' לָהֶם לְבִלְתִּי הַרְאוֹתָם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לַאֲבוֹתָם לָתֶת לָנוּ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חָלָב וּדְבָשׁ:	For the Israelites had traveled in the wilderness forty years, until the entire nation—the men of military age who had left Egypt—had perished; because they had not obeyed the LORD, and the LORD had sworn never to let them see the land that the LORD had sworn to their fathers to assign to us, a land flowing with milk and honey.
וְאֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם הֵקִים תַּחְתָּם אֹתָם מָל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּי־עֲרֵלִים הָיוּ כִּי לֹא־מָלוּ אוֹתָם בַּדָּרֶךְ:	But He had raised up their sons in their stead; and it was these that Joshua circumcised, for they were uncircumcised, not having been circumcised on the way.
וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר־תַּמּוּ כָל־הַגּוֹי לְהִמּוֹל וַיֵּשְׁבוּ תַחְתָּם בַּמַּחֲנֶה עַד חֳיוֹתָם: (פ)	After the circumcising of the whole nation was completed, they remained

	where they were, in the camp, until they recovered.
וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַיּוֹם גַּלֹּתִי אֶת־חֶרְפַּת מִצְרַיִם מֵעֲלֵיכֶם וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא גִּלְגָּל עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃	And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” So that place was called Gilgal, as it still is.
וַיַּחֲנוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּגִּלְגָּל וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בְּאַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ בָּעֶרֶב בְּעַרְבוֹת יְרִיחוֹ׃	Encamped at Gilgal, in the steppes of Jericho, the Israelites offered the passover sacrifice on the fourteenth day of the month, toward evening.
וַיֹּאכְלוּ מֵעֲבוּר הָאָרֶץ מִמָּחֳרַת הַפֶּסַח מַצּוֹת וְקָלוּי בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃	**On the day after the passover offering, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the country, unleavened bread and parched grain.**
וַיִּשְׁבֹּת הַמָּן מִמָּחֳרָת בְּאָכְלָם מֵעֲבוּר הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא־הָיָה עוֹד לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מָן וַיֹּאכְלוּ מִתְּבוּאַת אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִיא׃ (ס)	**On that same day, when they ate of the produce of the land, the manna ceased. The Israelites got no more manna; that year they ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.**
וַיְהִי בִּהְיוֹת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּירִיחוֹ וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה־אִישׁ עֹמֵד לְנֶגְדּוֹ וְחַרְבּוֹ שְׁלוּפָה בְּיָדוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲלָנוּ אַתָּה אִם־לְצָרֵינוּ׃	Once, when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing before him, drawn sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and asked him, “Are you one of us or of our enemies?”
וַיֹּאמֶר ׀ לֹא כִּי אֲנִי שַׂר־צְבָא־ה' עַתָּה בָּאתִי וַיִּפֹּל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־פָּנָיו אַרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתָּחוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה אֲדֹנִי מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עַבְדּוֹ׃	He replied, “No, I am captain of the LORD’s host. Now I have come!” Joshua threw himself face down to the ground and, prostrating himself, said to him, “What does my lord command his servant?”
וַיֹּאמֶר שַׂר־צְבָא ה' אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ שַׁל־נַעֲלְךָ מֵעַל רַגְלֶךָ כִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹמֵד עָלָיו קֹדֶשׁ הוּא וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כֵּן׃	The captain of the LORD’s host answered Joshua, “Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.
6 ו׳ Now Jericho was shut up tight because of the Israelites; no one could leave or enter.	וִירִיחוֹ סֹגֶרֶת וּמְסֻגֶּרֶת מִפְּנֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵין יוֹצֵא וְאֵין בָּא׃ (ס)

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Trajectory of Exodus from Egypt: Exodus 12 – 13

- Circumcision
- Pesach sacrifice
- Exodus from Egypt
- Crossing of Sea of Reeds
- Entry into wilderness
- Manna begins to fall

Trajectory of Entry into Land: Joshua 3 – 5

- Leaving wilderness behind
- Crossing of Jordan River
- Arrival in new land
- Circumcision
- Pesach sacrifice
- Manna ceases to fall

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