

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – **Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221**; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

OUTLINE OF JOSHUA (Chaps. 23-24)

H. Joshua’s farewell speech to Israel, warning against idolatry (23:1-16) How does God feel about idols? Exodus 23:24

III. Joshua's Death

A. The covenant at Shechem (24:1-25) 24:3 tie to Acts 7:2-3

B. The law written in a book and a memorial stone set up (24:26-28)

C. Death of Joshua (24:29-31)

D. Bones of Joseph buried at Shechem (24:32)

E. Death of Eleazar, the high priest (24:33)

JOSHUA 23-24 – Joshua’s Farewell Address:

Joshua's Charge to Israel's Leaders

Jos 23:1 Now it came to pass, a long time after the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua was old, advanced in age.

Jos 23:2 And Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers, and said to them: "I am old, advanced in age.

Jos 23:3 You have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has fought for you.

Jos 23:4 See, I have divided to you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, as far as the Great Sea westward.

Jos 23:5 And the LORD your God will expel them from before you and drive them out of your sight. So you shall possess their land, as the LORD your God promised you.

Jos 23:6 Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left,

Jos 23:7 and lest you go among these nations, these who remain among you. You shall not make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause anyone to swear by them; you shall not serve them nor bow down to them.

Once in the Promised Land, the people will turn against Me, but Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." (Jos 1:9) Dt. 31:7-8; 31:16-18

v. 1 This is thought to have been in the last year or so of one hundred and tenth year of the life of Joshua, about thirteen or fourteen years after the conquest of Canaan, and seven after the division of the land among the tribes.

vs. 2-3 Joshua begins to address the leaders of Israel. He is reminding them of God’s faithfulness to them. He will use this as the basis for his encouraging them to be faithful to God. God has been faithful. God has blessed you. God has fought for you.

vs. 4-5 Under Joshua’s leadership, the army of Israel broke the back of the Canaanite military occupation. Now it remains for each individual tribe to fully possess what God has given them. In the same way, God gives every believer an inheritance.

vs. 6-7 The exhortation of Joshua is to keep the law of God, the law that was written by Moses. Not to turn aside from it. Not to deviate from it at all. Lest as they come against these nations, they be polluted and not to mention the names of the gods of these nations.

Book of Joshua comes to a close. Chapter 23 is Joshua’s farewell address to the leaders and Chapter 24 is his farewell/exhortation address to the people.

It’s thought that about 13 years have passed since the end of the 7 years conquest of the land. This 20 year period has passes, with it the time for the people’s heart toward God to be somewhat demonstrated. In his two addresses, we clearly see that Joshua’s interest was not in himself, as he is nearing death, but it is his concern for the next generation and their obedience to the Lord. It is somewhat of a “final words” message as he soon with pass on at it is thought he now is nearing 110 years of age. There is **something very powerful about those final words of life, spoken with clarity.** No time for trivial or meaningless talk but to pass on those things that are most important – things of God and of eternal issues.

Vs. 1-3 Joshua’s exhortation the nation of Israel is to basically “stick with what got you here”! **Simple obedience to the Lord, allowing God to bless us.** We must now forget how and who got us this far!!! It’s the LORD!!

Vs. 4-5 God has been faithful all the way. He will be just as faithful in the future! Joshua is not to pass on his leadership to a single man, as Moses did, but to pass the leadership on the leaders of the 12 tribes. These leaders of the nation will be required to seek the Lord on their own, in looking to God Himself. He is telling the leaders to obey God, to listen to Him as he did. He’s is giving them life-tested wisdom!

Now Joshua will give four things to Israel’s leaders that are to be done:

Vs. 6 **First, - Be very courageous and have strict obedience to the Word of God.** Obey God and all that is written in His Word and everything else will be okay! Sometimes we have the tendency in our enthusiasm, to move too fast. In making every decision, even the little ones, we are to ask, What does the Bible say”?

Vs. 7 **Second - Do not serve any other gods!** They are to maintain a strict separation between themselves and the world around them. They are not to be “Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, 2Co 6:17 Therefore “COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, SAYS THE LORD. DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU.” They and we are to in the world but not of the world!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Jos 23:8 but you shall hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day.

Jos 23:9 For the LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations; but as for you, no one has been able to stand against you to this day.

Jos 23:10 One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the LORD your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you.
Jos 23:11 Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God.

Jos 23:12 Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations—these that remain among you—and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you,
Jos 23:13 know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

Jos 23:14 "Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed.

Jos 23:15 Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the LORD your God promised you, so the LORD will bring upon you all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

Jos 23:16 When you have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them, then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land which He has given you."

v. 8 They have been faithful up to this point but there were signs of moral breakdown among the people. It was not yet complete but it was beginning.

v. 9 Those that came out against them, and fought with them; these were all to a man cut off by them, or fled before them, and became tributaries to them; otherwise there were many, who as yet were not expelled by them; this the Lord had promised, and now had fulfilled, *Deu_11:25*. In **verses 8 & 9**, Joshua **stresses the grace of God and it’s motivation** toward being in obedience to God and His Word

vs. 10-11 The blessing of obedience to the law which Israel had experienced, is described, as in *Deu_32:30*, upon the basis of the promise in *Lev_26:7-8*, and *Deu_28:7*, and in *Jos_23:10* the thought of *Jos_23:3* is repeated.

vs. 12-13 Joshua **stresses the fear of God and it’s obvious motivation**. If you disobey God your life will be unpleasant, difficult, filled with defeat, discomfort and disgrace. Continued disobedience will result in you perishing from this good land which the LORD has given to them. Notice there is no “partial” or “being mostly” obedient. Full obedience is required!

v. 14 We see here at the end of Joshua’s life is his restating of the absolute faithfulness of God! “Just live a life of simple obedience to the Lord and He will always be faithful”!

v. 15 God is absolutely faithful to His Word. We want to be and we must be sure we’re on the obedient side of His promises. The nation of Israel wasn’t and they were destroyed and driven out of their land – 722 BC, Israel by the Assyrians and 585 BC, Judah by the Babylonians.

v. 16 God gives the warning to make sure that you’re on the right side of His faithfulness. How about you and how about me?

Vs. 8 Third – Hold fast to the LORD! They are to hold fast, to cleave, be inseparable to the LORD! To have a relationship so close that nothing can come between them and the LORD. The closeness is to be so sweet than anything that can come between them and the LORD will be distasteful. They are to get that close relationship with the LORD and are to keep it!

Vs. 11 Fourth - Therefore take careful heed that you love the LORD your God above all else! Have a love for Him above anyone or anything else!

The above four requirements are basically a “last words” testimony and exhortation to the nation’s leaders, that is, if you do these four things, and continue in doing them, you will have a great future!

vs. 12-13 Joshua **stresses the fear of God and it’s obvious motivation**. If you disobey God your life will be unpleasant, difficult, filled with defeat, discomfort and disgrace. Continued disobedience will result in you perishing from this good land which the LORD has given to them. Notice there is no “partial” or “being mostly” obedient. Full obedience is required!

v. 14 At the end of Joshua’s life, he is restating of the absolute faithfulness of God! True saints will always have this testimony, “Just live a life of simple obedience to the Lord and He will always be faithful”! **Is this typical of our testimony?**

v. 15 God is absolutely faithful to His Word. **We need to be sure we’re on the obedient side** of His promises. Joshua is also saying **if they turn their backs on His word and start disobeying Him, they would go from something to nothing, just as fast.**

v. 16 God warns us **to make sure that we’re on the right side of His faithfulness**. How about you and how about me?

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

The Covenant at Shechem:

Jos 24:1 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

Jos 24:2 And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.

Jos 24:3 Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac.

Jos 24:4 To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

Jos 24:5 Also I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to what I did among them. Afterward I brought you out.

Jos 24:6 'Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea.

Jos 24:7 So they cried out to the LORD; and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you dwelt in the wilderness a long time.

Jos 24:8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, and they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you.

Jos 24:9 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose to make war against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you.

Jos 24:10 But I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he continued to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hand.

Jos 24:11 Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you—also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand.

v. 1 In chapter 23, Joshua made his address to the leaders of Israel. Here in Chapter 24, he will be addressing all the people.

v. 2 Joshua speaks prophetically in speaking for the LORD God of Israel! **The use of the personal pronoun “I” will appear 17 times in the next thirteen verses as God gives Israel a review of their history.** God will be reminding the people that **everything that has been accomplished has been done by Him and through Him!** The Lord is responsible including the call of Abraham to their land of promise. He showed them that they were indebted for their national existence as well as their peculiar privileges, **not to any merits of their own, but to the free grace of God. Abraham did not make himself the father of the nation -it was all the LORD.**

v. 3 Joshua begins first of all to address the leaders of Israel, he is reminding them of God’s faithfulness to them. He will use this as the basis for his encouraging them to be faithful to God. God has been faithful. God has blessed you. God has fought for you.

v. 4 In order that he might be no obstacle to Jacob and his posterity being the exclusive heirs of Canaan.

vs. 5-8 To demand Israel’s dismissal of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and to be the deliverers of them, inflicting ten plagues upon them for refusing to let Israel go. I brought you out of Egypt, with a high hand, and outstretched arm. God continues to trace His care of them: delivering them from the Amorites who fought them and from Balaam who tried to curse them, bringing them across the Jordan and delivering them from the inhabitants of the land who fought against them.

v. 9 This circumstance is not related in Numbers 22:1-41, nor does it appear in that history that the Moabites attacked the Israelites; and probably the warring mentioned here means no more than his attempts to destroy them by the curses of Balaam, and the wiles of the Midianite women.

v. 10 I delivered you out of his hands: both out of the hand of Balak, who was intimidated from bringing his forces against them, and out of the hand of Balaam, who was not suffered to curse them.

v. 11 The people of Jericho are said to have fought against the Israelites, because they opposed them by shutting their gates, though they did not attempt to meet them in the field.

v. 2 Notice should be given in *verses 2-17* that **God uses the first pronoun “I”, seventeen times.** He is **behind everything!** Are we in agreement with that in our lives?

vs. 3-5 God says that it was “I” that took your father Abraham out of Babylon, a pagan, and brought him into the land of Canaan and made him as the father of the nation, Israel. And so with Isaac, Jacob and Esau. Even Moses and Aaron! Nahor is mentioned as well as Abraham, because Rebekah, and her nieces Leah and Rachel, the tribe-mothers of Israel, were descended from him.

vs. 6-11 God continues to review all their history and seemingly poses the question where would they be without the Lord? **Is that not the question for us? Where in the world would we be if it weren’t for what the Lord has done and is doing in our lives? Everything good in our lives is due to Him! Never forget your roots! What I was before You saved me and made the life transforming change in me!**

Because He Lives! The Booth Brothers

God sent his son, they called Him Jesus, He came to love, heal and forgive. He lived and died to buy my pardon, An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.

Refrain: Because He lives I can face tomorrow. Because He lives, All fear is gone. Because I know He holds the future. And life is worth the living Just because He lives.

How sweet to hold a newborn baby, And feel the pride and joy He gives, But greater still the calm assurance: This child can face uncertain day because He lives. And then one day I'll cross the river, I'll fight life's final war with pain. And then, as death gives way to vict'ry, I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He reigns. (Refrain, - then) - Because He Lives! (2x)

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Jos 24:12 I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, also the two kings of the Amorites, but not with your sword or with your bow.

Jos 24:13 I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'

Choose Whom You Will Serve

Jos 24:14 "Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!

Jos 24:15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Jos 24:16 So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; (1st)

Jos 24:17 for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed.

Jos 24:18 And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God."

Jos 24:19 But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

Jos 24:20 If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good."

Jos 24:21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD!"" (2nd time)

v. 12 When they were actually engaged in battle with the Canaanites. These dreadful swarms which first appeared in their war with Sihon and Og, tormented them with their stings and terrified them with their noise, so that they became an easy prey to Israel. God had promised to do this for them, Exo_23:27-28, and here Joshua observes the fulfilling of that promise.

v. 13 Now the people of Israel are settled in the land. But, because they did not get rid of the civilization that was there, they are surrounded by idolatry. They are in real danger. Realizing this, Joshua calls them to a real dedication to God, a turning over of their lives completely to Him. Listen to him.

vs. 14-15 Through the years Joshua has stood in the shadow of Moses. But Joshua is a man of great stature. God made no mistake in choosing this man. Although Joshua is an average man, we're shown that an average man dedicated to God can be mightily used. He says to the nation, "Do you want to go back to the gods of your fathers, those pagan gods which they served? Or do you want to serve the gods of the Amorites? You can choose. But as for me and my house, we have made our choice; we are going to serve the Lord!" This was a tremendous challenge to all the tribes of Israel to consider their covenant with God.

vs. 16-17 You would think that because of the wonderful way God worked with and continually delivered Israel they would stay close to Him and serve Him.

v.18 We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God: This is essentially the same attitude reflected by Jesus' disciples in Joh_6:66-69 : Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. If serving God sometimes seems hard, think of the alternatives.

vs. 19-21 The people assure Joshua three times that they will serve the Lord (Jos_24:16, Jos_24:21, Jos_24:24). He knows that what is said by the lips is not always true in the heart. "If you continue with your idols," he warns, "then you cannot serve the Lord! He is a jealous God, a God who will not share His people with any other god." He warns them that idolatry will lead to chastening and discipline, and the loss of their land.

v. 12 We see another supernatural miracle here, that of God using nature, hornets, to drive out the enemies of Israel. Many of the Bible commentators try to explain this away as not really using the hornets, but creating panic in the enemy that would exist if they were attacked by hornets! We need to be careful in not belittling the truthfulness of the Bible. God has a great vocabulary. When He says He used hornets. That's what He did! **Do we ever create doubt in the minds of others that the Bible doesn't really mean what it says and say what it means?**

v. 13 The lesson here is obvious. **It's their obedience to God's word that took them to something from nothing!** But Joshua is also saying **if they turn their backs on His word and start disobeying Him, they would go from something to nothing, just as fast.**

v. 14 Notice the **three things that Joshua instructs Israel to do** – 1) **To fear the LORD**; 2) **To serve the LORD** in sincerity and truth; 3) **To put away the gods** of their fathers in Babylon and Egypt. **How does your life presently reflect this list of requirements?**

v. 15 Joshua is saying here that each of us will worship something or someone. That in effect, from God's standpoint there are no atheists. **We all worship something. Who are we really worshipping?** Our selves? Pleasure? Our career? Money and possessions?

Joshua asks them to declare who they will serve, but he states emphatically, ***"But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*** **Is that absolutely true for us?**

vs. 16-17 How easy it is to point a finger back about 3,500 years ago and say what a sorry lot Israel was. What terrible failures they were. **What about us today? How close are we staying to the living God?**

v.18 Here again the people proclaim and promise that will serve the LORD and be faithful to Him. But they hadn't in the past and won't do it now. How about you and me, **are we making rash promises to serve God**, that we won't keep? **Better not to make vows to Him and then fail to keep them!**

v. 19 Joshua knows of the people's idolatry in worshipping other gods, so he tells them **they cannot serve both!**

v. 20 **God is faithful!!** To those who are obedient to His word and worship only Him, He will bless! But to those who are disobedient and pursue other gods, He is faithful to ***"do you harm and consume you"***!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Jos 24:22 So Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him." And they said, "We are witnesses!"

Jos 24:23 "Now therefore," he said, "put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel."

Jos 24:24 And the people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!" (3rd time!)

Jos 24:25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

Jos 24:26 Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.

Jos 24:27 And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God."

Jos 24:28 So Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance.

Death of Joshua and Eleazar!

Jos 24:29 Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being one hundred and ten years old.

Jos 24:30 And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Serah, which is in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash.

Jos 24:31 Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

Jos 24:32 The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried at Shechem, in the plot of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of silver, and which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph.

Jos 24:33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died. They buried him in a hill belonging to Phinehas his son, which was given to him in the mountains of Ephraim.

vs. 22-28 “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him.” And they said, “We are witnesses!” “Now therefore,” he said, “put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel.” And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!” So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God.” So Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance. You are witnesses . . . this stone shall be a witness: Joshua required that the covenant be confirmed by the testimony of two witnesses, the people and the stone. Therefore, this was a binding covenant before God (*Deu_19:15*). We should not fall short in our own need to re-establish our own covenant with the LORD. Rededication to God can be a wonderful and powerful thing.

v. 29-33 Death and Burial of Joshua and Eleazar. - With the renewal of the covenant Joshua had ended his vocation. He did not formally lay down his office, because there was no immediate successor who had been appointed by God. The ordinary rulers of the congregation were enough, when once they were settled in Canaan, viz., the elders as heads and judges of the nation, together with the high priest, who represented the nation in its relation to God, and could obtain for it the revelation of the will of God through the right of the Urim and Thummim. In order therefore to bring the history of Joshua and his times to a close, nothing further remained than to give an account of his death, with a short reference to the fruit of his labors, and to add certain other notices for which no suitable place had hitherto presented itself.

As we close this book, let us remember that Christ is our Joshua (Savior), and that He fights our battles for us and helps us claim the inheritance



Some say this is the stone, discovered at Shechem, as described in *Joshua 24:26*

vs. 21-27 Joshua continues to strongly rebuke the children of Israel to put away their idols. Once again they promise over and over that they will do all that the LORD requires! That’s so like us, is it now? We promise to do all the Lord asks, but then we find ourselves doing the things we said we would never do! (*Roman 7 & 8*)

v. 29 Joshua is given the same wonderful title “**the servant of the Lord**” as Moses had been given on his death. This is indeed a most wonderful and desired title. **Does that title fit you? Me?**

v. 31 We need to note that by the third generation, **even with all that God had done and exhorted Israel to do, they turned away from the LORD!** Mankind, it seems, **always is prone to rebellion against the LORD and to forsake His word!** **How is your house, right now?**