

BOOK OF JOSHUA JOSHUA 1-12

We now come to a new era in the history of the Israelites. The people were a new generation from the original ones who came out of Egypt. They now have a new leader—Joshua. It was a serious thing to succeed such a man as Moses. Joshua had witnessed the things that happened in the wilderness, the rebellious attitudes of the people and the remarkable leadership of Moses. It was not a simple matter to step into the place of the man whose name was to stand foremost throughout the centuries.

The Lord had great confidence in Joshua. He had called him to lead the people into the land. It was the highest honor, which carried great responsibilities. Joshua was a man of great ability, a man of fortitude and courage. Joshua enjoyed one thing in common with Moses... he had God's presence and enablement (v.5). He was the kind of servant God needed then and He still needs.

The book of Joshua covers a period of about 25 years, around 1400 B.C. The purpose of the book seems to have been to provide an official and authoritative account of God's faithfulness in leading his people into the promised land. (Joshua 21:43-45).

We will divide the book into three sections which we will title **God's Command**: Chapters 1-5... Enter the Land; Chapters 6-12...Overcome the Land! Chapters 13-24...Occupy the Land. Today we will look at the first two sections, i.e. Chapters 1-12.

I. God's Command: Enter the Land.

A. Joshua's commission (1:1-9).

1. God commissioned Joshua to lead the people across the Jordan and into the promise land.
2. God promised to give to give him every piece of land that his feet should tread on (1:3). All he needed to do was start walking.
3. Several statements are made which still are vitally important to us today.
 - a. Be strong and of good courage (vss.6,7,9, 18)
 - (1) Courage is the moral strength to stand for the right at all times and in all places, even if we have to stand alone.
 - (2) How badly we need to heed that advice!!
 - (3) Why did God tell him three times in Chapter 1?
 - (a) There was a vacancy to fill...a huge vacancy.. You need courage.
 - (b) There was a stream to cross. Streams of difficulties, seen and unseen, lie before you. You need courage.
 - (c) There were foes to subdue: Canaanites, Amorites, etc. Every Christian has foes to subdue: Internal—passions . . . External—allurements of world.
 - (d) There were expectations to be met (v.6). Look to the leader.
 - (e) There are commands to be obeyed (vss.7,8). Courage helps us to obey God.
 - b. Power of God's word (v.8).
 - (1) Meditate thereon day and night..."
 - (a) Meditation involves mature reflection upon the Word of God and it's place in our life.
 - (b) Psalm 1:1-3
 - (c) Psalm 119:15,97
 - (2) Do all that is written.
 - (a) God's will is still the same for us.
 - (b) Do what God's word say.

B. Preparation for Crossing the Jordan (1:10-18).

1. Joshua reminded the two and ½ tribes of their commitment (vss.12-15).
2. The promised to keep that commitment (vss.16-18). We read later (Chapter 4) that they kept their promises.

3. Disobedience would be dealt with harshly—by death (v.18).
- C. Rahab and the Spies (Chapter 2).
1. Two spies were sent, not to spy out the entire land as the original twelve did, but to learn about Jericho and to help plan the best strategy for taking that fortified city.
 2. They went to the house of Rahab the harlot.
 3. She hid them from the kings men.
 4. Rahab made her request. (vss.8-14).
 5. Spies escaped and reported to Joshua (vss.15-24).
 6. They set forth several conditions relative to the promise to Rahab.
 - a. Red string
 - b. All in this house, none go out during siege.
 7. God has always placed salvation in a clear, well-marked place.
 8. Rahab was saved because of her obedient faith. (Heb. 11:31; James 2:25).
- D. Crossing the Jordon. (Chap. 3).
1. They were about to do in three days what the previous generation had been trying to do for 40 years. (1:11; 3:2)
 2. Joshua prepared to cross the Jordon. He believed what God said.
 - a. He did not plead for more time.
 - b. He did not call a special committee meeting “The Committee on Crisis in the Contemporary Situation.”
 - c. He prepared to go.
 3. They were told to follow the ark. Even today we are to follow God and His word.
 4. The miracle of crossing the Jordon River (3:13-17)
- E. Memorial of stones erected (Chapter 4).
1. A man from each tribe was to take a stone from the river bed and carry it to their lodging place (v.5).
 2. This was to be a memorial for future generations.
 3. Joshua also set up a memorial in the midst of the Jordon (v.9).
 4. We have a memorial today for what God has done for us.
 5. When someone ask why we partake, we should be able to tell them (3:6, 20-24).
 6. After all was taken care of, the priests carried the ark over to the west band of the Jordon and the waters returned to their flood stage.
- F. Preparation for Conquest (Chapter 5).
1. When the kings heard of God’s power, their hearts melted. Rahab stated the same thing in 2:10.
 2. Circumcision.
 - a. Why circumcise again? (vss.4-5)
 - b. Evidently did not circumcise in the wilderness.
 - c. You may recall that circumcision was a covenant between God and Abraham (Gen. 17).
 3. Manna ceased (5:10-12). God always provided for them.
 4. Prince of Jehovah’s hosts appeared to Joshua (5:13-15).
 - a. Joshua wasn’t sure who it was (v.13).
 - b. When he realized, he fell down (v.14).
- II. Overcome the Land (6-12).
- A. Jericho is taken (chap. 6). This will be discussed in VBS, so we will skip chapter 6.
- B. Israel’s defeat at Ai (Chapter 7).
1. They were in the promised land, they had conquered Jericho... could any enemy possibly defeat them?
 - a. Yes, and one almost did.
 - b. And it came from within... i.e. Achan.

2. They were humiliated.
3. The sorrow (7:6-9)
4. The solution (7:10-26).
 - a. A change must take place (v.12)
 - b. Sanctify the people (v.13).
 - c. Confession of Achan (v.20f)
 - (1) He saw, he coveted, he took.
 - (2) Same as Eve, David, us (James 1:13ff)
 - d. Punishment (7:22-26).
- C. Ai again attacked, with different results (Chapter 8)
- D. The Craftiness of the Gibeonites (Chapter 9).
 1. Inhabitants of Gibeon put on an “Oscar winning performance.”
 2. They pretended to be from a far country.
 3. Because of their deceit, they became servants (9:16-27).
- E. Conquest of the south of Canaan (Chapter 10)
 1. The battle at Gibeon (1-14)
 - a. Gibeon was attacked by the five kings.
 - b. Joshua took his army to intervene.
 - c. God intervened by the use of a hail storm (v.11)
 - d. The long day (10:12-14). Actual extension of light for about a whole day, thereby permitting Joshua to complete the battle.
 2. All the other kings were defeated (10:15-43).
 - a. 10:24—symbolic of the complete subjugation of the defeated enemy.
 - b. They were killed and hung on trees (v.26).
- F. Northern Campaign (Chapter 11).
 1. Another coalition is formed to fight against Joshua (vss.1-5).
 - a. Great number (v.4)
 - b. Horses and chariots in great number.
 2. God assured Joshua that He was with them (v.6) and it was so (v.9).
 3. War was over (11:23).
- G. Chapter 12 is a list, or summary of the defeated kings.

Con: We have seen the power of God. With God, all things are possible. And, we have seen the faith of Joshua. He was engaged in battle with the enemy. He had to have faith in God’s promises. We are engaged in battle (Eph. 6:10ff). We also have to have faith in God’s promises. We can be victorious if we have an obedient faith in God. So many lessons to be learned from this first half of the book of Joshua. God will never fail us (1:5). Many we never bring shame and defeat on God’s army as a result of our actions, as Achan did (7). May we always have faith in God to do what He says for us to do. Enter the promised land of rest (Heb. 4:9).