

Abstract

We are first introduced to Joshua in the book of Exodus chapter 17:9. Joshua was asked to assemble an army at the request of Moses but little did he know that this was the beginning of the time of preparation where he would one day lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land. Joshua was given extraordinary gifts and talents with regards to wisdom and administration with large groups of people and as well as being a personal minister to Moses. Joshua is a man of faith and we will read that Joshua prepared the children of Israel for numerous battles and because of the favor of God on his life he would succeed Moses as a prominent leader of Israel.

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CHAPTER I

“Joshua takes the land for Israel”

The book of Joshua contains 24 chapters and is primarily broken down into two sections.

The first section shows a detailed account of the three battles that Joshua was engaged in and his conquest of the land. These battles are covered from Joshua chapters 1 through 12. The second section of Joshua is a record of the divisions of the lands by tribe and a record of the final instructions that God gives to Joshua this is covered in Chapters 13 through 24.

The children of Egypt are freed from their captivity in Exodus chapter 12:31, they embark on a journey to the Promised Land. However, due to their grumbling and complaining, it is only Joshua and Caleb that we read entering the Promised Land.

In Joshua chapter 1:8, Joshua instructs the Israelites to not depart from the book of the law and to meditate on it day and night. If they do that then their way will be prosperous. He also instructs them to be strong and have courage for wherever they go there God is with them.

Joshua also gives further instructions in chapter 24:19-22 as he tells the people to live a holy life, turn from their sins, not to forsake the Lord and he tells them that he will serve the Lord.

Part of Joshua's mission was to establish the people in the land, dividing it up among them and to destroy or drive out the natives of Canaan so that they would not

pollute Israel with idolatry and evil ways. The Book of Joshua describes how he did successfully establish the people in the land, largely in the hill country and in the forest lands, gradually moving outwards, although still with 'much land to be possessed'.

I believe the main premise of this book is to show that God is faithful as He said He would give the Israelites land to possess and Joshua was the instrument to fulfill God's purposes.

In Joshua chapter 24:26 we see that Joshua signed this book as having been a first-person account in witnessing the battles in victories that the Lord had given the children of Israel.

Noted historical background of the book of Joshua is that it was one of the first 12 of historical books written. Joshua's name means "Jehovah Saves" or "The Lord is Salvation." Joshua is the Hebrew translation of the Greek word Jesus.

According to the John MacArthur Study Bible (page 303) Joshua was approximately 90 years old when he assumed command after the death of Moses and became Israel's leader. Joshua died at the age of 110 years old, he was thought to be a type of deliverer for the people of Israel.

In Joshua chapters 1-5 we read that Joshua prepares for the overthrow of Canaan. Chapter 2:1 is when we are introduced to Rahab. We read that Joshua sends 17 spies into the city of Jericho they seek lodging at the house of Rahab the harlot.

The King of Jericho is alerted of their presence in the city and he sends men to Rahab to search for the spies. However, Rahab having heard of the miracles of the Lord God did by parting the Red Sea and she hides the spies from the King's men and then lowers them down over the city wall to safety. Rahab fears the Lord and asks for the spies

and God to show her kindness. They agree and tell her place a scarlet/red cord on the door of her home.

Later we read in chapter 2:18 that Joshua assembled the men for the siege of the city and they are told to look for scarlet/red a cord that is hung on the doorknob of Rahab's home. This red chord would be a symbol or sign of the kindness that she had asked for from the Lord to spare her household. Rahab's life was spared because she had great faith in the God of Israel. Red is also a symbol of how the Angel of death "passed over" the homes of the firstborn of Israel when he saw the lambs' blood in Exodus 12:12-14.

Rahab is mentioned in Matthew 1:5 in the genealogy of the Messiah.

CHAPTER II

“The Battle Rages On”

In Joshua chapter 3:3-6 we read the Ark of the Covenant (which represents the presence of God) is brought to the Jordan River, Joshua tells the people to sanctify themselves and they prepare to cross over the Jordan River. The Bible tells us that the river was raging but the minute the Levite priests set their feet in the river the water stopped so that the Israelites were able to cross and in doing so fulfill God’s mission. Once again, it is documented that the Israelites crossed the river on dry ground just as they had done in the Red Sea with Moses.

In chapter 4:5-7 Joshua calls for the 12 tribes of Israel to assemble and he instructs them to set up camp for that night. He also calls for the men to set up a memorial with stones. In verse 4:7 we read that these memorial stones would be a sign to the children for ever as God would give them the Promised Land and that the Jordan River was held back because of the Lord's covenant with His people.

Joshua chapter 5:2 God commands Joshua to circumcise the second-generation that came out of Egypt; they also commemorate the Passover and in doing so they acknowledged their covenant with the Lord. It is also noted that one day after the Passover, had been the last day that they were to receive manna in the wilderness because they were able to eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year and provide for themselves.

Joshua has an encounter with the Commander of the Army of the LORD (Joshua 5:13) as he is commanded to take off his shoes because he is standing on Holy ground.

Most scholars believe that this Angel was actually an appearance of a pre-incarnate Jesus and bears a striking similarity as to when Moses encountered the burning bush or type of Holy Spirit at the top of Mount Sinai before he received the law and the 10 Commandments.

CHAPTER III

“The Walls of Jericho fall and the Northern Battle Starts”

Perhaps the most famous Bible story ever told is the Battle of Jericho. As the walls seem impenetrable; Joshua (Joshua 6:2-3) being a military man uses unorthodox methods to win this battle. It is not Joshua's military expertise, state of the art equipment or his vast warriors that win this battle, but the fact that he has the Lord God Almighty on his side to fulfill His promises and covenant with the people of Israel.

Joshua is told to take seven ram's horn along with all his warriors, seven priests and the Ark of the covenant and commanded to march around the city for seven days and on the seventh day he is told they should blow their trumpets and the children of Israel witness another miracle as they see the walls of Jericho fall to the ground.

Joshua instructs his warriors to look for the door with the red chord because this is the house of Rahab. The young man who had been the spies rescued Rahab the father and mother and her brothers and all that she had Joshua 6:23.

Israel plundered the city. They took all the gold, silver, bronze and iron vessels and put them in the treasury of the house of the Lord and burned the city to the ground. The Lord was with Joshua and his fame spread throughout all the country Joshua 6:27

In Joshua chapter 7:4-5 we read the children of Israel experienced a great loss at the battle of Ai were several dozen warriors are killed. God also brings to the attention of Joshua that someone in the camp has secret sin. Achan had stolen some of the vessels and clothing from Jericho by hiding them in his tent. This transgression against God angers the LORD; because of their transgression against the Lord I believe God judged them by

being killed at the Battle of Ai. Achan along with his family was also judged by being stoned to death.

In chapter 8:1 the Lord tells Joshua to engage in battle with Ai and not to fear because this time the Lord will be with them. God tells Joshua to go to the King lay in ambush and plot a sneak attack. Joshua proceeds as instructed by the LORD against Ai. We read later in the chapter that Joshua and the people renew their covenant with the Lord.

Joshua chapter 9:16 we read that Joshua makes a covenant with the Gibeonites. Joshua fails to see God's advice before making the covenant with the Gibeonites. Joshua confronts the Gibeonites and asks them why they deceived him, they explained to him that they have heard of Joshua throughout the land and how the God of Israel had promised them the land and they feared for their life. Although Joshua had spared their lives and made them woodcutter's and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord.

Joshua engages in battle with the King of Jerusalem and the Lord God makes the sun stand still so Joshua can be victorious against his enemies. The armies of Joshua overthrow the Amorites and all of the tribes in the South Land.

The Israeli army proceeds to conquer the Northern lands and start with Beth Shan and move north to Chinneroth, Merom, Kedesh, Hazor and Tyre. The LORD gave them the victory to conquer the lands that He had promised them.

CHAPTER IV

“Tribes and lands are divided”

The final chapters of Joshua give a detailed account for the instructions on the division of land according to the tribes.

The tribe of Judah is given a special portion in chapter 15:1. There are also instructions for the setting up of the tabernacle at Shiloh.

God tells Joshua to set up cities of refuge in chapter 20:1-3. These cities are set up for those who had accidentally or unintentionally killed someone. This refuge city would provide protection against the victim's family for accused until judgment could be rendered or the death of the high priests occurred. There are also instructions for the cities of the Levites and alter instructions for the priests.

The last two chapters of Joshua have been dubbed “Joshua’s farewell address.” It is here Joshua instructs on the covenant of God and reminds the Israelites to teach their children the ways of the LORD.

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SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Ex 17:9 Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand
NIV

Ex 12:31 During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the LORD as you have requested. NIV

Josh 1: 8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. NIV

Josh 24:19-22 Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. 20 If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you." 21 But the people said to Joshua, "No! We will serve the LORD." 22 Then Joshua said, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the LORD." NIV

Josh 24:26 And Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God. Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak near the holy place of the LORD. NIV

Josh 2:1 Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there. NIV

Josh 2:18 unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother,

your brothers and all your family into your house NIV

Ex 12:12 "On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn — both men and animals — and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. 13 The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. 14 "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD — a lasting ordinance. NIV

Matt 1:5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, NIV

Josh 3:3-6 giving orders to the people: "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, who are Levites, carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. 4 Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about a thousand yards between you and the ark ; do not go near it." 5 Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you." 6 Joshua said to the priests, "Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people." So they took it up and went ahead of them. NIV

Josh 4:5-7 and said to them, "Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, 6 to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' 7 tell them that the flow of the

Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever." NIV

Josh 5:2-3 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites again." 3 So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites at Gibeath Haaraloth. NIV

Josh 5:13 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" NIV

Josh 6:2-4 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. 3 March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. NIV

Josh 6:23 So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab, her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel. NIV

Josh 6:27 So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land. NIV

Josh 7:4-5 So about three thousand men went up; but they were routed by the men of Ai , 5 who killed about thirty-six of them. They chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the stone quarries and struck them down on the slopes. At this the hearts of the people melted and became like water. NIV

Josh 8:1 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai . For I have delivered into your hands

the king of Ai , his people, his city and his land. NIV

Josh 9:16 16 Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites , the Israelites heard that they were neighbors, living near them. NIV

Josh 15:1 The allotment for the tribe of Judah , clan by clan, extended down to the territory of Edom, to the Desert of Zin in the extreme south. NIV

Josh 20:1-3 Then the LORD said to Joshua: 2 "Tell the Israelites to designate the cities of refuge , as I instructed you through Moses, 3 so that anyone who kills a person accidentally and unintentionally may flee there and find protection from the avenger of blood. NIV