

# Joshua

## *The LORD is Salvation*

### Major OT Principles in **Joshua** Applicable to NT Christians

#### Chapter 1 *The LORD Commissions Joshua*

God's unconditional promise to "never leave ... nor forsake" Joshua<sup>1:5</sup> was earlier spoken to Moses<sup>Deuteronomy 31:6</sup> and presented later as a promise to Christians<sup>Matthew 28:20b, Hebrews 13:5</sup>.

The OT<sup>1:6</sup> and NT<sup>1 Corinthians 16:13</sup> exhortations to the genuine followers of God to "be strong" can only be embraced when genuine believers put their full trust in the Lord<sup>Isaiah 12:2, John 14:1</sup>.

#### Chapter 2 *Rahab and the Spies (Messengers?)*

Rahab lied<sup>2:4-6</sup> (a sin<sup>Exodus 20:16, Proverbs 12:22</sup>) ⇒ situational ethics? However, in the end, Rahab was saved, as all are<sup>Ephesians 2:8-9</sup>, not by her actions, but by her faith<sup>Hebrews 11:31</sup>.

James<sup>James 2:18-26</sup> contrasted the salvation of "God's friend" Abraham and the "harlot" Rahab in order to illustrate the principle: "God does not show favoritism"<sup>Acts 10:34-35, Romans 2:9-11</sup>.

#### Chapter 3 *The Nation of Israel Crosses the Jordan*

In the OT, consecration<sup>3:5</sup> meant receiving ceremonial washing and abstinence<sup>Exodus 19:14-15</sup>. A Christian becomes purified through the faithful act of confession to the LORD<sup>1 John 1:9</sup>.

The nations the Israelites would face in Canaan<sup>3:10</sup> are human-type enemies equivalent to the spiritual-type enemies Christians face in the world ("rulers, authorities, powers"<sup>Ephesians 6:12</sup>).

#### Chapter 4 *The Two Sets of Twelve Stones*

Joshua explained: the twelve stones at Gilgal were a sign of God's provision for the Israelite nation<sup>v.21-24</sup>, but they can also be seen as a representation of the twelve tribes that crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land. Also, the other twelve stones Joshua set-up in the middle of the river<sup>v.9</sup> symbolized the Israelites who lacked the faith/trust to enter the PL, so they were not allowed to cross the Jordan and died in the desert<sup>Deuteronomy 1:27-28, 35</sup>.

And so, these powerful images are a wonderful picture of baptism: Paul explained<sup>Romans 6:1-10</sup>, in the process of baptism, death to sin is symbolized by being under the water (like the set of stones in the middle of the river) and coming out of the water represents new life in the resurrection of Christ (like the set of stones at Gilgal) (producing "living stones"<sup>1 Peter 2:4-7</sup>).

## Chapter 5:1-12 *The Circumcision at Gilgal*

Circumcisions<sup>5:2-3</sup> are a sign of the Old Covenant<sup>Acts 7:8</sup> and the New Covenant<sup>Colossians 2:11-12</sup>.

Joshua performed the circumcisions & celebrated Passover in order for the Israelites to be prepared for war. In the same way, Christians are to prepare<sup>2 Corinthians 10:3-6, Ephesians 6:10-18</sup> for the spiritual warfare that will occur when they are obedient to trust in & serve the LORD.

When God stopped the manna, He didn't abandon Israel, but changed how He provided for them.<sup>5:11-12</sup> The same is true for Christians: God will always meet their needs.<sup>Philippians 4:19</sup>

## Chapter 5:13-15 *The Commander of the Army of the LORD (Central Campaign)*

The "man/commander of the Lord's army" was probably a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus (the Angel of the LORD<sup>Genesis 22:15-18, 2 Kings 1:3</sup>, a Christophany). This conclusion is based on: (1) Jesus said He was on "neither" side, because He is always on His own side, and it is up to people to be on His side<sup>Luke 11:23</sup>. (2) Joshua recognized Him right away and worshipped Him. If the man was a regular angel, the angel would have rebuked the worship<sup>Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9</sup> and (3) Jesus repeated the words He spoke to Moses at the burning bush (Joshua would have known them from his association with Moses). The presence of Jesus makes any place "holy".

## Chapter 6 *The Battle and Fall of Jericho*

Joshua fought and Christians fight from a position of victory<sup>6:2</sup>, when the proper preparations are taken (i.e., getting<sup>John 3:16</sup> and staying<sup>1 John 1:9</sup> in the center of God's will). Christians have victory in Jesus<sup>1 Corinthians 15:57, Romans 8:37</sup>, because He defeated all fleshly and spiritual enemies on the cross<sup>Colossians 2:13-15</sup> and through His resurrection<sup>Ephesians 1:18-23</sup>. When Christians are in God's will, they can never be defeated<sup>Romans 8:31, 1 John 4:4</sup>.

The Jericho "battle plan" devised by God<sup>6:3-5</sup> is one of many examples of methods He uses that seem "foolish" (e.g., the cross<sup>1 Corinthians 1:18</sup>), but the "foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom"<sup>1 Corinthians 1:25</sup> because "[God's] ways are higher than [man's] ways"<sup>Isaiah 55:8-9</sup>.

Note the "sacred" things God told Joshua to keep ('gold, silver, bronze, iron'<sup>6:19</sup>) and the things to be destroyed ("burned the whole city"<sup>6:24</sup>). These things seem to be foreshadowing the materials associated with God's judgement of the works of the believer<sup>1 Corinthians 3:10-15</sup>; the things of eternal value (gold, silver and costly stones<sup>1 Corinthians 3:12</sup>) will produce a "reward" for the follower of God<sup>1 Corinthians 3:12-14</sup>, while the things with no eternal value (wood, hay, straw<sup>1 Corinthians 3:12</sup>) are "burned up"<sup>1 Corinthians 3:15</sup>.

The Lord's total destruction (through Joshua and the Israelites) of Jericho<sup>6:24</sup> (a fortified Canaan city) is a physical earthly example of "[demolishing] strongholds", which is how Paul described the victories Christians can gain in the spiritual battles of life.<sup>2 Corinthians 10:3-5</sup>

## Chapter 7 *Achan's Sin*

Followers of God (Jews and Christians alike) are most vulnerable immediately after victory. Consider Peter's great defeat <sup>Matthew 16:21-23</sup> that followed his greatest victory <sup>Matthew 16:13-19</sup>.

Ultimately, Achan's sin <sup>7:20-21</sup> involved stealing what rightfully belonged to the LORD <sup>Acts 5:1-10</sup>.

Achan's actions followed the general progressive steps of sin <sup>James 1:13-15</sup> that can be seen in other Biblical stories and in life today: (1) he saw, (2) he coveted, (3) he took and (4) he hid. (e.g., Eve's garden sin <sup>Genesis 3</sup> and David's sin with Bathsheba <sup>2 Samuel 11</sup> followed the pattern.)

## Chapter 8:1-29 *A New Beginning: Ai is Destroyed*

These verses stress how critical it is to always properly prepare <sup>Joshua 7:13, Ephesians 6:10-18</sup> be wholly obedient to His plans <sup>Deuteronomy 11:13-15, John 14:15,23</sup> and allow Him to lead <sup>Psalms 31:3</sup> because when believers follow this Biblical pattern, Jesus will provide victory <sup>1 Corinthians 15:57</sup>.

## Chapter 8:30-35 *The Covenant with the LORD is Renewed*

God demanded an altar be made with "uncut stones" <sup>8:30-31</sup>, because God's workmanship would be "defiled" if the altar was made with "dressed stones" <sup>Exodus 20:25</sup> (man's workmanship). This is a foreshadowing of God's direction to not add anything to His grace <sup>Ephesians 2:8-9</sup>.

Joshua's altar was close to the altar Abram built when he first arrived in Canaan <sup>Genesis 12:8</sup> and near Jacob's altar <sup>Genesis 33:20</sup> and where Jesus met the Samaritan woman <sup>John 4:4-26</sup>.

## Chapter 9 *The Gibeonite Deception, but an Honored Oath*

The pride of worldly men is so strong, they even think they can war against God: here <sup>9:1-2</sup> and twice in the end times <sup>Revelation 19:19-21, 20:7-9</sup>, but the Lord laughs at their vanity <sup>Psalms 2:1-6</sup>.

The Hivites used deception to entice the Israelites to sin for their benefit <sup>9:3-13</sup>, much like spiritual trials Christians face against Satan, who induces sin as the "father of lies" <sup>John 8:44</sup> with wily "schemes" <sup>2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 6:11</sup> and "cunning" deception <sup>2 Corinthians 11:3</sup>.

Some lies are discovered quickly by man <sup>v.16</sup> and others are never uncovered; however, man can do nothing without God's full awareness <sup>Psalms 33:13-15, Proverbs 5:21, John 16:30, Hebrews 4:13</sup>.

The LORD considers any oath taken in His name as binding <sup>Leviticus 19:12, Numbers 30:1-2</sup>, even if it turns out to "hurt" the one who took the oath <sup>Deuteronomy 23:21, Psalm 15:1-5</sup>. God is faithful to always keep His promises <sup>Numbers 23:19</sup> and Christians are required to do the same <sup>Matthew 5:37</sup>. A sign of a deteriorating society is the lost sanctity of commitment (American marriages).

## Chapter 10:1-15 *The Longest Day (Southern Campaign)*

The King of Salem means "king of peace" <sup>Hebrews 7:1-2</sup>; Jerusalem means "teaching of peace".

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## Chapter 10:16-28 *The Five Amorite Kings are Killed*

In the end, all of God's enemies will be footstools <sup>10:24</sup> for Jesus. <sup>1 Kings 5:3, Psalm 110:1, 1 Corinthians 15:25</sup>

Joshua's faith in the Lord's promises <sup>10:8, Matthew 28:20</sup> carried the Israelites on to victory <sup>1 John 5:3-5</sup>.

## Chapter 10:29-43 Southern Cities are Conquered

God's commandment to annihilate the people of Canaan <sup>Deuteronomy 7:1-2</sup> was justified: after 400 years <sup>Genesis 15:16</sup>, their sin (that effected both the people and the land they lived in <sup>Leviticus 18:1-28</sup>) had reached its "full measure", which was implied in God's covenant with Abram <sup>Genesis 15:16</sup> (this was another way of saying they had committed the "eternal sin" <sup>Mark 3:28-29, Revelation 14:9-11</sup>).

## Chapter 11 *The Northern Kings are Defeated (Northern Campaign)*

## Chapter 12 *A Summary of the Defeated Kings and Cities*

## Chapter 13:1-7 *The Area of the Promised Land Yet Conquered*

Joshua was a great leader of the people, but as a human, his efforts to conquer the PL were incomplete, unlike the job his namesake, Jesus, will do in the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel <sup>Revelation 4-18</sup>.

## Chapter 13:8-33 *The Land East of the Jordan River is Divided*

## Chapter 14 *The Division of the Land West of the Jordan River Begins*

There are 3 key examples in Abraham's early descendants of God's blessing the 2<sup>nd</sup> born over the 1<sup>st</sup> born: Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Ephraim over Manasseh. Are these signs of God's anointing the 2<sup>nd</sup> (spiritual) birth over the 1<sup>st</sup> (physical) birth? <sup>John 3:1-7, 1 Peter 1:22-23</sup>

## Chapter 15 *The Land Allotment for Judah*

## Chapter 16 *The Land Allotment for Joseph's Sons: Part 1, Ephraim*

## Chapter 17 *The Land Allotment for Joseph's Sons: Part 2, Manasseh*

## Chapter 18:1-10 *Dividing the Remaining Land among the Seven Last Tribes*

## Chapter 18:11-28 *The Land Allotment for Benjamin*

## Chapter 19 *The Land Allotment for the Last Six Tribes and Joshua*

Zebulun <sup>v.10-16</sup> and Naphtali <sup>v.32-39</sup> were called the "Galilee of the Gentiles" by Isaiah <sup>Isaiah 9:1-2</sup> and Matthew <sup>Matthew 4:12-16</sup>, which alluded to the main route Gentiles took to enter and exit Israel passing through Galilee. The context of Matthew's quote of Isaiah's statement: "people living in darkness have seen a great light..." <sup>Isaiah 9:1-2, Matthew 4:12-16</sup>, was that Israel 'exhibited' the light of God to the world ("Gentiles") and in a more definitive way, Jesus is the great light <sup>John 8:12</sup> who came to the Gentiles <sup>Luke 2:28-32</sup> and all mankind <sup>Matthew 5:14, John 1:4</sup>.

## Chapter 20 *The Cities of Refuge and the Avenger of Blood*

Is there a NT/Church Age application of these principles? <sup>20:1-6</sup> Christians deserve death, because of sin <sup>Romans 6:23</sup>, and sin was the reason for the death of Jesus <sup>1 Peter 3:18</sup>. However, Jesus said He was executed by people who did not know what they were doing <sup>Luke 23:32-34</sup> (i.e., it was not premeditated murder). God is the avenger <sup>Deuteronomy 32:35,40-42</sup>, but Jesus is the refuge <sup>2 Timothy 1:9-10</sup>. Since the high priest has died <sup>Hebrews 7:26-27</sup>, believers are free.

## Chapter 21 *The Towns and Pasturelands given to the Levites*

## Chapter 22 *The Men of the Eastern Tribes have a Controversial Trip Home*

## Chapter 23 *Joshua's Last Messages: First to the Israelite Leadership*

Christians gain spiritual strength in the same manner <sup>23:6</sup>: **Philippians 4:6-9** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me - put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

The Israelites inherited the land, but God is the true owner and the people of Israel are His tenants <sup>Leviticus 25:23</sup>. What God required from Israel (the 'rent') was their obedience to the Lord <sup>Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 27-30</sup>. The Christian's inheritance is salvation <sup>Hebrews 1:14</sup> and the benefits of the Kingdom <sup>James 2:5</sup>, but obedience <sup>Luke 11:28, John 14:15, 15:10-11</sup> is also required, because it is the proof of a believer's redemption <sup>Matthew 7:20, James 1:2-4,12</sup>.

America has rejected God, but after a crisis, most people are crying "God Bless America!". These verses <sup>23:12-13</sup> make it clear that neither Israel nor America can have it both ways.

## Chapter 24:1-27 *Joshua's Last Messages: A Final Inspirational Reminder*

God's teachings, Joshua's warnings and Israel's emphatic responses are suggestive of a later exchange between Jesus and Peter. After the Last Supper, Jesus warned His disciples of their scattering after His death <sup>Mark 14:27-28</sup>, but in the emotion of the time, Peter pledged his complete allegiance to Jesus <sup>Mark 14:29</sup>. Jesus told Peter he would soon fall <sup>Mark 14:30</sup>, but being overconfident, Peter again emphatically avowed he would not fail <sup>Mark 14:31</sup>; however, he quickly faltered in the garden <sup>Mark 14:32-37</sup> and in the courtyard of the high priest <sup>Mark 14:66-72</sup>. However, in His mercy/compassion for Peter, later Jesus extended grace to Peter <sup>John 21:15-19</sup>.

## Chapter 24:28-33 *The Death and Burial of Joshua*