

**RE READ** *the big story*
**JOSHUA 1-2**

 PREVIOUS BEDTIME STORY: SPIES IN THE LAND - TAKE TWO  
 CHARACTERS: YAHWEH, MOSES, JOSHUA, TWO SPIES, RAHAB, THE KING OF JERICHO

**RE VIEW** *the context*

After forty years of nomadic living, the generation of Israelites that left Egypt had died. It was again time for Israel to enter Canaan. But it would be different the second time around. Moses would not be with them. In a dramatic and profound handoff, God's Spirit had been passed from Moses onto Joshua, who wasted no time. He secretly sent two spies to scope out the land and gave orders for the entire nation to prepare. He read the Law of Moses. Joshua was ready. He wasn't about to miss what God was doing.

**RE ENTER** *through the 2nd story*
**A REIMAGINING OF JOSHUA 2:21-3:5**

**'Sir. Two men are here to see you. They say it is urgent!'** Joshua lowered a scroll and quill from his hands. He waved to his guard, **'Yes, yes. Send them in at once!'** The tent flap opened and two men covered in dirt and sweat entered. **'You made it!'** Joshua said. **'You spied out Canaan - now tell me what it was like!'** The two men smiled. **'Commander Joshua, the Promised Land is everything you said it would be!'**

Joshua motioned for the men to sit and poured them water to drink. **'Tell me!'** he said with urgency. **'Tell me everything you saw. Every detail. I must know.'** Without delay the two spies began to recount their journey into Canaan. They spoke of the lush greenery, palms, and farmland. They spoke of the springs, and freshwater pools that surrounded the city of Jericho. **'It's like no other place I've seen!'** They recounted the layout of the city, the fortifications, and the walls that surrounded it. **'The walls are so thick that two chariots can pass on top!'** They remembered their near capture, the friendship with Rahab, their promise to her, and their escape. **'Canaan is filled with giants and fortified cities,'** the spies said. **'But the Lord has given us this land. Rahab told us that the entire city has heard of Yahweh. They know how God struck down Egypt. They know we are coming. And they are afraid.'**

**'But I sense there is something more you wish to say,'** Joshua said, looking at men intently. **'Do not be afraid. I know your hearts are pure.'** The spies looked to each other, hesitant to speak. **'Yes, there is something else.'** They paused. **'It is the Jordan River. When we first crossed, the waters were quick but passable. On our return they were surging. Powerful. We nearly drowned.'** Joshua leaned back in his chair and chuckled. **'Ah yes. The springtime runoff! The snow melt has overflowed the banks! No matter. It is not a concern.'** Joshua stood to his feet and moved to a large table that sat in the middle of his tent. It was covered with scrolls and cups and small painted stones that were dotted across a map. **'Beg your pardon, commander - but how will our women and children and carts cross a raging river?'** Joshua lifted a worn scroll from the pile. **'You were not there!'** he said. **'When God parted the Red Sea. Or when he spoke on Mt. Sinia. Or when he first fed us manna and quail in the wild. Put your doubts to rest. Nothing is impossible for God! No river can stop Yahweh. We will take the land.'** Joshua called to his servants to pour two hot baths for the spies for a well-deserved rest. **'Prepare your strength. In three days you will see the Lord do wonders among us!'**

**RETHINK** *in sacred sharing*

Spend some time in sacred reflection, conversation, and listening. Use the following questions as a guide.

- Q: Have you ever moved to a new place or gone on a big trip? How did you prepare?
- Q: KIDS: name two things that Joshua did to prepare the Israelites for their move into Canaan.
- Q: Is it possible to ‘ponder the law day and night?’ (Joshua 1:8)
- Q: How has God prepared you for this moment in time?
- Q: What awaits you after this time of isolation? What are you preparing for now?
- Q: What are practical things you can do to be spiritually ready?
- Q: Rahab was not an Israelite but she was ready to meet God. Have you seen God at work in unexpected people?

**RECREATE** *in sacred play*

Spend some time in sacred play recreating the Spy-Jericho scene! Below are a list of props, characters, ideas to use your space, and a general flow-of-the-story.

**COSTUMES/PROPS:** Ancient spy satchels (\*see Crafty Time video), swords and shields for guards, flax stalks (pillows and blankets), rope.

**CHARACTERS:** The characters should be divided.

KIDS: the two spies of Israel, Rahab.

ADULTS: the King of Jericho, Jericho’s guards.

**SPACE:** Set up the space to resemble the ancient city of Jericho (push together two couches!) Your city will need thick walls, an inner court, and Rahab’s apartment on the outside wall.

**FLOW:** The two spies arrive in Jericho are quickly discovered. The King of the city set guards to catch them. Rahab, who fears God, hides the spies under a pile of flax stalks. When the guards leave her apartment, she lowers them by rope out of her window and safely out of the city.

**First, act out the story in play, and then replay the story as a game: Hide-a-Spy (hide-and-seek!)**

**REMAKE** *in a sacred meal*

The two spies Joshua sent were not overly good spies. Almost immediately upon entering Jericho they were discovered. Rahab, a woman who lived in the city, hid them under a pile of flax!

**CHALLENGE:** Make a loaf of flaxseed bread! Flaxseed is healthy, nutritious, and delicious! You can find a good recipe online and flaxseed at the grocery store. Not in the mood for bread? Bake a tray of flaxseed muffins instead! Or flaxseed pancakes! Mix in some berries and enjoy the ancient goodness!

**RESPOND** *in sacred prayer*

Most of the Israelites who were preparing to cross the Jordan River had not seen the parting of the Red Sea. They had not heard the audible voice of God at Sinai. They were the first true generation of faith: ‘having hoped but not seen’ (Hebrews 11).

We too are a part of a family of generations of the faithful. We rely on people who have gone before us, who have been formed and shaped by Jesus. Take a moment and contact one of your ‘ancestors’ of the faith. Someone who has taught you, and discipled you. Take time to pray together. Listen to their stories of faith. Be encouraged. God is with you!