



Overview for Joshua

Author: Primarily Joshua. Phinehas, the high priest, was an eyewitness to the events and may have finished the book. Some commentators suggest that Ezra may have edited it.

Time Period Covered: 1451 B.C. – 1427 B.C.

Date Written: 1407 B.C. – 1383 B.C.

Setting: The conquest and division of the Land of Canaan, the geographical territory comprised by today's Israel and Jordan

Prominent Characters: Joshua, Rahab, two spies, Achan, Caleb, Phinehas, Eleazar

Key Word: “Inheritance” is used fifty-eight times in the Book of Joshua

Objective: To detail the history of Israel's taking possession of the Promised Land

Key Verse: “Within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.” – Joshua 1:11

Comments: The Book of Joshua is a multi-purpose book. It continues to record the history of the Children of Israel begun in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament which the Jews call the “Torah,” meaning “Law”). Also, it is a book of new beginnings, as it demonstrates the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His covenant in settling the tribes into their promised homeland.

The book can be separated into three main parts: Section one records the people entering the land (chapters 1—5); section two describes them conquering the land (chapters 6—12), and section three details them dividing and settling the land, including the setting aside of special cities of refuge and cities for the Levites (chapters 13—24). The remainder of the

historical books of the Old Testament (Judges through Esther) cover Israel's history inside the land.

The Book of Joshua begins just after the death of Moses. Joshua, who had distinguished himself as a man of faith and courage, was the successor appointed by God. Joshua had been one of the twelve spies who initially explored the land of Canaan, and, with Caleb, he brought back a good report. He demonstrated brilliant military leadership and was a strong influence for God to the Children of Israel. This book records Joshua's leadership of the people of God as they concluded their wanderings in the wilderness, conquered the Promised Land, and divided the land among the various tribes.

Many notable events are recorded in this book: the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River, the walls of Jericho falling down, the battle at Ai and the stoning of Achan, Israel at Ebal and Gerizim, the conquest of the north and south, and the renewal of God's covenant with the Children of Israel.

As leader of God's chosen people, Joshua was obedient to God and to God's way, and obedience is therefore a theme of this book. Whatever the Israelites set out to do, they were required to trust God and follow His plan implicitly. In his final message to the people, Joshua once more stressed the importance of obedience, telling them, “Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God” (Joshua 23:11) and stating once again his personal purpose, “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

The Book of Joshua instructs Christians of every age in how to be victorious soldiers of the Lord, and how to claim their rich spiritual inheritance in Jesus Christ. It encourages believers to be strong and courageous as they face their enemies and march forward to claim new territory for the Lord.

Timeline

Exodus from Egypt 1446 B.C.	Judges begin to rule 1375	T H E D A Y S O F T H E J U D G E S	United Kingdom under Saul 1050	David becomes king 1010
	Israelites enter Canaan 1406			
	CONQUEST OF CANAAN			

Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.

- I. The land contested (1:1—12:24)
 - A. The preparation for the conquest (1:1—5:15)
 - B. The history of the conquest (6:1—12:24)
- II. The land divided (13:1—21:45)
 - A. The instructions to apportion the land (13:1-7)
 - B. The apportionment of Transjordan (13:8-33)
 - C. The apportionment of Canaan (14:1—19:51)
 - D. The assignment of the cities of refuge (20:1-9)
 - E. The apportionment to the Levites (21:1-42)
 - F. The summary (21:43-45)
- III. The epilogue (22:1—24:33)
 - A. The return of the Transjordan tribes (22:1-34)
 - B. The final addresses of Joshua (23:1—24:33)