

# The Whole Truth

## Joshua

### Introduction: Historical Books

#### A. New genre—Historical Books (Joshua-Esther)

1. New Setting: from wilderness to Canaan
2. New Status: from Slave/Sojourner to resident/citizen
3. Chronicle the establishment, destruction, and restoration of Israel as nation
4. Hebrew Bible Division (Torah, Nevi'im Ketuvim)
  - a. Nevi'im: Former prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) and latter prophets (Isaiah, Ezra, and 12 minor)
  - b. Ketuvim: Writings in 4 sections (1. Poetic—Psalms, Proverbs, and Job; 2. Scrolls—Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther; Prophecy—Daniel; 4. History—Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles)

#### B. Reminder of Moses' final challenge

READ: Deuteronomy 30:15-18

1. As Canaan is conquered and settled, these words are quickly forgotten
2. People interested in their own pursuits

*In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes. Judges 21:25 NLT*

#### C. God is faithful to preserve and protect seed

READ: Ruth 4:18-22

*Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever." 2 Samuel 7:16 NLT*

*Fifteen days before the Festival of Shelters began, the priests had begun to sacrifice burnt offerings to the Lord. This was even before they had started to lay the foundation of the Lord's Temple. Ezra 3:6 NLT*

#### D. Given a history of Israel from entering Canaan to returning from exile

#### E. Joshua—the person

1. Name= “Yehashua” Yahweh is salvation
2. Mentoring relationship with Moses prepared him to be his successor (Joshua fails to mentor—Judges 2:10)

- a. Military leader (Exodus 17:8-16)
- b. Moses' attendant on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 24:13)
- c. With Moses at Tent of Meeting (Exodus 33:11)
- d. Urges Eldad and Medad to stop prophesying—mistake (Numbers 11:24-29)
- e. Chosen as spy (Numbers 13:8, 16; 14:6-9)
- f. Commissioned by God as successor (Numbers 27:18-23)—role of Spirit is key)

## F. Joshua—The Book

1. Author—Joshua according to Jewish tradition
2. Theme is three-fold
  - a. God kept promise to Abraham regarding land
  - b. God, rich in mercy, judges sin as an act of justice
  - c. God judges sin in ALL nations—includes Canaan
3. Structure and Outline
  - a. Entering Canaan (1-4)
  - b. Conquering Canaan (5-12)
  - c. Settling Canaan (13-24)

## I. **Entering Canaan** (1-4)

### A. Variety of Preparatory Speeches (1:1-18)

1. God to Joshua (READ: 1:1-9)
2. Joshua to officers (READ: 1:10-11)
3. Joshua to Trans Jordanian Tribes (READ: 1:12-18)

NOTE: The success of God's people in Canaan will be based on their devotion and commitment to God's law (theme in Deuteronomy)

### B. Spies sent to Jericho (2:1-24)

1. Two men sent to scout out Jericho (READ: 2:1)
2. Rahab, a prostitute, spares their life (READ: 2:15-22)
3. Spies report of Canaanites' fear (READ: 2:23-24)

SEE: Matthew 1:5

### C. Crossing the Jordan (3:1-4:24)

1. March to Jordan River (3:1)
2. Preparatory orders—follow Levites and Ark (3:2-5)

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3. Crossing orders (3:6-13)
4. Descent into the river (3:14-17)
5. Stone orders—two orders (4:1-10)

NOTE: What reminders do we have in place to speak of God's faithfulness?

6. Priests and ark cross while people look on (4:11-14)
7. Ascent from river (4:15-18)
8. Arrival at Gilgal/need to speak with kids (4:19-24)

## II. Conquering Canaan (5-12)

### A. Preparing for the battles (5:1-15)

1. Enemies of Israel struck with fear at the news of their crossing (5:1)
2. Men are circumcised (5:2-9)
  - a. First battle fought is postoperative
  - b. Signifies Israel belongs to God, not Egypt (READ: 5:9)
  - c. Prerequisite for Passover

*Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the instructions for the festival of Passover. No outsiders are allowed to eat the Passover meal. 44 But any slave who has been purchased may eat it if he has been circumcised. 45 Temporary residents and hired servants may not eat it. 46 Each Passover lamb must be eaten in one house. Do not carry any of its meat outside, and do not break any of its bones. 47 The whole community of Israel must celebrate this Passover festival. 48 "If there are foreigners living among you who want to celebrate the Lord's Passover, let all their males be circumcised. Only then may they celebrate the Passover with you like any native-born Israelite. But no uncircumcised male may ever eat the Passover meal. 49 This instruction applies to everyone, whether a native-born Israelite or a foreigner living among you." Exodus 12:43-49 NLT*

3. Passover celebrated—focus back on past (5:10-11)
4. Manna ceases—time to take responsibility (5:12)

NOTE: Learning to live in God's family is a growing process—training wheels off, ownership (not borrowed faith).

5. Commander of Lord's Army—Theophany (5:13-15)

NOTE: Given perspective—God is before you

### B. Central Battles—Jericho and Ai (6-8)

1. Jericho defeated (6:1-27)

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- a. Unique strategy (march, trumpets, war cry)
  - b. Rahab and family spared
  - c. Reputation spread (6:26-27)
  - d. Complete destruction—prevent moral/spiritual contamination (6:17-19)
2. The events at Ai (7:1-8:29)
- a. Israel's defeat by Ai (7:2-5)
  - b. Basis of defeat was not God's inability but human disobedience (7:1)
  - c. Joshua and elders' response—fall and pray (7:6-9)
  - d. Lord's reply (7:10-15)
  - e. Achan is held responsible (7:16-26)

NOTE: Our sin doesn't just impact the individual

*They piled a great heap of stones over Achan, which remains to this day. That is why the place has been called the Valley of Trouble ever since. So the Lord was no longer angry. Joshua 7:26 NLT*

*I will return her vineyards to her and transform the Valley of Trouble into a gateway of hope. She will give herself to me there, as she did long ago when she was young, when I freed her from her captivity in Egypt. Hosea 2:15 NLT*

NOTE: God can turn a valley of trouble into a door of hope

- f. Second attack on Ai (8:1-29)

NOTE: God can work through human strategizing and planning

- 3. Covenant renewal (READ: 8:30-35)

C. Southern battles—Amorite Allies (9:1-10:43)

- 1. Many kings formed opposition against Israel (9:1-2)
- 2. Gibeonite deception and covenant (9:3-15)
- 3. Covenant violates earlier commands

*"Make no treaties with them or their gods. 33 They must not live in your land, or they will cause you to sin against me. If you serve their gods, you will be caught in the trap of idolatry." Exodus 23:32-33 NLT*

*"Be very careful never to make a treaty with the people who live in the land where you are going. If you do, you will follow their evil ways and be trapped. Exodus 34:12-13 NLT*

*When the Lord your God hands these nations over to you and you conquer them, you must completely destroy them. Make no treaties with them and show them no mercy. Deuteronomy 7:2-3 NLT*

4. Failed to consult the Lord (see 9:14)

*Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success. Proverbs 15:22 NLT*

5. Defeat of Southern Armies (10:1-43)

READ: 10:12-13

- D. Northern Battles—Canaanite Allies (11:1-15)
- E. Summary of Victories (11:16-12:24)

READ: Joshua 11:23

### **III. Settling Canaan (13-24)**

- A. Division of Land (13-19)

NOTE: Failed to drive ALL people out—see 15:63

NOTE: Shiloh as religious center—18:1

- B. Settling the Land of Canaan (20-24)

1. Cities of Refuge (24)—3 on the East and 3 on the West
2. Cities to Levites (21:1-42)—48 total
3. Eastern tribes (men) returned (22:24-27)
4. Controversy over altar (READ: 22:24-27)
5. People given rest from enemies (READ: 23:1)
6. Joshua's farewell and final charge (23-24)

READ: Chapter 23 and 24

7. Faithfulness of people in Joshua's time

*The people of Israel served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him—those who had personally experienced all that the Lord had done for Israel. Joshua 24:31 NLT*

### **Conclusion:**