



Rally Cry, Out Cry, Battle Cry

Steve Carter

January 9, 2022

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation--encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Bible References

Exodus 33:11; Numbers 13:17-33, 14:6-10; Joshua 1:1-11, 3:7-8, 4:2-7; John 15:4.

// Message Summary

This weekend we were blessed to have Steve Carter encourage us with a challenging and inspirational message. Steve took us on a journey through one of Israel's most historic achievements: crossing the Jordan River and into the Promised Land. This achievement was part of God's greater rescue plan for the Israelites, and while it was His mighty hand that would deliver this miracle, the Israelites played their part by being "strong and courageous" (Joshua 1:6). The phrase "strong and courageous" is the English translation of the Hebrew "rak chazak amats", a bold battle cry which calls us to stand tall, stand strong and stand confident in what God is calling us to do.

// Biblical and Historical Context

Joshua was born during the period of Hebrew slavery in Egypt. As the Hebrew people neared the end of their 40-years in the wilderness, their historical leader, Moses, passed away. The baton of national leadership was passed to Joshua, and he was charged by God with a) bringing the people into the Promised Land, b) purging the Canaanites from the land, and c) dividing the new land among the twelve tribes. The conquest would be intimidating, violent and protracted: the Book of Joshua records that some of the Canaanites resembled giants (Joshua 11:21 c.f. Numbers 13:28-33), over 30 kings and their armies had to be defeated (Joshua 12:24), and in total the warring lasted seven years (Joshua 14:10). Though God would ultimately bring them victory, it is clear why the Israelites had to remain "strong and courageous" during this endeavor.

// Community Questions

1. What was something that you wanted to achieve in 2021? Share with the group.
2. What is one of the most inspirational speeches (“battle cries”) that you have heard (either real or fiction)? What made it so inspirational?

// Discussion Questions

1. As a group, read Joshua 1:7-9. What do you find interesting? What questions does this passage raise?
2. Joshua was told to be “strong and courageous”. He was also given another instruction in the passage. What was it, and why would it also be important?
3. The first Hebrews who looked upon the Promised Land agreed that it was a bountiful land, but were terrified to face the inhabitants (Numbers 13:27-28).
 - a. In your life, where have you seen the awesome promises of God, but been intimidated by the obstacles you would need to overcome?
 - b. Share a time when you were “strong and courageous”, and saw God’s promises realized in your life.
4. It took roughly six centuries for the promise that God made to Abraham - that his descendents would inhabit the Promised Land - to come to fruition. What does this tell you about God’s nature and character?

// Challenge

The purpose of Israel building a stone memorial was to cause people to ask, “What happened here?” This would allow the Israelites to share their story of God’s power and providence.

Think about your response if someone were to say to you, “What happened here?” about your life. How would you answer it? Would you be ready to share a story of God’s power and providence?

Prepare your response in your mind so that you can confidently share it whenever you get the opportunity.