

Joshua - Overview

1. Joshua is the first of what are called the historical books of the Old Testament, written about 1,400 BC by Joshua, the son of Nun who was born into slavery in Egypt.
2. Joshua is the first book of the Bible to be named after a person.
3. Joshua is the Hebrew equivalent for the Greek name translated “Jesus”; both of which mean Yahweh or Jehovah is salvation – God is salvation.
4. Joshua experienced the bondage of Egypt, he saw the terrible plagues, the parting of the Red Sea – he saw it all.
5. Joshua is first mentioned as Israel’s first general (Exodus 17) fighting against the Amalekites. Joshua was one of the two faithful spies sent out to reconnoiter the Promised Land, and he was Moses’ minister / servant. Jesus was a servant.
6. All of these things were helpful but his greatest qualification was that he loved the Lord and loved being in his presence.

Exodus 33:11 “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.”

7. **Theme:** Overcoming the enemy in battle, walking victoriously learning to walk in the Spirit.

Romans 8:37 “... for we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”

8. This is an account or a picture of leading the children of Israel, the believer into the Promised Land – which to us is not heaven, but the victorious Christian life here and now in this world.
9. Whereas neither the Law nor Moses could not lead the children of Israel into the promised land, only Joshua could or would be allowed to do that; but even Joshua could only take them so far.
 - Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, which is likened to the world, the place of bondage to sin.
 - Moses brought them through the Red Sea as God parted the waters, which is symbolic of water baptism of the believer.
 - Joshua will lead the children of Israel in to the promise land, and he will do it by leading them across or through the Jordan River – which is likened to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to live the victorious Christian life and abundant life that God has intended for them.

Jesus said:

John 10:10 "... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

10. As the children of Israel enter into the promise land there will still be battles to be fought, just as there are battles for the Christian who's entered into the promised land – spiritual battles – but in both cases one of which is a model for the other – God's children have been given the power for victory, or the victory has been handed to them.

11. The leading character of this book is not Joshua; it is his namesake – Jesus!

Jesus told the Pharisees:

John 5:39 "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me."

Chapter 1: Joshua's commission; exhortation to the people.

Key Verse for the book: Joshua 1:8-9

Chapter 2: The two spies and Rahab:

2:1 "And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there."

Rahab's statement of faith:

2:11 "... for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

- Rahab ends up marrying an Israelite name Salmon (**Matthew 1:5**) and eventually up in the genealogy leading to the Messiah through Boaz to David, but she also ends up in the "hall of faith".

Hebrews 11:31 "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."

2:18-19 A beautiful picture of abiding in Christ. Those who are within Christ are safe no matter what happens. Outside of Him, we have nothing and are open prey.

Chapter 3: The crossing of the Jordan River at Bethabara.

3:7-8 ⁷"And the Lord said unto Joshua, this day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. ⁸And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, when ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan."

- Again we see the typology: Joshua was magnified as he went down into the river Jordan.
- When Jesus was baptized at the Jordan, at the exact same place, He was magnified by God as well:

Matthew 3:16-17 “¹⁶And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: ¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

- When God used Moses to part the Red Sea, he raised his staff and the waters parts out before them. Here God deals differently and the children must take a greater step of faith.
- When their feet touch the water, then the waters will recede...

2 Corinthians 5:7 “For we walk by faith, not by sight:”

Chapter 4: Memorial stones: stones of remembrance, like milestones in our lives.

4:6-7 “⁶That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, what mean ye by these stones? ⁷Then ye shall answer them, that the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.”

V: 19 Notes that it is just 4 days until the Passover.

Chapter 5: Circumcision at Gilgal.

5:2-3 “²At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. ⁴And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.”

- All the males are circumcised: Symbolic of God’s covenant with the children of Israel.
- 650,000 men able to go to war + all males over 8 days old – at the “hill of the foreskins”
- Gilgal is approximately 2 miles from Jericho, so this was done in sight of their enemies.

Hebrews 11:6 “Without faith it is impossible to please Him...”

- Now they were able to keep the Passover and did so.

Psalm 23:5 “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.”

Chapter 6: Conquering Jericho.

6:2-3 “²And the Lord said unto Joshua, see, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor. ³And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.”

6:18 “And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.”

- This is the first city in the land that they are conquering: the first fruits – so the spoil belongs to the Lord.

6:19 “But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.”

- And then the wall came a tumbling down...

6:20 “So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, and every man straight before him, and they took the city.”

Chapter 7: Defeat at Ai & Achan’s sin.

7:1 “But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.”

- Shortly thereafter the children of Israel send a smaller force against the small city of Ai, and are routed and defeated, fleeing before their enemies.
- God’s reveals the reason, God reveals the person:

Numbers 32:23 “... behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out.”

- Achan and his family all perished:

Romans 6:23 “The wages of sin is death...”

Chapter 8: Victory over Ai, and the reading of the Law.

- They failed conquering Ai by their own ingenuity and ability, but experienced victory when God directed them according to His will.

- After the victory Joshua read the word of God to them:

8:34-35 ³⁴“And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. ³⁵There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.”

Chapter 9: Deception by the Gibeonites

- As a confederation of kingdoms gather to fight against Israel; the Gibeonites use subtlety.

9:3-4 ³“And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, ⁴they did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks...”

Joshua fell for it:

9:14-15 ¹⁴“And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord. ¹⁵And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto them.”

- Because they swore by the Lord they honored their promise to the Gibeonites.
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Chapter 10: The long day of Joshua.

- Instead of facing 1 city, now they face the kings of 5 cities – their faith is growing and being tested. The kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon come against Gibeon whom God is using for bait.

10:8 “And the Lord said unto Joshua, fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.”

As it turned out Joshua had more enemies than daylight so he prayed:

10:12-14 ¹²“Then Joshua spake to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon. ¹³And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. ¹⁴And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel.”

- As the Lord gives Israel this victory over the 5 kings, they go on to conquer the cities of the kings and all the other major cities in the Southern region of Israel

- We see that God is directly involved in the affairs of His children.

10:42 “And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel.”

Chapter 11: The Northern campaign, towards the Galilee and Lebanon.

- Another confederation of an even greater number:

11:4-6 “⁴And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. ⁵And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel. ⁶And the Lord said unto Joshua, be not afraid because of them: for tomorrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hock their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.”

11:8 “And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel...”

Joshua was obedient to do all that the Lord commanded him:

11:15 “As the Lord commanded Moses His servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.”

- Without obedience to God’s word, there will be no victory.
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Chapter 12: Reviewing the kings that were conquered on the other side of the Jordan, in the territory given to Reuben, Gad, and the ½ tribe of Manasseh, 31 kings in all.

Chapter 13: Joshua is old and stricken in age, but there is still much land to be taken.

- Describes the territories given to Reuben, Gad, and the ½ tribe of Manasseh.

13:22 “Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.”

Chapter 14: Describes Caleb’s inheritance: Specifically Hebron which was inhabited by giants.

14:14 “Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.”

- Again, the connection between obedience and victory.
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Chapter 15: Judah's portion.

- There is a notation with each of the tribes that they did not drive out all the inhabitants of the land – which we'll see later comes back to haunt them.

Chapter 16-17: Ephraim and the other ½ tribe of Manasseh's portion.

Chapter 18: The Tabernacle is set up at Shiloh and the other 7 tribes receive their inheritances by lot after surveying the land.

18:1-2 “¹And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them. ²And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

- The tribe of Benjamin receives their inheritance – which includes Jerusalem.

Chapter 19: The other 6 tribes receive their inheritance: Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan.

Chapter 20: Cities of refuge are appointed throughout the land, six cities in all where the manslayer is safe from the avenger of blood.

Chapter 21: Cities for the Levites from among the people, 48 cities and their suburbs for the Levites who don't have an inheritance of land because the Lord is their inheritance.

Chapter 22: Joshua commends, then dismisses the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the ½ tribe of Manasseh for keeping their word and helping to conquer the land, and they go home on the other side of Jordan.

Chapter 23-24: Joshua's farewell address:

23:1-2 “¹And it came to pass a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age. ²And Joshua called for all Israel...”

- The exhortation to love the Lord their God, and to serve Him with all their hearts.

23:6 “Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside there from to the right hand or to the left.”

23:8 “But cleave unto the Lord your God...”

23:11 “Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.”

24:15 “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

- The challenge – choose! Make a commitment.
- The acknowledgement that we will serve and worship something, it either the True and the Living God, or it's some form of the god of this world.
- Joshua can't choose or commit for us; but he can for his family.
- Joshua dies, Eleazar the priest dies, they bury the bones of Joseph – and we move into the book of Judges.
- Read ahead.