

JOSHUA

Author:

According to Jewish tradition Joshua was the author of this book, except for 24:29-33. There is evidence in the book itself that points to Joshua's authorship. See 24:26. See the use of the word "we" in 5:1. Joshua came out of Egypt with Moses and spent 40 years with him and Israel in the desert. He was an experienced military leader (Ex 17:8-13), a man of faith and faithfulness (Num 14:6-9). The name Joshua means "Jehovah gives salvation" or "Jehovah gives victory".

Date:

The invasion of Canaan took place probably about 1406 BC. Joshua wrote when most of the land had been taken, toward the end of his life.

Themes:

God's people taking the land God had promised them, the way God gave them victory, and the lessons they learned in the battle for Canaan. This book has many spiritual lessons for believers now. Some, at least, of the events seen in it are pictures of our spiritual life and warfare. See the note at 1:17. Another theme in Joshua is the destruction of wicked peoples. See 6:21; 8:26; 10:28,35,37,39,40. This was done at God's command. See Deut 7:1-2,16. And it was done under divine leadership (Josh 5:13-15). But was it just and right for God to destroy whole peoples? Certainly it was just and right. That is why God did it. Everything God does is just and right, and He is the one who is the proper judge of what is just and right, not sinful man. On the destruction of wicked people see notes at Gen 6:7; 15:16; Lev 18:24-25; Deut 13:12-18; Ps 47:2; 2 Thess 1:5-9; Rev 16:5-7. The inhabitants of Canaan practiced idolatry, the sacrifice of infants to idols, and sexual perversions in the name of their gods. They were extremely cruel and corrupt. Mingling with them would be disastrous for the people of Israel, whom God had chosen to worship Him and to proclaim the truth about Him. The sins of the peoples of Canaan were ripe for judgment, so God wisely and justly decided the time had come to destroy them.

Some key verses in this book are 1:3-9; 5:13-15; 21:43-45; 24:14-15.

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1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came about that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying,

²"Moses my servant is dead. Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you, and all this people, to the land which I give to them, to the children of Israel. ³Every place that the sole of your foot treads on, I have given to you, just as I said to Moses. ⁴Your territory will be from the wilderness and this Lebanon to the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the great sea toward the sunset. ⁵No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not fail you, or forsake you.

⁶"Be strong and courageous; for you will cause this people to possess the land, which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷Only be strong and very courageous, so that you may be careful to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸This book of the law must not depart from your mouth, but you must meditate in it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have

good success. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed; for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go".

¹⁰Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹"Pass through the camp, and command the people, saying, Prepare food for yourselves; for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God gives you to possess".

¹²And Joshua spoke to the Reubenites and to the Gadites and to half the tribe of Manasseh, saying, ¹³"Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God has given you rest, and has given you this land. ¹⁴Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock, will remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but you, all the valiant warriors, must go armed before your brethren, and help them ¹⁵until the LORD has given your brethren rest, just as *he has given* you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God gives them.' Then you shall return to enjoy the land of your possession, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side of Jordan toward the sunrise".

¹⁶And they answered Joshua, saying, "We will do all that you command us, and

1:1 "*Death of Moses*"— Deut 34:5. The book of Joshua continues the story of Israel where Deuteronomy left off. When one leader passed off the scene God raised up another. For the accomplishment of His purposes He was not dependent on any one man.

1:2 "*My servant*"— Ex 14:31; Deut 34:5; Hab 3:5.

"*Jordan*"—marked the eastern boundary of Canaan.

"*Give*"— God had already given it to them by promise (v 6; Gen 12:6-7; 15:18-21; Ex 3:8). Now He was giving them the actual possession of it.

1:3 Deut 11:24-25. God gave them the land but they had to occupy it.

1:4 "*Wilderness*"— in the far south of the land.

"*Euphrates*"— in the far north.

"*Hittites*"— Ex 33:2; 34:11. The Hittites once occupied much of Canaan and in ancient times the whole land was sometimes called after them.

"*Sea*"— Mediterranean.

1:5 "*Stand*"— Deut 7:24. In spiritual matters compare Luke 10:18-19; Jam 4:7.

"*I will be with you*"— vs 9,17; Gen 26:3; 39:2; Deut 31:8; Isa 7:14; Heb 13:5-6.

1:6 "*Strong and courageous*"— two qualities very necessary in a leader. No doubt it was a matter of trembling to Joshua to be called to take the place of one of the greatest men in history, and to lead a nation into a strange land to conquer powerful enemies.

"*Cause...to possess*"— Joshua had already been chosen as Moses's successor (Deut 31:1-8). Here God confirms his call. It is God who must appoint leaders for His people. The initiative is His, and He will equip them for the task to which He calls them.

1:7-8 For a leader obedience to God was more necessary than any other quality (Deut 8:1; 11:8). This is still true. The Book of the Law was the revelation God gave through Moses at Mt Sinai (Ex 20:1; 21:1; Lev 1:1; Deut 4:5-8). Moses had written down all God gave him to write— Ex 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Num 33:22; Deut 31:9. God's people had to give it the highest importance in their lives (Deut 6:6-7). That was the only way to victory and the enjoyment of God's blessings. Now we have God's full revelation in the Bible, and God's Word is of the utmost importance in the life of every believer (John 8:31-32; 14:24; Rom 15:4; Col 3:16; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Jam 1:22-25). Obedience to it is the only way to have success in the Christian life.

1:9 God with us is the remedy for fear and discouragement (v 5; Deut 33:27; Ps 23:4; 27:1-3; 46:1-3; 2 Tim 4:16-17; Heb 13:5-6).

1:10-11 A true leader obeys God's instructions and urges the people to obey them.

1:12-18 Num 32; Josh 22:1-4.

will go wherever you send us. ¹⁷Just as we listened to Moses in all things, so we will listen to you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses. ¹⁸Whoever rebels against your command, and will not listen to your words in all that

you command him, he shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous”.

2 And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two spies secretly, saying, “Go view the land, and Jericho”. And they went

1:18 They were right to insist that Joshua live in the presence and blessing of God. It is a risky thing to follow a leader out of touch with God. The taking of Canaan by the people of Israel has many lessons for believers now, and the physical events involved in it are pictures of our spiritual walk and warfare. Consider the following:

(a) Canaan was the “promised land”. God had given it to Israel and told them repeatedly that He had (note on v 2 above). It was their inheritance and they had a right to it. Now believers in Christ have been given a very precious thing – life in Christ and exceeding precious promises relating to it (2 Pet 1:4). They have spiritual possessions in Christ (Eph 1:3) which they have a right to claim and enjoy. These include victory over spiritual enemies and in all the circumstances of life (Rom 8:37), the fullness of God’s Spirit (Eph 5:18), and similar blessings. Just as the giving of Canaan to Israel was all of grace so this life in Christ is all of grace (Eph 2:8-10).

(b) What was promised to Israel they had to claim and possess. Believers in Christ now must claim the blessings given them in Christ. Their success in the Christian life will depend in large measure on claiming the promises of God by faith. What God gives, men must take. Believers may claim many things from God, and fight for them, and possess and enjoy them. Though the words “faith” and “believe” are not found in Joshua, faith was at the very basis of what they did. If they had not believed that God had given them the land they would not have gone in to possess it. If they had not believed God had appointed Joshua they would not have followed him. If they had not had faith in God’s instructions they would not have taken Jericho (see Heb 11:30). The relationship between faith and victory in the spiritual life now is made clear in the New Testament – Eph 6:16; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7; Heb 6:12; 10:35-36; 1 Pet 5:9; 1 John 5:4-5. By faith we receive the empowering Holy Spirit (Gal 3:2,14); by faith we walk (2 Cor 5:7; Gal 3:11); by faith we fight (Eph 6:16; 1 Tim 6:12).

(c) There were mighty enemies opposing Israel and they were determined that Israel should not possess the land (for example see 11:1-5). Believers in Christ have enemies far stronger and more determined than the Canaanites (Eph 6:10-12). These enemies would, if they could, prevent us from claiming our possessions in the heavenly places.

(d) Because there were enemies Israel was required to fight. Being passive or lazy would have been ruinous. Believers now too are engaged in a warfare, whether they like it or not, but this warfare is spiritual (2 Cor 10:4; Eph 6:12; 1 Pet 5:8-9). To be passive is to be defeated.

(e) To enter into their inheritance Israel had to follow the leader God had appointed – Joshua. Believers now have a God appointed leader whom they must follow or face certain defeat – Jesus. Joshua means “Jehovah saves”. In Greek, the original language of the New Testament, the name became Jesus, with the same meaning. Jesus is our leader to glory, our captain in the battle of life (Heb 2:10; 12:1-3).

(f) For victory in Canaan certain qualities were very necessary to Israel – courage, strength, an obedient heart, and a mind always occupied with the word of God. These qualities are no less needed in the believer’s spiritual warfare now.

(g) God gave Israel the promise of victory (1:5). He does so now to believers (John 8:31-36; 16:33; Rom 8:37; 1 Cor 15:57).

(h) God promised Israel His continual presence, which indeed was the basis for their victory (1:5). So with us now (Matt 28:20; Heb 13:5-6).

(i) By overcoming the enemy Israel inherited the land and dwelt in it. Compare Rev 21:7.

(j) Taking the land was a process. It did not happen in a single day (11:18). Believers now do not immediately understand, claim, and enjoy all they have in Christ. See Paul’s prayers in Eph 1:15-19; 3:14-19.

(k) Even when Joshua was an old man and much of Canaan was taken there was still much land to be possessed (13:1; 23:4-5). Now how little of our riches in Christ do most believers ever claim and enjoy in this life! There is more to come (Matt 25:31-34; 1 Pet 1:4).

2:1 Shittim was east of the Jordan River in the plains of Moab. Jericho was a very ancient city eight kilometers west of the Jordan. It was a walled and fortified city which stood in the path of Israel’s invasion route into Canaan. Like all of the nations in Canaan the people of Jericho were hopelessly sinful and depraved (Lev 18:24-26; 20:23; Deut 18:9-12). God used Israel as an instrument of judgment on them.

Yet there was mercy for anyone who turned to the Lord in repentance and faith. The experience of Rahab, herself a sinful woman, shows this (Josh 6:17; Heb 11:31; Jam 2:25). Rahab became one of the ancestors of Boaz into whose line King David was born (Ruth 4:21-22; Matt 1:5-6). From the line of David our Lord Jesus Christ was born. This shows us the greatness of God’s grace and how He can use a person who believes in Him. We are not told why the spies entered Rahab’s house. It is probable that she saw them first and invited them in so she could make an agreement with them that would save her life. Some Jewish scholars of olden times taught that Rahab was an innkeeper. If so, this might account for the spies going into her place.

and entered the house of a prostitute, named Rahab, and lodged there.

²And the king of Jericho was told, saying, "Look, tonight men from the children of Israel have come here to search out the country". ³And the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house; for they have come to search out the whole country".

⁴And the woman took the two men and hid them and spoke like this: "Some men came to me, but I did not know from where they came. ⁵And it so happened that *about the time* the gates were being shut, when it was dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Go after them quickly, for you can catch up with them". ⁶But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had spread out on the roof. ⁷And the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.

⁸And before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, ⁹and she said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that your terror has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. ¹⁰For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹And as soon as we had heard *these things*, our hearts melted, and no one had any courage left, because of you. For the LORD your God is God in heaven above, and in earth below. ¹²Now, therefore, since

I have showed you kindness, please swear to me by the LORD that you will also show kindness to my father's household, and give me a true token ¹³*that* you will save alive my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death".

¹⁴And the men answered her, "Our life for yours, if you do not tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you".

¹⁵Then she let them down by a rope through the window; for her house was on the town wall, and she lived on the wall. ¹⁶And she said to them, "Go to the mountain, so that the pursuers will not come across you, and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers have returned; and afterwards you can go your way".

¹⁷And the men said to her, "We *will be* blameless about this oath to you which you have made us swear. ¹⁸See, *when* we come into the land, you must tie this scarlet cord in the window from which you let us down. And you must bring your father and your mother and your brothers, and all your father's household, to your home. ¹⁹And it will be *like this*: whoever goes out of the doors of your house into the street, *his blood* will be on his head, and we *will be* blameless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood *will be* on our head, if a hand is laid on him. ²⁰But if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free of this oath to you which you have made us swear".

²¹And she said, "Let it be according to your words". And she sent them away, and they left. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²²And they went away and came to the

2:5 Rahab told a deliberate lie to protect the spies. She had come to believe in the power of the one true God (Josh 2:9-11). The New Testament commends her for her faith (Heb 11:31; Jam 2:25), but not for her lying. God does not need the help of man's lies to carry out His purposes. And no doubt God could have saved the lives of these spies without it. But even in lying Rahab showed her faith in the LORD. And faith is very powerful with God.

2:8-11 Rahab's words gave the spies a knowledge of the state of mind of the people of Jericho and of all of Canaan's people. Of course this was encouraging information for Joshua (v 24).

2:10 Ex 14:21; Num 21:23-24,33-35.

2:11 Deut 4:39; Isa 42:8.

2:15 The outer wall of Jericho may have been as much as 30 feet high, and several feet thick. Rahab's house may have been built between this wall and an inner wall, with a window over or through the outer wall.

2:18 Rahab's house was the only safe place in Jericho. The scarlet line, the colour of blood, may speak symbolically of protection through sacrifice (Ex 12:7,13; Heb 9:19-22). We are saved from the penalty of sin through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ (Heb 9:28). His blood protects believers from eternal destruction. Observe that Rahab's faith could be a means of salvation to all in her family (6:25).

mountain and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had gone back. And the pursuers looked for *them* everywhere along the way but did not find *them*. ²³So the two men returned, came down from the mountain, crossed *the Jordan* and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him everything that had happened to them. ²⁴And they said to Joshua, “The LORD has definitely delivered the whole land into our hands, for all the inhabitants of the country are fainting because of us”.

3 And Joshua rose early in the morning. And he and all the children of Israel set out from Shittim and came to the Jordan, and stayed there before they crossed over. ²And this occurred after three days: the officers went through the camp, ³and commanded the people, saying, “When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites carrying it, then you must set out from your place, and go after it. ⁴Yet there must be a distance of about two thousand cubits between you and it. Do not go near it. *This is so* that you may know the way you should go; for you have not come *this way* before this”.

⁵And Joshua said to the people, “Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you”. ⁶And Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, “Pick up the ark of the covenant, and cross over before the people”. And they picked up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

3:1 This chapter records a very important event in the history of Israel. After repeated promises by God to give them the land, after a few centuries in Egypt, and 40 years of wandering in the desert, at last they enter the promised land.

3:3 “*Ark*”— Ex 25:10-16. The ark of the covenant symbolized the presence of God with His people. Among other things it contained a copy of the law (Deut 31:9). Carrying it before the people signified God’s guidance and their readiness to follow Him and to accept His standards.

“*Priests*”— note at Ex 28:1.

“*Levites*”— notes at Num 8:10-19.

3:4 “*Two thousand cubits*”— the people had to keep a certain distance from the ark. They were to show their respect for the holy things of God. We must never treat the things of God and His Word lightly. To do so is a very serious matter (Num 4:15; 1 Sam 6:19; 2 Sam 6:6-7; Heb 12:28).

3:5 “*Sanctify yourselves*”— people who want to follow the Lord need to be clean, separated from all that might defile them, fully dedicated to

⁷And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to make you great in the sight of all Israel, so that they may know that I will be with you just as I was with Moses. ⁸And you shall command the priests who carry the ark of the covenant, saying, ‘When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you must stand still in the Jordan.’”

⁹And Joshua said to the children of Israel, “Come here, and listen to the words of the LORD your God”. ¹⁰And Joshua said, “This is how you will know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites. ¹¹See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. ¹²Therefore now take twelve men for yourselves out of the tribes of Israel, one man from each tribe. ¹³And it will come about, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the LORD, the Lord of the whole earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, *that* the waters of the Jordan will be cut off *from* the waters that come down from *upstream*, and they will stand up in a heap”.

¹⁴And so it happened. When the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, and the priests carried the ark of the covenant before the people, ¹⁵as those carrying the ark came to the Jordan and the feet of the priests carrying the ark touched the edge of the water (for

Him. Compare Rom 12:1-2; 2 Cor 7:1. The Lord works wonders among those who fully consecrate themselves to Him.

3:7 It was very important for the people to recognize that Joshua was God’s appointed leader. Otherwise they would not have followed him and disaster would have resulted. So God exalted him by openly demonstrating that He was with him. This demonstration was the miracle which follows.

3:8 The river Jordan was the border of the promised land, the boundary between the old life and the new. Crossing it is a symbol of entering into our possessions in Christ.

3:10 In the following miracle (vs 16,17), similar to the one performed at the Red Sea (Ex 14:21-22), God revealed His presence with His people.

3:11 “*Lord of the whole earth*”— Canaan belonged to God, not to the Canaanites, and He could give it to whomever He chose.

3:12 The twelve represented the whole nation. They had a work to do – 4:2-9.

the Jordan overflows all of its banks throughout the time of harvest), ¹⁶the water which came down from *upstream* stood *and* rose up in a heap, a great distance away at the town of Adam, that *is* near Zaretan. And the *water* that came down toward the Sea of the Plain, the Salt Sea, failed and was cut off. And the people crossed over directly opposite Jericho. ¹⁷And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, and all the Israelites crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan.

4 And it came about when all the people had finished crossing over the Jordan that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, ²“Take for yourself twelve men from the people, a man from each tribe, ³and command them, saying, Take up for yourselves twelve stones here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet stood firm, and carry them over with you, and leave them in the camping place, where you will camp tonight”.

⁴Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he appointed from the children of Israel, a man from each tribe, ⁵and Joshua said to them, “Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God to the middle of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, in accordance with the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, ⁶so that this may be a sign among you, *so that* when your children ask *their fathers* in the future, saying, ‘What *do* these stones *mean* to you?’ ⁷Then you shall answer them, ‘That the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of

Jordan were cut off.’ And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever”.

⁸And the children of Israel did just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, just as the LORD told Joshua, in accordance with the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they camped, and laid them down there. ⁹And Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant had stood. And they are there to this day.

¹⁰For the priests who carried the ark stood in the middle of the Jordan until everything that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people was finished, in accordance with all that Moses commanded Joshua. And the people hurried and crossed over. ¹¹And it came about when all the people had finished crossing over that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over, in the presence of the people.

¹²And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, crossed over armed before the children of Israel, just as Moses had told them. ¹³About forty thousand *of them* prepared for war crossed over to battle, in the presence of the LORD, to the plains of Jericho.

¹⁴On that day the LORD made Joshua great in the sight of all Israel, and they feared him, just as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.

¹⁵And the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, ¹⁶“Command the priests, who carry the ark of the Testimony, to come up out of the Jordan”.

¹⁷So Joshua commanded the priests, saying, “Come up out of the Jordan”.

3:15 “*Harvest*”— March to May was a time of harvest in that area. It was flood time in the Jordan because of seasonal rains and melting snow in the mountains to the north.

3:16 “*Rose up in a heap*”— God can as easily stop the flow of a flood as stop a small trickle of water. Great miracles are no more difficult to Him than small miracles. And when there is faith and obedience God will not be reluctant to do what He has promised.

“*Sea of the Plain*”— the Dead Sea.

4:2-8 Verses 21-22. This memorial pillar was a remembrance, not simply of the crossing of the

Jordan River, but of the great grace God showed to His people in bringing them thus far. It was to serve as a reminder of God’s goodness and power to the following generations. God often impressed on His people the duty of remembering His great acts (24:26; Deut 7:18; 8:2-4; 24:9). Compare 1 Cor 11:24-26; 2 Tim 2:8; Ps 103:2; 105:5. The believer should always call to mind the great things God has done and the way God has worked in his life.

4:12 Num 32:20-27.

4:13 Those 40,000 were from these 3 tribes only.

4:14 Note at 3:7.

¹⁸And it came about, when the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come up out of the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were set on dry land, that the water of the Jordan returned to its place and overflowed all its banks, just as it did before.

¹⁹And the people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month and camped in Gilgal, on the eastern boundary of Jericho. ²⁰And Joshua set up those twelve stones, which they took from the Jordan, in Gilgal. ²¹And he spoke to the children of Israel, saying, "When your children ask their fathers in the future, saying, 'What do these stones mean?' ²²Then you must tell your children, saying, 'Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. ²³For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan from before you until you had passed over, just as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea which he dried up from before us until we had crossed over, ²⁴so that all the people of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, so that you might fear the LORD your God forever.' "

5 And it came about, when all the kings of the Amorites who were on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were near the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before

the children of Israel until we had crossed over, that their heart melted and there was no longer any spirit in them, because of the children of Israel.

²At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make sharp knives for yourself, and circumcise the children of Israel the second time". ³And Joshua made sharp knives for himself, and circumcised the children of Israel at the Hill of the Foreskins.

⁴And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males among the people who came out of Egypt, all the men of war, died in the desert on the way, after they came out of Egypt. ⁵Now all the people who came out were circumcised, but they had not circumcised all the people who were born in the desert on the way after they came out of Egypt. ⁶For the children of Israel walked about forty years in the desert until all the men of war among the people who came out of Egypt had perished, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD. The LORD swore that he would not show them the land which the LORD swore to their fathers that he would give us, a land that flows with milk and honey. ⁷Their children are the ones he raised up in their place; Joshua circumcised them, for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them on the way. ⁸And it came about when they had finished circumcising all the people that they stayed in their places in the camp until they were healed.

4:19 "First month"— Ex 12:3.

"Gilgal"— probably about three kilometers north of Jericho.

4:23 Ex 14:21-22.

4:24 God had two purposes in performing this miracle at the Jordan. He wanted all nations to know that He, the God of Israel, not their gods and idols, was the God of power. And He wanted His people to have a reverential awe of Him that would produce obedience in their lives. Notes on fear of the Lord at Gen 20:11; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10; Prov 1:7.

5:1 "Amorites"— Gen 15:16.

"Melted"— 2:11.

5:2-3 See note on Gen 17:9-14. Circumcision was a sign first given to Abraham (Rom 4:11). The law to circumcise each male child on the eighth day from his birth was incorporated in the Law of Moses (Lev 13:3), but it was neglected during the years of wilderness wandering (vs 5,7). No reason is given for this failure. According to the New Testament, circumcision is symbolic of putting off the

flesh, the sinful nature (Phil 3:3; Col 2:11). It means that in an ungodly world we are willing to follow the Lord in godliness and righteousness.

5:4-6 The men who had come out of Egypt had been circumcised, but that did not automatically mean God's blessing. The outward sign was useless if the heart and life were wrong. Though they were circumcised, they were unbelieving and disobedient (Num 14:21-23; Heb 3:19). No outward rite or ceremony is of any use to us if our hearts are not right with God— Rom 2:28-29; Gal 6:15; Isa 1:11-17.

5:7 God did not overlook the neglect of the sign of His covenant. He calls His people to obedience. In spite of their neglect of His law He showed grace and mercy to the nation during the long years of wandering (Deut 2:7), but they had to show obedience before they could enter their inheritance. Believers now cannot expect to overcome in the life of faith and enjoy their inheritance in Christ if they deliberately go on disobeying Him.

⁹And the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you". Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰And the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at evening in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹And they ate the old grain of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened cakes and parched grain on the same day. ¹²And the manna ceased on the day after they ate the old grain of the land, and the children of Israel did not have manna any more; but they ate the produce of the land of Canaan that year.

¹³And this occurred when Joshua was near Jericho: he raised his eyes and looked, and a man appeared standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went up to him and said to him, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"

¹⁴And he said, "No, but I have now come as captain of the army of the LORD".

And Joshua prostrated himself to the ground and worshipped, and said to him,

5:9 The "reproach of Egypt" possibly refers to the reproach the Egyptians would have brought against Israel as they wandered in the desert uncircumcised and thus disobeying God's covenant and seemingly forsaken by God. In Gilgal they became obedient to God's covenant and ready to move forward with God. There was no longer any reason to reproach them. Gilgal became the base for Israel's military operations in Canaan. Gilgal sounds like the Hebrew word for "roll".

5:10 See notes on Exodus chapter 12; Lev 23:5. No uncircumcised person was allowed to eat the Passover (Ex 12:48), so those who had grown up in the wilderness had been debarred from taking part in this remembrance. Their obedience in being circumcised now enabled them to remember the grace of God, and opened up a whole new pathway of blessing. A first step of obedience to God can mean the same for anyone.

5:11 "Without yeast"—Ex 12:15; Lev 23:6.

"Grain"—not corn. Corn (maize) was not known in that day in that part of the world.

5:12 "Manna stopped"—the manna stopped because there was no longer need of it. Israel could begin to eat the food of the promised land.

5:13 "Man"—no doubt the angel of Jehovah. See note at Gen 16:7. Joshua did not recognize Him as a heavenly being.

5:14 The Lord did not come to join one side or the other. He came as the supreme commander of God's army. This army was the nation of Israel,

"What does my Lord say to his servant?"

¹⁵And the captain of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Remove your sandal from your foot, for the place you are standing on is holy". And Joshua did so.

6 Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the children of Israel. No one went out and no one came in.

²And the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho and its king and valiant warriors into your hand. ³And you must go around the city, all you men of war circling the city once. You must do this for six days.

⁴And seven priests must carry seven ram's horn trumpets before the ark. And on the seventh day you must go around the city seven times, and the priests must blow with the trumpets. ⁵And it shall be when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a loud shout. Then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people must go up, each man straight before him".

⁶And Joshua the son of Nun called the

and any angelic forces which might be engaged in the conflict. Israel would not conquer and claim their inheritance with God merely on their side while they fought in their own way. They would conquer only in full obedience to God as their leader and commander. He would tell them where to go and what to do. So with believers now in their spiritual warfare.

5:15 The message is this: Joshua is in the presence of the supremely Holy One (compare Ex 3:5), and he must behave accordingly.

6:1 Verse 1 is a parenthesis. Verse 2 connects with 5:15. The commander of the LORD's host goes on speaking to Joshua. He is Jehovah Himself.

6:2-5 Jericho was not conquered by military might. Its defeat was a result of God's miraculous activity, and Israel's faith. As in the crossing of Jordan (3:14-17), the ark of the covenant went before the people. This symbolized the powerful presence of the Lord guiding His people. Marching, trumpets and shouts do not bring down great walls and conquer cities. God works on principles which are different from men's (Isa 55:8-9; Luke 16:15; 2 Cor 10:3-5). He uses people and things which human wisdom counts totally inadequate (1 Cor 1:27-29).

6:6-21 Though the Lord's instructions may have seemed strange to them, they obeyed their supreme commander, and obtained the very results He had described. Trust and obedience cannot be overemphasized in all our dealings with God. See Heb 11:30.

priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant, and have seven priests carry seven ram’s horn trumpets before the ark of the LORD”.⁷ And he said to the people, “Pass on and go around the city, and have him who is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD”.

⁸And it came about, when Joshua had spoken to the people, that the seven priests carrying the seven ram’s horn trumpets passed on before the LORD and blew with the trumpets; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. ⁹And the armed men went before the priests who blew with the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, *the priests* going on and blowing with the trumpets. ¹⁰And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, “You must not shout or make any noise with your voice, and do not let a word come out of your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout”. ¹¹So the ark of the LORD went around the city, circling *it* once. Then they came into the camp and stayed in the camp.

¹²And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. ¹³And seven priests carrying seven ram’s horn trumpets before the ark of the LORD went on continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them, but the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, *the priests* going on and blowing with the trumpets. ¹⁴And the second day they went around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

¹⁵And this happened on the seventh day: they rose early at the dawning of the day and went around the city in the same way seven times. On that day only they went around the city seven times. ¹⁶And it came about at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people, “Shout! For the LORD has given

you the city. ¹⁷And the city, it and all that *is* in it, will be accursed by the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute is to live, she and all who *are* with her in the house, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. ¹⁸And you must keep *yourselves* from the accursed thing, so that you will not make yourselves accursed by taking the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel accursed, and trouble it. ¹⁹But all the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron are consecrated to the LORD. They are to come into the LORD’s treasury”.

²⁰So the people shouted when *the priests* blew with the trumpets. Then this took place: when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a loud shout, the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, each man straight before him. And they took the city, ²¹and with the edge of the sword they utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey.

²²But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring out of there the woman and all who belong to her, just as you swore to her”. ²³And the young men who had been the spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all that she had. They brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel.

²⁴And they burned the city with fire, and everything that was in it; only the silver and the gold and the articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. ²⁵And Joshua saved Rahab the prostitute alive, and her father’s household, and all that she had. And she lives in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

6:17 “*Accursed by the LORD*”—the Hebrew words indicate that Jericho was set apart for destruction (v 21), and that nothing in it was to come into the possession of the Israelites. The destruction was God’s judgment upon a totally debased people. See notes on God’s judgment at Gen 6:7; 15:16; Lev 18:24; Deut 13:12-18; 28:18-19; Rev 16:5-7. **6:18-19** Everything in Jericho was for God, nothing for man. Possibly this was to safeguard Israel from the corruption that comes from lusting and looting. Self-seeking always leads to spiritual ruin (Jer 45:5; 1 Cor 10:24; Col 3:5). **6:20** The Bible does not tell us the means God

used to bring the walls of Jericho crashing down. Whatever they were, the event was a miracle, the result of divine action working with the faith of the people (Heb 11:30).

6:21 Verse 17. Notes on destruction of nations at Gen 6:7; 15:6; Lev 18:24; Deut 13:12-18.

6:22-25 Rahab and her family were saved according to the promise made to her (2:14, 17-20). Rahab is an example of faith (Heb 11:31; Jam 2:25). She was a Gentile, separated from Israel, but through faith became identified with the people of God. Her faith was effective in saving her entire family. Compare Gen 6:18; 7:1; Acts 16:31.

²⁶And Joshua made *them* take this oath at that time, saying, “Cursed in the presence of the LORD be the man who rises up and builds this city of Jericho. He will lay its foundation on his firstborn, and set up its gates on his youngest son”.

²⁷So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was *heard of* throughout the whole country.

7 But the children of Israel acted unfaithfully concerning the accursed thing, for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the accursed thing. And the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.

²And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, “Go up and look at the land”. And the men went up and looked at Ai.

³And they returned to Joshua, and said to him, “Don’t have all the people go up, but have about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai, *and* do not make all the people toil up there, for they are few *in number*”. ⁴So about three thousand men from the people went up there, and they fled before the men of Ai. ⁵And the men of Ai struck down among them about thirty-six

6:26 Five hundred years later, in the time of king Ahab, Joshua’s pronouncement against Jericho was disregarded. The city was rebuilt by a man called Hiel at the cost of two of his sons (1 Kings 16:34).

7:1 “*Acted unfaithfully*”— one man sinned but God regarded the whole nation as responsible. God looks upon His people as a unity. The sin of one affects all and is the responsibility of all (v 11; 22:20; Lev 4:13-21; 2 Sam 21:1-2). No one lives to himself alone. Our actions always affect others for good or bad (compare Rom 14:7,13; 1 Cor 5:1-2,6; 12:26-27).

“*Anger*”— note at Num 25:3; Ps 90:11; Rom 1:18.

7:2-5 Achan’s sin resulted in a humiliating defeat for the whole nation.

7:2 “*Ai*”— about 25 Kilometers from Jericho on the top of the hills that face the Jordan valley.

7:3 Does this suggest too much confidence in themselves? Did Joshua consult the Lord about this? See 8:1,3.

7:6 Tearing clothes, falling prostrate, and sprinkling dust are all evidence of their utter dismay, grief, and dejection.

7:7-9 Compare Ex 5:22; 14:11-12; 16:3; 17:3. This is not the language of faith and obedience, but of confusion and discouragement. Joshua should

men; for they chased them *from* in front of the gate to Shebarim, and struck them in the descent *there*. So the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

⁶And Joshua tore his clothes and prostrated himself on his face before the ark of the LORD until evening, *both* he and the elders of Israel, and they put dust on their heads. ⁷And Joshua said, “Alas, O Lord God, why did you ever bring this people over the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content and stayed on the other side of the Jordan. ⁸O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turns their backs before their enemies! ⁹For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear *of it*, and will surround us and cut our name off from the earth. And what will you do for your great name?”

¹⁰And the LORD said to Joshua, “Get up! Why are you lying like this on your face? ¹¹Israel has sinned, and they have broken my covenant which I commanded them; for they have taken *some* of the accursed thing and have stolen and also used deception, and they have put it among their own things. ¹²Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned their backs before *their* enemies, because they were accursed. And I will not be with you any more unless you destroy the accursed among you.

have been trying to find out the reasons for Israel’s defeat rather than questioning God’s guidance.

7:9 “*What will you do for your great name*”— Num 14:13-16; Deut 9:28-29. We should always be more concerned with God’s reputation than with our own.

7:10-12 The Lord rebukes Joshua, because it was not a time to pray, but to obey (Ex 14:15). Sin had to be judged. Remember this – prayer is never a substitute for obedience. And why should God ever answer our prayers if we will not do what He says?

7:11 The sin was by one man, Achan, but notice “Israel has sinned”, “they have broken”.

“*Covenant*”— 6:17-19. See also Ex 20:15,17.

“*Accursed thing*”— Achan was stealing from God – 6:19.

“*Used deception*”— the sin of deception or lying is often committed to cover up other sins. Notes and references on lying at Ex 20:16. Learn here also that God knows what people are doing (Heb 4:13). Achan hid everything from men but he could not hide anything from God.

7:12 “*I will not be with you any more unless*”— imagine what an impact such words had on Joshua. He knew very well that if God was not to be with them the whole war for Canaan was already

¹³“Get up! Sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow; for this is what the LORD God of Israel says, *There is an accursed thing among you, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies, until you take away the accursed thing from among you.* ¹⁴Therefore in the morning you shall be brought near according to your tribes. Then it shall be *that* the tribe which the LORD takes shall approach, according to *its* families; and the family which the LORD takes shall approach by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall approach man by man. ¹⁵And it is to be like this: ‘the one who is caught with the accursed thing shall be burned in the fire, he and all that he has, because he has broken the covenant of the LORD, and because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel.’ ”

¹⁶So Joshua got up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken. ¹⁷And he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarahites. And he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man; and Zabdi was taken. ¹⁸And he brought his household man by man; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

¹⁹And Joshua said to Achan, “My son, please give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession to him, and tell me now what you have done. Do not hide *it* from me”.

²⁰And Achan answered Joshua, and said,

“Yes, I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done: ²¹when I saw among the plunder a fine Babylonian garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and took them. And, look, they *are* hidden in the ground in the middle of my tent, and the silver *is* under it”.

²²So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there *it was*, hidden in his tent, and the silver *was* under it. ²³And they took them from the middle of the tent, and brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.

²⁴And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the garment and the bar of gold and his sons and his daughters and his oxen and his donkeys and his sheep and his tent and all that he had, and they brought them to the valley of Achor.

²⁵And Joshua said, “Why have you troubled us? Today the LORD will trouble you”. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they stoned them with stones. ²⁶And they raised over him a great heap of stones. *They are there* to this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called The Valley of Achor to this day.

8 And the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid or dismayed. Take all the

lost. Two important lessons for us also are here – sin, if we do not judge it and put it away, will make us liable to “destruction”. That is, God may abandon us to punishment for it. Compare Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor 5:1-5; 11:30-31. And sin may make it impossible for God to work with us.

7:13 Nor can we successfully fight Satan and enjoy our inheritance in Christ if we permit sin to remain unconfessed, unjudged in our lives and churches.

7:14 “*Takes*” – evidently they cast lots to determine this. Compare Jud 20:9; 1 Sam 14:41-42; 1 Chron 24:5.

7:15 “*Disgraceful thing*” – Deut 22:21; Jud 19:23-24; 20:6,10; 2 Sam 13:12.

7:19 Confession and repentance was the only hope for Achan, and for Israel.

7:20-21 Many people have wrecked their lives and lost their souls because of greed for money and possessions (Mark 10:22-23; 1 Tim 6:9-10).

7:21 “*Two hundred shekels*” – about 2.3 kilograms.

7:24-25 God holds us responsible for the effects of our sin on others (6:18; Luke 17:1-2). Achor means “trouble”. Oh, sin is the great troubler of the people of God. Achan’s wife and children were also put to death. They must have had guilty knowledge of what Achan had done and kept quiet about it.

7:25 “*Stoned him*” – stoning was the penalty for breaking God’s law (Lev 20:2; 24:23; Num 15:36).

7:26 If we repent and accept His judgment upon our sins, God will turn from His anger (Num 25:4; Deut 13:17).

“*Achor*” – the Hebrew word means “trouble” or “disaster”. From there Israel went on to victory at Ai and everywhere else. One defeat did not mean the war for Canaan was lost. So now a defeat in the Christian life does not mean that we cannot be overcomers and win the victory.

8:1 “*Afraid or dismayed*” – 7:6-9. Sin, defeat, and judgment would naturally bring fear and discouragement.

warriors with you, arise and go up to Ai. See, I have given the king of Ai and his people and his city and his land into your hand. ²And you will do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. But you may take its plunder and its livestock as prey for yourselves. Place an ambush for the city behind it”.

³So Joshua arose, and all the warriors, to go up against Ai. And Joshua picked out thirty thousand brave fighting men and sent them away at night. ⁴And he commanded them, saying, “Look, you are to lie in wait against the city, behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, and all of you be ready. ⁵And I, and all the people who are with me, will approach the city. And it will come about that, when they come out against us, as at the first, we will run away from them ⁶(For they will come out after us) until we have drawn them away from the city. For they will say, ‘They are running away from us, as at the first.’ So we will run away from them. ⁷Then you must rise up from the ambush, and capture the city; for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hands. ⁸And when you have taken the city, it is to be *like this*: set the city on fire. You must act in accordance with the command of the LORD. See, I have commanded you”.

⁹So Joshua sent them away; and they went to lie in ambush and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai. But Joshua stayed that night among the people.

¹⁰And Joshua rose up early in the morning and counted the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. ¹¹And all the people, the warriors who were with him, went up and drew near and came in front of the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now *there was* a valley between them and Ai. ¹²And he took about five thousand men, and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. ¹³And that night when they

“*All the warriors*”— compare 7:3. God wanted the whole army to see the victory He would give at Ai, and so get back their courage and faith in His working.

8:2 If Achan had waited, he would have received his part in this plunder. God gives us what He wants us to have in His own time (Matt 6:33)— if we trust and obey Him.

8:5 “*Run away*”— 7:4-5.

8:8 Deut 20:16-18.

8:12 There were apparently two ambushes, the

had placed the people, all the army that was on the north of the city and their *people* in ambush on the west of the city, Joshua went out into the middle of the valley.

¹⁴Then *this* happened: when the king of Ai saw *it*, they hurriedly got up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a set time, before the plain. But he did not know that *there was* an ambush against him behind the city. ¹⁵And Joshua and all Israel acted as if they were beaten before them, and ran away on the wilderness road. ¹⁶And all the people who were in Ai were called together to pursue them, and pursuing Joshua they were drawn away from the city. ¹⁷And there was not a man left in Ai or Bethel, who did not go out after Israel. And they left the city open and pursued Israel.

¹⁸And the LORD said to Joshua, “Stretch out the spear that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hands”. And Joshua stretched out the spear that *he had* in his hand toward the city. ¹⁹And the ambush got up quickly out of their place, and as soon as he stretched out his hand they ran, entered the city, and took it, and hurriedly set the city on fire.

²⁰And when the men of Ai turned and looked behind them, they saw the smoke of the city rising up to the sky, and they were powerless to flee this way or that. And the people who had run toward the wilderness turned back on *their* pursuers. ²¹And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city was rising up, they turned back and killed the men of Ai. ²²And the other *men* came out of the city against them, so they were in the middle of Israel, some on this side, and some on that. And they struck them down, not letting any of them remain or escape. ²³But they took the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

²⁴And when Israel had finished killing

one mentioned in vs 3,4 which was “behind the city”, and the one mentioned here “between Bethel and Ai”, possibly to deal with any attack that might come from Bethel. Ai and Bethel were very close together (12:9). There is no independent account of the conquest of Bethel, though the city was overcome in the taking of Canaan (12:16). It appears from v 17 that Bethel was an ally of Ai in this battle.

8:14 “*The plain*”— here means the Jordan valley.

8:18 8:26; Ex 17:11-12; Ps 44:3.

all the inhabitants of Ai in the field in the wilderness where they had chased them, and when they had all fallen by the edge of the sword until they were destroyed, it came about that all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. ²⁵And so it was *that* all who fell that day, both men and women, were twelve thousand. All the men of Ai *fell*. ²⁶For Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he had stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. ²⁷Only the livestock and the plunder of that city Israel took as a prey for themselves, according to the word of the LORD which he commanded Joshua.

²⁸And Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever, a desolation to this day. ²⁹And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening, but as soon as the sun had set, Joshua commanded them to take his carcass down from the tree and throw it down at the entrance of the gate of the city, and pile on it a great heap of stones. *It remains* to this day.

³⁰Then Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel in Mount Ebal, ³¹just as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel (as it is written in the book of the law of Moses), an altar of uncut stones, on which no one had used *any* iron tool. And on it they offered burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. ³²And there on the stones *Joshua* wrote a copy of the law of Moses. He wrote it in the presence of the children of Israel. ³³And all Israel and their elders and officers and their judges stood on *both* this side and that side of the ark before the priests the Levites, the carriers of the ark of the covenant of the LORD, also the foreigners, just as those

who had been born among them. Half of them *stood* in front of Mount Gerizim, and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had previously commanded, so that they might bless the people of Israel.

³⁴And afterwards *Joshua* read all the words of the law, the blessings and curses, just as everything was written in the book of the law. ³⁵There was not a word of all that Moses commanded which Joshua did not read before all the congregation of Israel with the women and the little ones and the foreigners who were living among them.

9 Then it came about when all the kings who *were* on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the valleys and on all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite heard *about this*, ²that they gathered together with one accord to fight with Joshua and with Israel.

³And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, ⁴they acted cleverly and went and behaved as if they were ambassadors and took old sacks on their donkeys, and old, torn and patched wineskins, ⁵and *put* old mended sandals on their feet and *wore* old clothes. And all the bread *they took* for their provisions was dry *and* mouldy. ⁶And they went to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; so now make a treaty with us".

⁷And the men of Israel said to *those* Hivites, "Perhaps you are living among us, and so

8:29 Deut 21:22-23.

8:30-35 Deut 11:26-30; 27:1-8,14-26; chapter 29. Here Israel renews their covenant with God. They acknowledge that He is their God, they are His people.

8:30 "*Mount Ebal*"— the fortified town of Shechem lay at the foot of this mount. There is no record that Israel conquered it. Perhaps the town surrendered without a fight. Or its inhabitants may have shut themselves up inside the town from fear (compare 6:1; 5:1; 2:11).

8:31 Ex 20:25.

"*Peace offerings*"— Lev 3:1.

8:32-35 At the beginning of their life in Canaan the people were called to renew their acceptance of God's covenant. God wanted them to know clearly their responsibilities and privileges.

8:34 "*Joshua read all*"— he knew how very important it was that the people of God (including the children) hear and understand the Word of God. Compare Deut 6:6-9.

8:35 "*Foreigners*"— people, such as Rahab, who had joined themselves to Israel.

9:1 "*Kings*"— these kings were kings merely of cities with their surrounding villages, not of any very large areas.

"*The great sea*"— the Mediterranean.

9:3 "*Gibeon*"— in those days an important city (10:2) situated about 13 kilometers northwest of Jerusalem.

9:4-6 They were sure they faced certain defeat at the hands of Israel and sought a way to preserve themselves (v 24).

how shall we make a treaty with you?"

⁸And they said to Joshua, "We are your servants". And Joshua said to them, "Who are you? And where do you come from?"

⁹And they said to him, "Your servants have come from a very distant country, because of the name of the LORD your God; for we have heard of his fame, and all that he did in Egypt, ¹⁰and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon and to Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. ¹¹Therefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, "Take provisions with you for the journey and go to meet them, and say to them, 'We are your servants'." Therefore now make a treaty with us. ¹²This is our bread which we brought for our provisions hot from our houses on the day we set out to come to you. But now, look, it is dry and mouldy. ¹³And these wineskins were new when we filled them, and, look, they are torn. And these clothes and sandals of ours have worn out because of the very long journey".

¹⁴And the men of Israel took some of their provisions, and did not ask counsel from the mouth of the LORD. ¹⁵And Joshua made peace with them and made a treaty with them to let them live. And the leaders of the congregation swore to them.

¹⁶And it so happened that at the end of three days after they had made a treaty with them,

they heard that they were their neighbours and that they lived among them. ¹⁷And the children of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon and Chephirah and Beeroth and Kirjath-Jearim. ¹⁸And the children of Israel did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD of Israel. And all the congregation grumbled against the leaders.

¹⁹But all the leaders said to the whole congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel; so now we must not touch them. ²⁰This is what we will do to them: we will let them live so that wrath does not come on us, because of the oath which we swore to them". ²¹And the leaders said to them, "Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and drawers of water for the whole congregation". They did as the leaders told them.

²²And Joshua called for them and spoke to them, saying, "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We live very far from you', when you were living among us? ²³Therefore now you are accursed, and none of you will be freed from being slaves and woodcutters and drawers of water for the house of my God".

²⁴And they answered Joshua and said, "Because your servants were plainly told that the LORD your God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land

9:7 "Treaty"— God had forbidden Israel to make such agreements with people in Canaan. See Ex 23:31-33.

9:8 "Servants"— indicates complete submission.

9:9 "We have heard"— 2:9-10; 5:1.

9:14-15 The defeat at Ai had taught Israel the need to obey God, but they still had not learned the need for God's guidance at every step. Joshua was an experienced man and a spiritual one, but he made the error of using his own judgment and trusting in outward appearances. Every believer should learn to live under the constant guidance of God. If we do not seek God's guidance about our activities we are certain to make many mistakes.

9:16 When men use their own judgment without reference to God, they should not be surprised if men deceive them.

9:18-19 A promise once made must be honored (Ps 15:4; Eccl 5:4-5; Matt 5:37; Jam 5:12). The Israelites had been deceived, but this was no reason for them to break their word. When someone else does wrong, that does not give us also the right to do wrong. Speaking the truth

must be an essential part of the believer's life and witness in an untruthful world – Ps 15:2; 51:6; Phil 2:15.

9:18 "Grumbled"— the people, possibly with their eyes on the possessions they might gain by attacking Gibeon and its allies, resisted the decision of their leaders to keep their promises. They should have known that God's standards cannot be set aside simply because obedience is inconvenient or costs something.

9:23 "Accursed"— lying and deception will always have unhappy consequences.

"Drawers of water"— these Canaanites became a partial fulfilment of Gen 9:25-26. Later on the tabernacle was at Gibeon for a time (2 Chron 1:3,5). This curse that made them menial laborers, without freedom to become anything else, perhaps became a means of blessing to many of these Gibeonites, for their service was for the house of God. And it is God's way to turn curses into blessings when He sees faith in the human heart. Compare Gen 50:20.

from before you. Therefore we had great fear for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. ²⁵And now, see, we are in your hands. Do to us what seems good and right to you to do”.

²⁶And so he did to them and delivered them from the hands of the children of Israel, so that they did not kill them. ²⁷And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, to this very day, in the place which he chose.

10 Now it came about when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it (he had done to Ai and its king just as he had done to Jericho and its king), and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, ²that they were very afraid, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai and all its men were mighty. ³Therefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent word to Hoham king of Hebron and to Piram king of Jarmuth and to Japhia king of Lachish and to Debir king of Eglon, saying, ⁴“Come up to me, and help me, so that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel”.

⁵Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and camped in front of Gibeon and made war against it.

10:3-4 Here are five of the most important cities of southern Canaan at that time.

10:6-7 Joshua had made a pact with the Gibeonites, so he thought it was right to honor it and defend them.

10:8 1:5; 21:44. God used confusion (v 10), hailstones (v 11), and a mighty miracle (v 13) to defeat these armies.

10:9 Gilgal was about 30 kilometers east of Gibeon and the terrain was hill country.

10:10 “*Makkedah*” – towns in the foothills west of Gibeon.

10:11 God sometimes used natural things in a supernatural way. Compare Ex 14:21; 1 Sam 7:10; Josh 24:12.

10:12 Joshua was inspired to offer this unique and wonderful prayer. And he prayed it publicly.

10:13-14 The book of Jasher has been lost and we do not know what else it contained. This

⁶And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal, saying, “Do not forsake your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who live in the mountains have gathered against us”.

⁷So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him and all the brave fighting men. ⁸And the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them, for I have delivered them into your hand. Not a man of them will stand before you”.

⁹Therefore Joshua came on them suddenly, going up from Gilgal all night. ¹⁰And the LORD threw them into confusion before Israel and struck them down with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the road that goes up to Beth-Horon and struck them down as far as Azekah, and Makkedah. ¹¹And it happened as they fled from before Israel, and were in the descent to Beth Horon, that the LORD hurled great stones down from heaven on them as far as Azekah; and many died. More died from the hailstones than those whom the children of Israel killed with the sword.

¹²Then Joshua spoke to the LORD on the day that the LORD delivered up the Amorites to the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, “Sun, stand still on Gibeon, and you, moon, in the valley of Ajalon!”

¹³And the sun stood still and the moon stopped until the people had taken vengeance on their enemies. *Is this not written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the middle of the sky and did not hurry to set for about a whole day.* ¹⁴And there was no

miracle recorded in it was unparalleled in the history of man. There have been many days when God heard the prayers of His servants and did miraculous things, but none like this day. We do not know what changes occurred in the rotation of the earth or moon, or whether the entire solar system was affected in some way. But the author of these notes is sure that on that exceptional day, from the point of view of the earth, the sun and moon seemed to stand still in the sky for several hours.

If God arises to fight for His people He may use any of what are called the forces of nature He chooses, and it would be no more difficult for Him to make a temporary change in the whole solar system than to cause hailstones to fall from the sky. Compare Ex 14:21; Ps 18:6-15; Acts 16:25-26.

10:13 “*Taken vengeance on*” – or it could be translated “triumphed over”.

day like that before it or after it, *a day* when the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel.

¹⁵And Joshua returned to the camp at Gilgal, and all Israel *went* with him.

¹⁶But those five kings fled and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah. ¹⁷And *someone* told Joshua, saying, “The five kings have been found hidden in a cave at Makkedah”. ¹⁸And Joshua said, “Roll large stones over the mouth of the cave and place men by it to guard them. ¹⁹And do not stay *there*, but pursue your enemies and attack those in the rear. Don’t let them enter their cities; for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hands”.

²⁰And it came about, when Joshua and the children of Israel had finished striking them down with a very great slaughter until they were destroyed, that those of them *who* remained entered fenced cities. ²¹And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace; no one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

²²Then Joshua said, “Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out of the cave to me”. ²³And they did so, bringing those five kings out of the cave to him, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon. ²⁴And it happened, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel and said to the captains of the warriors who went with him, “Come near. Put your feet on the necks of these kings”. And they came near and put their feet on their necks.

²⁵And Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid or be dismayed. Be strong and courageous, for the LORD will do like this to all your enemies that you fight against”.

²⁶And afterwards Joshua struck them down and killed them, and hung them on five trees. And they were hanging on the trees until evening. ²⁷And it happened at the time of sunset *that* Joshua gave a command, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had

hidden and laid large stones at the cave’s mouth, *which remain* until this very day.

²⁸And that day Joshua took Makkedah and struck it with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed its king and every soul who was in it. He did not allow anyone to remain. He did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

²⁹Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, went on to Libnah and fought against Libnah. ³⁰And the LORD delivered it also and its king into the hands of Israel. And he struck it with the edge of the sword and every soul who was in it. He did not allow anyone to remain in it, but did to its king just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

³¹And Joshua, and all Israel with him, went on from Libnah to Lachish and camped against it and fought against it. ³²And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hands of Israel. They took it on the second day and struck it with the edge of the sword and every soul who was in it, just as he had done everything to Libnah. ³³Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people down until he left no one to him.

³⁴And from Lachish Joshua, and all Israel with him, went on to Eglon and camped against it and fought against it. ³⁵And they took it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword and that day utterly destroyed every soul who was in it, just as he had done everything to Lachish.

³⁶And Joshua, and all Israel with him, went up from Eglon to Hebron and fought against it, ³⁷and took it and with the edge of the sword struck it and its king and all its cities and every soul that was in it. He did not leave anyone remaining, just as he had done everything to Eglon. He utterly destroyed it and every soul who was in it.

³⁸And Joshua, and all Israel with him, returned to Debir and fought against it. ³⁹And he took it and its king and all its cities. And they struck them with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed every soul who was in it. He did not leave anyone. He did to

10:15 Verse 43. Verses 16-42 give a further description of events that took place before Joshua returned to Gilgal.

10:24 “Put your feet on”— signifying Israel’s complete victory.

10:25 1:9; 8:1.

10:26-27 Deut 21:22-23.

10:28-40 In these verses the words “utterly destroyed” and “did not leave anyone” appear again and again. In this Israel was obeying God’s clear command (Deut 7:2,16; 20:16-18). The time to judge and destroy godless, hardened, unrepentant peoples had come. See Gen 6:7; 15:16; Lev 18:24; Rev 16:1-7.

Debir and to its king just as he had done to Hebron, and just as he had done to Libnah and to its king.

⁴⁰So Joshua attacked the whole hill country and the *land* of the south and of the valley and of the springs, and all their kings. He did not leave anyone, but utterly destroyed all who breathed, just as the LORD God of Israel commanded. ⁴¹And Joshua struck them from Kadesh-Barnea to Gaza, and all the country of Goshen to Gibeon. ⁴²And Joshua captured all these kings and their land at the same time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

⁴³And Joshua, and all Israel with him, returned to the camp at Gilgal.

11 And it happened when Jabin king of Hazor heard *these things*, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon and to the king of Shimron and to the king of Achshaph ²and to the kings who were in the northern mountains and in the plains south of Kinneroth and in the valley and in the regions of Dor on the west ³and to the Canaanite in the east and in the west and to the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Jebusite in the mountains and to the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpeh. ⁴And they went out, they and all their armies with them, a people as many as the sand on the seashore in number, with a great many horses and chariots. ⁵And all these kings assembled and came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

⁶And the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not

be afraid because of them, for about this time tomorrow I will deliver them up before Israel, all killed. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire”.

⁷So Joshua, and all the warriors with him, suddenly came against them at the waters of Merom and attacked them. ⁸And the LORD delivered them into Israel’s hands, who struck them and chased them to great Sidon, and to Misrephoth Maim and to the valley of Mizpeh on the east, and struck them down until they had no survivor left. ⁹And Joshua did to them just as the LORD had ordered him; he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

¹⁰And at that time Joshua turned back and took Hazor and struck its king with the sword; for previously Hazor was the head of all those kingdoms. ¹¹And with the edge of the sword they struck down every soul in it, utterly destroying *them*. There was no one left breathing. And he burned Hazor with fire.

¹²And Joshua captured all the cities of those kings and all their kings, and struck them with the edge of the sword *and* utterly destroyed them, just as Moses the LORD’s servant commanded. ¹³But as for the cities standing on their mounds, Israel did not burn any of them, except Hazor. Joshua did burn *that*. ¹⁴And the children of Israel took all the plunder of these cities, and the livestock, as prey for themselves; but they struck down every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, not leaving anyone breathing. ¹⁵Moses commanded Joshua just as the LORD commanded his servant Moses,

10:40 This concluded the campaign to conquer the southern portion of the land of Canaan. The Goshen in v 41 was a place in the southeast part of the desert region of Canaan, not the Goshen in the land of Egypt seen in Gen 45:10; and 47:1.

10:42 “*Because*”—we are reminded again that Israel’s victories were not the result of their skill in warfare, but because of God’s presence with them, fighting for them. This is a key verse in Joshua. The person seen in 5:13-15 was with them all the way as commander of their army. See also v 14; 23:10; Ex 14:14; Ps 136:24.

11:1 This chapter brings us to the final section of Joshua’s campaign. It records how the northern regions of the promised land were conquered. Hazor was the largest and best fortified of all the cities in Canaan. It was located about 15 kilometers north of the Sea of Galilee. Today there remains only ruins (v 11).

11:2-5 Jabin collected a mighty army from his own people and from his numerous allies from all over the northern area of Canaan. Their horses and chariots should have given them military advantage. But God fought for Israel. Merom was (probably) about thirteen kilometers northwest of the Sea of Galilee. “Kinnereth” is another name for Galilee.

11:6 “*Hamstring*”—this means cutting the great tendon at the back of the leg near the foot. The animals could not be used again. The Canaanites trusted in horses and chariots; Israel trusted in God. Compare 1 Chron 5:20; Ps 20:7.

11:8 The Lord once again gained the victory for them.

11:11-12 10:28-40.

11:15 It was this obedience that was so important in conquering the land of promise (1:7-8).

and Joshua did accordingly. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses. ¹⁶So Joshua took all that land, the hills and all the south country and all the land of Goshen and the valley and the plain and the hill country of Israel and its lowland, ¹⁷from Mount Halak that rises toward Seir to Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. And he captured all their kings, struck them down and killed them. ¹⁸For a long time Joshua waged war with all those kings. ¹⁹There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, except the Hivites who lived in Gibeon; all *the others* they captured in battle. ²⁰For it was the LORD's purpose to harden their hearts, so that they would come against Israel in battle, that *Joshua* might utterly destroy them; that they might receive no mercy, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

²¹And at that time Joshua went and cut off the Anakim from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah and from all the mountains of Israel. Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. ²²None of the Anakim was left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod. ²³So Joshua took the whole land, in accordance with all that the LORD said to Moses. And Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.

12 Now these *are* the kings of the land whom the children of Israel struck down and took possession of their land on the other side of the Jordan toward the sunrise, from the Arnon river to Mount Hermon and all the eastern plain:

²Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in

Heshbon *and* ruled from Aroer, which is on the bank of the Arnon river, and from the middle of the river and from half Gilead to the river Jabbok, *which is* the border of the children of Ammon, ³and from the plain to the sea of Kinneroth on the east, and to the Sea of the Plain, the Salt Sea, on the east, the way to Beth Jeshimoth; and from the south, under Ashdoth-Pisgah; ⁴and the territory of Og king of Bashan, *who was one* of the survivors of the giants, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, ⁵and reigned in Mount Hermon and in Salcah and in all Bashan to the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

⁶Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel struck them down, and Moses the servant of the LORD gave it as a possession to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh.

⁷And these *are* the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel struck down on this, the western, side of the Jordan, from Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak that rises to Seir, which Joshua gave to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their divisions, ⁸in the mountains and in the valleys and in the plains and in the slopes and in the desert and in the south country, *among* the Hittites, the Amorites and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites:

⁹The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is next to Bethel, one; ¹⁰the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; ¹¹the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; ¹²the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; ¹³the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; ¹⁴the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; ¹⁵the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; ¹⁶the

11:18 "A long time"—several years (14:10). The believer's fight now against spiritual enemies will not be over in a day.

11:20 "Harden"—see note on Ex 4:21.

"Might utterly destroy them"—note at 10:28-40.

11:21 "Anakim"—the sight of this strong and tall people had brought fear to the hearts of the spies who searched the land in the days of Moses (Num 13:33). Later Moses spoke of them (Deut 9:2). Here special mention is made of the victory over them. No foe is too strong for the Lord (Rom 8:31; Eph 6:10; 1 John 4:4; 5:4).

11:23 Verse 15; Deut 12:10; Num 34:2. For

believers now there are times of rest before the final rest (Heb 4:9,11). And a greater than Joshua leads us there. The Lord Jesus has fought and won our inheritance for us and enables us to enter into it and gives to each his portion.

12:1-6 A list of the kings defeated by Moses on the west side of Jordan (Num 21:21-35; 2:24-33; 3:8-17).

12:3 "Kinnereth"—Galilee.

"Sea of the Plain"—the Dead Sea.

12:6 Num 32:29-33.

12:7-24 A list of the kings defeated by Joshua on the west side of Jordan.

12:7 See 11:17.

king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; ¹⁷the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one; ¹⁸the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; ¹⁹the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; ²⁰the king of Shimron Meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; ²¹the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; ²²the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one; ²³the king of Dor in the region of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one; ²⁴the king of Tirzah, one; thirty-one kings in all.

13 Now Joshua was old *and* advanced in years; and the LORD said to him, “You are old *and* advanced in years, and there still remains very much land to be possessed.

²“This is the land that still remains: all the areas of the Philistines, and all Geshuri, ³from Sihor, which is east of Egypt, to the borders of Ekron on the north, which is counted as Canaanite territory; five lords of the Philistines; the Gazaites and the Ashdodites, the Ashkalonites, the Gittites and the Ekronites; also the Avites; ⁴from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah which is controlled by the Sidonians, to Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites; ⁵and the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to the entrance to Hamath.

⁶“As for all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-Maim, *and* all the Sidonians, I will drive them out from before the children of Israel. Only divide it by lot to the Israelites as an inheritance, as I have commanded you. ⁷Now therefore divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh”.

⁸With *Manasseh’s other half*, the Reubenites and the Gadites have received

their inheritance, which Moses gave them beyond Jordan eastward. Moses, the LORD’s servant, gave them ⁹from Aroer, that is on the bank of the Arnon river, and the city that is in the middle of the river valley and all the plain of Medeba to Dibon, ¹⁰and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, to the border of the children of Ammon, ¹¹and Gilead and the territory of the Geshurites and Maachathites and all Mount Hermon and all Bashan as far as Salcah, ¹²all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained from the survivors of the giants. For Moses attacked these and drove them out. ¹³However the children of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites; and the Geshurites and the Maachathites live among the Israelites to this day.

¹⁴Only he did not give an inheritance to the tribe of Levi. Their inheritance is the sacrifices by fire to the LORD God of Israel, just as he said to them.

¹⁵And Moses gave to the tribe of the children of Reuben *an inheritance* according to their families. ¹⁶And their boundary was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the Arnon river, and the city that is in the middle of the river valley and all the plain at Medeba; ¹⁷Heshbon and all its towns in the plain; Dibon and Bamoth Baal and Beth Baal Meon ¹⁸and Jahaza and Kedemoth and Mephaath ¹⁹and Kirjathaim and Sibmah and Zareth Shahaar on the hill in the valley ²⁰and Beth Peor and Ashdoth Pisgah and Beth Jeshimoth ²¹and all the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses struck down with the princes of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, who were princes with Sihon, living in the country.

13:1 “Joshua was old” – probably over 90.

“Very much land to be possessed” – mostly areas along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and in the far north of the land. As regards the believer’s inheritance in Christ, no matter how much he has claimed for himself there is still a very great deal to be claimed and enjoyed. We should never think we have attained everything attainable (Phil 3:12).

13:6-7 Joshua was to divide the land in anticipation of final victory. Each tribe, each individual was responsible to enter into the

allotted inheritance. How much of our spiritual inheritance in Christ have we entered into? Oh, what riches of glory are in Him, what spiritual fields and flowing valleys and high mountain peaks! – Eph 1:3.

13:8-12 Num 21:33-35; 32:31-33.

13:13 The land as a whole was conquered, but the individual tribes failed to drive all of their enemies out of their territories. See Jud 1:19-36, and see the result in Jud 2:1-3.

13:14 Verse 33; Deut 10:9; 18:1-2. Note at Num 18:8-32.

²²Among those whom the children of Israel slaughtered with the sword they also killed Balaam the son of Beor, who practiced divination.

²³And the border of the children of Reuben was the Jordan and *its* border. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.

²⁴And Moses gave *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the children of Gad according to their families. ²⁵And their territory was Jazer and all the cities of Gilead and half the land of the children of Ammon to Aroer that *is* before Rabbah, ²⁶and from Heshbon to Ramath-Mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir; ²⁷and in the valley, Beth-Aram and Beth-Nimrah and Succoth and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and *its* border, to the shore of the Sea of Kinnereth on the other side of the Jordan, eastward. ²⁸This *is* the inheritance of the children of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

²⁹And Moses gave *an inheritance* to the half tribe of Manasseh. And *this was the possession* of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families: ³⁰their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which *are* in Bashan, sixty cities; ³¹and half Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were* for the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the children of Machir by their families.

³²These *are the regions* which Moses allotted as an inheritance on the plains of Moab, on the other side of the Jordan, opposite Jericho, eastward. ³³But Moses did not give *any* inheritance to the tribe of Levi. The LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said to them.

14 And these *are the regions* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the tribes of the fathers of the children of Israel allotted as an inheritance to them. ²Their inheritance (for the nine tribes and for the half tribe) was by lot, just as the LORD commanded through Moses. ³For Moses had given the inheritance of two and a half tribes on the other side of the Jordan. But he did not give any inheritance among them to the Levites. ⁴For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim; so they gave no portion in the land to the Levites, except cities to live *in*, with their pasture lands for their livestock and for their property. ⁵The children of Israel did just as the LORD commanded Moses, and they allotted the land.

⁶Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said to him, “You know the word that the LORD spoke to Moses the man of God concerning me and you in Kadesh-Barnea. ⁷I was forty years old when the LORD’s servant Moses sent me from Kadesh-Barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him back word just as *it was* in my heart. ⁸Nevertheless my brothers who went up with me caused the heart of the people to melt, but I fully followed the LORD my God. ⁹And that day Moses gave an oath, saying, ‘Surely the land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance, and your children’s, forever, because you have fully followed the LORD my God.’

¹⁰“And now, see, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while *the children of Israel* wandered in the desert. And now, look, today I am

13:22 “Balaam”— Num 22:5; 31:8.

13:27 “Kinnereth”— Galilee.

14:1 Num 34:16-19.

14:2 Num 26:55-56; Prov 16:33. In this way God Himself was the one who allotted an inheritance to each tribe, to each family. It was never a matter of personal choice. Now too God gives to each believer what He, in His wisdom, sees he should have in the matter of spiritual gifts as he serves in the heavenly places (Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:4-11). And God

determines our place in Christ’s Body, the Church (1 Cor 12:14-26).

14:3 “Levites”— 13:14.

14:4 “Ephraim”— Gen 48:5.

14:6 Num 14:6-9,24,30; 32:11-12. This took place 38 years before but it was still fresh in the mind of the 85-year-old Caleb.

14:7-8 Num 13:31-32.

14:9 Deut 1:34-36.

14:10 This was 7 years after Israel under Joshua moved into Canaan.

eighty-five years old. ¹¹Yet I *am* as strong today as I was on the day that Moses sent me. My strength now *is* the same as my strength was then, for war and to go out and come in. ¹²Now therefore give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and *that* the cities were large *and* fortified. If the LORD *will be* with me, then I will be able to drive them out, just as the LORD said”.

¹³And Joshua blessed him and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. ¹⁴Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite to this day, because he fully followed the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁵And previously the name of Hebron was Kirjath-Arba (*this* Arba was a great man among the Anakim). And the land had rest from war.

15 *This* then was the allotment for the tribe of the children of Judah by their families: *it reached* the border of Edom, on the south the desert of Zin at the farthest southern point. ²And their southern border was from the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces south. ³Then it went on south to Maaleh-Akrabbim and passed along to Zin and rose on the south side to Kadesh-Barnea and passed along to Hezron and went up to Adar and turned about to Karka. ⁴*From there* it went to Azmon and continued to the river of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea. This will be your southern border.

⁵And the eastern border was the Salt Sea, up to the end of the Jordan. And *their* northern border was from the bay of the sea at the extreme end of the Jordan. ⁶And the border went up to Beth-Hoglah and continued to the north of Beth-Arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben; ⁷and the border went on up to Debir from the valley of Achor, and so northward, facing Gilgal, that *is* before the ascent to Adummim, which *is* on the south side of the river; and the border continued to

the waters of En-Shemesh, and its end was at En-Rogel. ⁸And the border proceeded by the valley of the son of Hinnom to the south side of the Jebusite (*this is* Jerusalem); and the border went up to the top of the mountain that *rises* before the valley of Hinnom on the west, which *is* at the end of the Valley of the Giants on the north. ⁹And the border was drawn from the top of the hill to the spring of the water of Nephtoah, and went on to the cities of Mount Ephron, and the border was drawn to Baalah, which *is* Kirjath-Jearim. ¹⁰And the border turned around from Baalah on the west to Mount Seir and passed along to the side of mount Jearim, which *is* Kesalon, on the north, and went down to Beth-Shemesh and continued on to Timnah. ¹¹And the border went on to the side of Ekron on the north; and the border was drawn to Shicron and continued along to Mount Baalah and went out to Jabneel. And the end of the border was at the Sea.

¹²And the western border was at the Great Sea and *its* coast. This is the border around the children of Judah, according to their families.

¹³And he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, the city of Arba the father of Anak, which *city is* Hebron. ¹⁴And Caleb drove away from there the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak. ¹⁵And he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (previously the name of Debir was Kirjath-Sepher).

¹⁶And Caleb said, “I will give my daughter Achsah in marriage to the one who attacks Kirjath-Sepher and captures it”. ¹⁷And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it; and he gave him his daughter Achsah in marriage. ¹⁸And it came about when she came *to him*, that she persuaded him to ask a field from her father. And as she descended from her donkey Caleb said to her, “What do you wish?”

¹⁹She answered, “Give me a blessing. Since

14:11-12 Caleb maintained his spiritual vitality and faith right into old age. Even then he did not look for an easy way, but for more opportunities to serve the Lord in difficult places. He is an example to all who are advanced in years. The Bible has messages for the old, as well as for everyone else. See Ps 92:12-15; Isa 40:29-31; 46:4. **14:13-14** Caleb was the only individual,

except Joshua (19:49-50), who was permitted to choose his inheritance. These were the only two left alive of all the generation, aged 20 years and over, that came out of Egypt.

15:2 “Salt Sea”— Dead Sea (also v 5).

15:12 “Great Sea”— the Mediterranean.

15:13-19 14:12; Jud 1:10-15,20.

you have given me a land in the south, give me also springs of water". And he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

²⁰This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families.

²¹And the most distant cities of the tribe of the children of Judah on the south toward the territory of Edom were Kabzeel and Eder and Jagur ²²and Kinah and Dimonah and Adadah ²³and Kedesh and Hazor and Ithnan, ²⁴Ziph and Telem and Bealoth, ²⁵and Hazor, Hadattah and Kerioth and Hezron, which is Hazor, ²⁶Amam and Shema and Moladah ²⁷and Hazar-Gaddah and Heshmon and Beth-Palet, ²⁸and Hazar Shual and Beersheba and Bizjothjah, ²⁹Baalah and Iim and Azem, ³⁰and Eltolad and Chesil and Hormah, ³¹and Ziklag and Madmannah and Sansannah, ³²and Lebaoth and Shilhim and Ain and Rimmon; in all, twenty-nine cities, with their villages.

³³And in the lowlands were Eshtaol and Zorah and Ashnah, ³⁴and Zanoah and Engannim, Tappuah and Enam, ³⁵Jarmuth and Adullam, Socoh and Azekah, ³⁶and Sharaim and Adithaim and Gederah and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages; ³⁷Zenan and Hadashah and Migdal-Gad, ³⁸and Dilean and Mizpeh and Joktheel, ³⁹Lachish and Bozkath and Eglon, ⁴⁰and Cabbon and Lahmam and Kithlish, ⁴¹and Gederoth, Beth-Dagon and Naamah and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages; ⁴²Libnah and Ether and Ashan, ⁴³and Jiphtah and Ashnah and Nezib, ⁴⁴and Keilah and Achzib and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages; ⁴⁵Ekron, with her towns and her villages; ⁴⁶from Ekron to the sea, all that lay near Ashdod, with their villages; ⁴⁷Ashdod with her towns and her villages; Gaza with her towns and her villages, to the river of Egypt, and the Great Sea and its shoreline; ⁴⁸and in the mountains, Shamir

15:19 "The south" – in Hebrew "The Negev". This was a dry desert area in the south of Canaan. Therefore Achsah's request for springs of water was reasonable.

15:63 Jud 1:21; 2 Sam 5:6-7. The efforts of Judah and Benjamin were unsuccessful in driving out the Jebusites. Other tribes had similar difficulties – Jud 1:19-36. God had assured Joshua that no one would be able to withstand them if they were obedient to His law (1:5-8). The weakness or defeat, not only of Benjamin and Judah, but of other tribes also, was the result of partial obedience, and feeble faith. If we now fail to

and Jattir and Socoh, ⁴⁹and Dannah and Kirjath-Sannah, which is Debir, ⁵⁰and Anab and Eshtemoh and Anim, ⁵¹and Goshen and Holon and Giloh; eleven cities with their villages; ⁵²Arab and Dumah and Eshean, ⁵³and Janum and Beth-Tappuah and Aphekah, ⁵⁴and Humtah and Kirjath-Arba, which is Hebron, and Zior; nine cities with their villages; ⁵⁵Maon, Carmel and Ziph and Juttah, ⁵⁶and Jezreel and Jokdeam and Zanoah, ⁵⁷Cain, Gibeah and Timnah; ten cities with their villages; ⁵⁸Halhul, Beth-Zur and Gedor, ⁵⁹and Maarath and Beth-Anoth and Eltekon; six cities with their villages; ⁶⁰Kirjath-Baal, which is Kirjath-Jearim, and Rabbah; two cities with their villages; ⁶¹in the wilderness, Beth Arabah, Middin and Secacah, ⁶²and Nibshan, and the city of Salt and Engedi; six cities with their villages.

⁶³As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out, and the Jebusites live among the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

16 And the allotment of the children of Joseph fell from the Jordan at Jericho to the water of Jericho on the east to the wilderness that extends up from Jericho through the hill country of Bethel, ²and continues out from Bethel to Luz, and proceeds along to the borders of Archi to Ataroth, ³and goes down on the west to the border of Japhleti to the border of Upper Beth-Horon and on to Gezer. And its end was at the Sea.

⁴So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim took their inheritance.

⁵And the border of the children of Ephraim according to their families was *this*: the border of their inheritance on the east was Ataroth-Addar, to Upper Beth-Horon; ⁶and the border went out toward the sea to

claim and experience victories in the heavenly places the reasons will be the same.

16:1 The two tribes descended from Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim) received as their inheritance some of the finest, most fruitful areas in Canaan. See the blessings pronounced on them by Jacob in Gen 49:22-26 and by Moses in Deut 33:13-17. Since the lot for their inheritance was determined by God this suggests that past behavior, God's foreknowledge of the future, and the inspired words of Jacob and Moses concerning the tribes, had much to do with the inheritance each tribe received.

Michmethah on the north; and the border turned about on the east to Taanath-Shiloh and continued on by it on the east to Janohah; ⁷and it went down from Janohah to Ataroth and to Naarath and came to Jericho, and came out at the Jordan. ⁸The border went out from Tappuah on the west to the stream of Kanah; and its end was at the sea. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim by their families. ⁹And the cities set apart for the children of Ephraim were among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages.

¹⁰And they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, and the Canaanites live among the Ephraimites to this day and serve as forced laborers.

17 There was also an allotment for the tribe of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph; *an allotment* for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead. Because he was a warrior, he had Gilead and Bashan. ²There was also *an allotment* for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families, for the children of Abiezer and for the children of Helek and for the children of Asriel and for the children of Shechem and for the children of Hopher and for the children of Shemida. These were the male *descendants* of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families.

³But Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh had no sons, only daughters; and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. ⁴And they approached the presence of Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the leaders, saying, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers". Therefore, in accordance with the commandment of the LORD, he gave them an inheritance among the brothers of their father. ⁵And ten portions fell to Manasseh,

16:10 Another instance of incomplete victory because of disobedience. In this case it is not written that they could not drive them out, only that they did not. They had been commanded not to permit any of the Canaanites to live among them – Deut 20:16-18. The Canaanites were still in Gezer a few centuries later, in King Solomon's time (1 Kings 19:16). Note at Josh 15:63.

17:3-4 Num 27:1-11. In Christ women and men share equally in the inheritance – in regard to that there is neither male nor female (Gal 3:28).

besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side of the Jordan, ⁶because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons, and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

⁷And the border of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, which was east of Shechem; and the border went along toward the south to the inhabitants of En-Tappuah. ⁸Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh *belonged* to the children of Ephraim. ⁹And the border descended to the river Kanah, to the south of the river. These cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh. The border of Manasseh also was on the north side of the river, and it ended at the Sea. ¹⁰On the south it was Ephraim's, and on the north it was Manasseh's, and the Sea was their border; and they met in Asher on the north and in Issachar on the east.

¹¹And Manasseh had in the territories of Issachar and Asher Beth-Shean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Endor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, three areas.

¹²But the children of Manasseh could not drive out *the inhabitants of* those cities; for the Canaanites were determined to live in that region. ¹³But it happened, when the children of Israel became strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not completely drive them out.

¹⁴And the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me *only one* allotment and one portion to inherit, since I *am* a numerous people? Up to now the LORD has blessed me".

¹⁵And Joshua answered them, "If you are a numerous people, *then* go up to the forest area and clear *land* for yourself there in the region of the Perizzites and the giants, since

17:11-13 15:63; 16:10; Jud 1:27-28. Here is yet another example of weakness due to disobedience. See note at 15:63.

17:14 "Joseph" – Manasseh and Ephraim.

17:15-18 They claimed to be a great people in v 14, yet now (v 16) express their fear that they would not be able to defeat the Canaanites. Where was their faith? Joshua tells them to act like the great people they profess to be. It was faith in operation that would lay hold of all their inheritance, not their boasting of God's blessing.

the hill country of Ephraim is too cramped for you”.

¹⁶And the children of Joseph said, “The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the lowlands have iron chariots, *both the ones who belong to Beth-Shean and her towns, and the ones who are in the valley of Jezreel*”.

¹⁷And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, “You *are* a numerous people and have great strength; you are not to have *just* one allotment, ¹⁸for the mountain will be yours. It *is* forest, and you shall clear it, and it shall be yours to the end of it. For you shall drive out the Canaanites, even though they have iron chariots *and* though they are strong”.

18 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them. ²And seven tribes remained among the children of Israel which had not yet received their inheritance.

³And Joshua said to the children of Israel, “How long *will you be* slack in going to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers has given you? ⁴Appoint from among yourselves three men for each tribe, and I will send them out; and they will rise and go throughout the land and write a description of it according to their inheritance, and come *back* to me. ⁵And they shall divide it into seven parts. Judah is to stay in their borders in the south, and the house of Joseph is to stay in their borders in the north. ⁶So you shall write a description of the seven divisions of the land, and bring *the description* here to me, so that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. ⁷But the Levites are to have no portion among you; for the priesthood of the LORD *is* their inheritance. And Gad and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan on the

east, which the LORD’s servant Moses gave them”.

⁸And the men arose and went away. Joshua had given orders to those who went to write a description of the land, saying, “Go and walk through the land, and write a description of it, and come back to me, so that I may cast lots for you before the LORD here in Shiloh”.

⁹And the men went and passed through the land and wrote a description of it by cities in seven divisions in a book and came *back* to Joshua to the camp at Shiloh. ¹⁰And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD, and there Joshua apportioned the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions.

¹¹And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families. And the territory of their lot came between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph. ¹²And their border on the north was from the Jordan; and the border went up by the side of Jericho on the north and continued up through the mountains to the west; and its end was at the wilderness of Beth-Aven. ¹³And the border went on from there toward Luz, at the side of Luz, which *is* Bethel, to the south; and the border went down to Ataroth-Adar, near the hill that *rises* to the south of Lower Beth-Horon. ¹⁴And the border was drawn *from there* and went around the edge of the sea on the south, from the hill that *rises* before Beth-Horon on the south. And its end was at Kirjath-Baal, which *is* Kirjath-Jearim, a city of the children of Judah. This was the western side.

¹⁵And the south side was from the end of Kirjath-Jearim, and the border went on to the west and continued to the well of the waters of Nephtoah; ¹⁶and the border came down to the end of the mountain that rises before the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is in the Valley of the Giants on the north, and went down to the valley of Hinnom to the southern side of Jebusi, and descended

18:1 The tent of meeting, the tabernacle, was set up at Shiloh which remained the principal holy place throughout the time of the Judges. Shiloh was located in the territory of Ephraim about 16 kilometers north of Bethel and about twice that distance from Jerusalem. The tabernacle remained in Shiloh until the time of Samuel. Note on the tent of meeting at Ex 25:8. The land as a whole had been conquered but it had to be

claimed by the individual tribes and settled.

18:6 14:2 (note).

18:7 13:33; Num 18:20; Deut 18:1-6. The priests and Levites had the greatest inheritance of them all.

18:10 The division of the land was begun at Gilgal (13:7), and was then continued at Shiloh where land was allotted to the remaining seven tribes (v 2).

to En-Rogel. ¹⁷And it was drawn from the north, and went on to En-Shemesh, and continued toward Geliloth, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, and went down to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, ¹⁸and proceeded along toward the side opposite the Arabah on the north and went down to the Arabah; ¹⁹and the border continued along by the side of Beth-Hoglah on the north; and the end of the border was at the north bay of the Salt Sea at the southern end of Jordan. This was the southern boundary.

²⁰And the Jordan was its border on the eastern side. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by its surrounding boundaries, according to their families.

²¹Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho and Beth-Hoglah and the valley of Keziz, ²²and Beth-Arabah and Zemaraim and Bethel, ²³and Avim and Parah and Ophrah, ²⁴and Kephah-Haammonai and Ophni and Gaba; twelve cities with their villages; ²⁵Gibeon and Ramah and Beeroth, ²⁶and Mizpeh and Kephirah and Mozah, ²⁷and Rekem and Irpeel and Taralah, ²⁸and Zelah, Eleph and Jebusi, which is Jerusalem, Gibeath and Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

19 And the second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. And their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

²And in their inheritance they had Beersheba and Sheba and Moladah, ³and Hazarshual and Balah and Azem, ⁴and Eltolad and Bethul and Hormah, ⁵and Ziklag and Beth-Marcaboth and Hazar-Susah, ⁶and Beth-Lebaoth and Sharuhem; thirteen cities and their villages; ⁷Ain, Remmon and Ether and Ashan; four cities and their villages; ⁸and all the villages that surrounded these cities to Baalath-Ber, Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. ⁹The inheritance of the children of Simeon was from the portion of the children of Judah;

18:19 "Salt Sea"—Dead Sea.

19:1-9 Simeon's inheritance was in the south of the land, within the allotment made to the tribe of Judah. See Gen 49:7.

for the portion of the children of Judah was too much for them. So the children of Simeon had their inheritance within their inheritance.

¹⁰And the third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families; and the border of their inheritance was to Sarid; ¹¹and their border went up toward the sea and Maralah, and extended to Dabbasheth and went on to the river that is before Jokneam, ¹²and turned from Sarid on the east toward sunrise to the border of Kisloth-Tabor, and then went on to Daberath and went up to Japhia. ¹³And from there it continued along on the east to Gittah-Hepher, to Ittahkazin, and went on to Remmon-Methoar to Neah; ¹⁴and the border circled around it on the north to Hannathon; and its end was in the valley of Jiphthahel; ¹⁵and it included Kattath, and Nahallal and Shimron and Idalah and Bethlehem; twelve cities with their villages.

¹⁶This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.

¹⁷And the fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families. ¹⁸And their border was toward Jezreel, and included Kesulloth and Shunem ¹⁹and Haphraim and Shihon and Anaharath ²⁰and Rabbith and Kishion and Abez ²¹and Remeth and Engannim and Enhaddah and Beth-Pazzez; ²²and the border extended to Tabor and Shahazimah and Beth-Shemesh; and the end of their border was at the Jordan; sixteen cities with their villages.

²³This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

²⁴And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. ²⁵And their border was at Helkath and Hali and Beten and Achshaph, ²⁶and Alammelech and Amad and Misheal, and it extended to Carmel on the west and to Shihor-Libnath; ²⁷and turned toward the sunrise to Beth-Dagon and extended to Zebulun and to the valley of Jiphthahel toward the north of Beth-Emek and Neiel and went on to Cabul on the north, ²⁸and Hebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and

19:10-16 Zebulun was in Galilee, west of the sea.

19:17-23 Issachar was southeast of Zebulun.

19:24-31 Asher was along the Mediterranean coast, north of Mt Carmel.

Kanah, even to greater Sidon; ²⁹and then the border turned toward Ramah and to the strong city of Tyre; and the border turned to Hosah; and its end was at the sea from the coast to Achzib; ³⁰it included Ummah also and Aphek and Rehob; twenty-two cities with their villages.

³¹This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.

³²The sixth lot came out for the children of Naphtali, for the children of Naphtali according to their families. ³³And their border was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaanannim and Adami-Nekeb, and Jabneel, to Lakum; and its end was at the Jordan; ³⁴then the border turned to the west to Aznoth-Tabor, and went on from there to Hukkok, and extended to Zebulun on the south and extended to Asher on the west and to Judah on the Jordan toward sunrise. ³⁵And the fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer and Hammath, Rakkath, and Kinnereth, ³⁶and Adamah and Ramah and Hazor ³⁷and Kedesh and Edrei and En-Hazor ³⁸and Iron and Migdalel, Horem and Beth-Anath and Beth-Shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages.

³⁹This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.

⁴⁰And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. ⁴¹And the border of their inheritance included Zorah and Eshtaol and Ir-Shemesh ⁴²and Shaalabbin and Ajalon and Jethlah ⁴³and Elon and Thimnathah and Ekron ⁴⁴and Eltekeh and Gibbethon and Baalath ⁴⁵and Jehud and Bene-Berak and Gath-Rimmon ⁴⁶and Mejarkon and Rakkon, with the border before Japho.

⁴⁷And the border of the children of Dan

encompassed too little for them; therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it and struck it with the edge of the sword and possessed it and lived in it, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

⁴⁸This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

⁴⁹When they had finished apportioning the land for an inheritance by their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them. ⁵⁰In accordance with the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for, Timnath-Serah in the hill country of Ephraim. And he built the city and lived in it.

⁵¹These are the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the leaders of the tribes of the fathers of the children of Israel, apportioned as an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. So they finished apportioning the country.

20 Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying,

²“Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Set apart for yourselves cities of refuge, about which I spoke to you through Moses, ³so that a man who kills another person, striking him unintentionally, unwittingly, may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

⁴“And when the one who flees to one of those cities stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city, they shall let him come to them inside the city and give him a place to stay, so that he can live among them. ⁵And if the avenger of blood

19:32-39 Naphtali was east of Asher, north of Issachar.

19:40-48 Dan was west of Ephraim and extended to the coast of the Mediterranean.

19:47 Leshem was in the far north of the land, near Mt Hermon – Jud 18:27-31.

19:50 14:13-14; 24:30.

19:51 16:1-9. The land was apportioned as God saw fit. Some tribes were given more land than the others and some areas were more fruitful than others. But all received something and there was a suitable place for each tribe, family and individual. Reward for past behavior entered into the allotment for each though

everything given was of God’s grace, since no one fully deserved anything. It seems clear that the prophetic blessings pronounced by Jacob in Genesis chapter 49 and by Moses in Deuteronomy chapter 33 were in line with what each tribe received.

20:1-9 See note on cities of refuge at Num 35:9-32.

20:4-5 In addition to the regulations given to Moses, there are here laid down the responsibilities of the city elders. A person who fled to a city of refuge had to respect their position, and the elders should be people of discernment who upheld justice. Trials were not to be held in secret but before the assembly.

pursues him, then they shall not hand the one who killed the other over to them, because he struck his neighbour unwittingly, and did not hate him previously. ⁶And he is to live in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest who will be in those days. Afterwards the man who killed the other shall return to his own city and to his own house, to the city that he fled from”.

⁷And they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali and Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and Kirjath-Arba, which is Hebron, in the mountains of Judah. ⁸And on the other side of the Jordan near Jericho on the east, from the tribe of Reuben, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness on the plain, and Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh. ⁹These were the cities set apart for all the children of Israel and for the foreigners living among them, so that whoever kills a person unintentionally might flee there, and remain until he stands before the congregation, and not die at the hand of the avenger of blood.

21 Then the heads of the Levite fathers’ families approached Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the tribes of the fathers of the children of Israel, ²and spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, “The LORD gave orders through Moses to give us cities to live in, with their pasture lands for our cattle”.

³And in accordance with the command of the LORD, the children of Israel gave these cities and their pasture lands to the Levites, from their inheritance:

⁴And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites; and the children of Aaron the priest, who were of the Levites, had thirteen cities by lot from the tribe of Judah and from the tribe of Simeon and from the tribe of Benjamin. ⁵And the rest of the children of Kohath had ten cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim and from the tribe of Dan and from the half tribe of Manasseh.

⁶And the children of Gershon *had* thirteen cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Issachar and from the tribe of Asher and from the tribe of Naphtali and from the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

⁷The children of Merari by their families *had* twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben and from the tribe of Gad and from the tribe of Zebulun.

⁸And the children of Israel gave these cities with their pasture lands to the Levites by lot, just as the LORD commanded through Moses.

⁹And from the tribe of the children of Judah and from the tribe of the children of Simeon they gave these cities which are *here* mentioned by name, ¹⁰which the children of Aaron, *being* of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi, possessed; for theirs was the first lot.

¹¹And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak, which *is* Hebron, in the hill *country* of Judah, with its surrounding pasture lands. ¹²But the fields of the city and its villages, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

¹³So they gave Hebron with its pasture lands to the children of Aaron the priest *to be* a city of refuge for anyone who killed *another person*; and Libnah with its pasture lands ¹⁴and Jattir with its pasture lands and Eshtemoa with its pasture lands ¹⁵and Holon with its pasture lands and Debir with its pasture lands ¹⁶and Ain with its pasture lands and Juttah with its pasture lands *and* Beth-Shemesh with its pasture lands; nine cities from those two tribes; ¹⁷and from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pasture lands, Geba with its pasture lands, ¹⁸Anathoth with its pasture lands, and Almon with its pasture lands; four cities.

¹⁹The cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, *were* thirteen cities in all, with their pasture lands.

²⁰And as for the families of the children of Kohath, the rest of the Levites of the children of Kohath, by their lot they had the cities from the tribe of Ephraim.

²¹For they gave them Shechem with its

21:1-42 Num 35:1-8; 1 Chron 6:54-81.

21:2 “*Cities*” – they did not possess the towns but lived with the other people there.

21:3 “*From their inheritance*” – it was the privilege and duty of the people of Israel to provide for the servants of God who served in the tabernacle and

temple. So is it now – 1 Cor 9:7-14.

21:4-7 The three families of the Levites sprang from the three sons of Levi (Ex 6:16; Num 3:17).

21:9-40 All the tribes, not just one or two, had the responsibility of providing for the servants of God.

pasture lands in the hill country of Ephraim *to be* a city of refuge for anyone who killed *another person*; and Gezer with its pasture lands ²²and Kibzaim with its pasture lands and Beth-Horon with its pasture lands; four cities; ²³and from the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with its pasture lands, Gibbethon with its pasture lands, ²⁴Aijalon with its pasture lands, Gath-Rimmon with its pasture lands; four cities; ²⁵and from the half tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with its pasture lands and Gath Rimmon with its pasture lands; two cities.

²⁶All the cities with their pasture lands for the families of the children of Kohath who were left *were* ten.

²⁷And they gave to the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, from the *other* half tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with its pasture lands, to be a city of refuge for anyone who killed *another person*, and Beeshterah with its pasture lands; two cities; ²⁸and from the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with its pasture lands, Dabareh with its pasture lands, ²⁹Jarmuth with its pasture lands, Engannim with its pasture lands; four cities; ³⁰and from the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its pasture lands, Abdon with its pasture lands, ³¹Helkath with its pasture lands, and Rehob with its pasture lands; four cities; ³²and from the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with its pasture lands *to be* a city of refuge for anyone who killed *another person*, and Hammoth-Dor with its pasture lands and Kartan with its pasture lands; three cities.

³³All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families *were* thirteen cities, with their suburbs.

³⁴And *they gave* to the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its pasture lands and Kartah with its pasture lands, ³⁵Dimnah with its pasture lands, Nahalal with its pasture lands; four cities; ³⁶and from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its

pasture lands, and Jahazah with its pasture lands, ³⁷Kedemoth with its pasture lands, and Mephaath with its pasture lands; four cities; ³⁸and from the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its pasture lands to be a city of refuge for anyone who killed *another person*, and Mahanaim with its pasture lands, ³⁹Heshbon with its pasture lands, Jazer with its pasture lands; four cities in all.

⁴⁰So all the cities by their lot for the children of Merari by their families, which were left of the families of the Levites, were twelve cities.

⁴¹All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel *were* forty-eight cities with their suburbs. ⁴²Each of these cities was with its surrounding pasture lands; *it was* the same for all these cities.

⁴³And the LORD gave to Israel all the land which he swore to give to their fathers; and they took possession of it, and lived in it. ⁴⁴And the LORD gave them rest on all sides, in accordance with all that he swore to their fathers; and not a man of all their enemies stood before them. The LORD delivered all their enemies into their hands. ⁴⁵No good thing that the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.

22 Then Joshua called the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh, ²and said to them, “You have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. ³You have not left your brethren these many days until today, but have been careful *to fulfil* the responsibility of the commandment of the LORD your God. ⁴And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as he promised them. Therefore return now and go to your homes and to the land of your possession, which the LORD’s servant Moses gave you on the other side of the Jordan. ⁵But be very careful to keep the command and the law, which the LORD’s servant Moses

21:41 The cities for the Levites were scattered throughout the nation. No tribe was left out. The Levites had to be in touch with the people as a whole and always in a position to serve them. This would have been a unifying factor in the social and religious life of Israel.

21:43 Gen 15:18-21; 17:8; 28:13.

21:44 “Rest” – 1:13.

21:45 23:14 . 1 Kings 8:56; Neh 9:8. God always

fulfills His word – Num 11:23; 23:19; Ps 119:140; 145:13; Isa 45:19; Matt 5:18; Titus 1:2; Heb 6:18. Verses 43-45 do not deny the measure in which Israel failed to enter fully into their inheritance. God is faithful, but sometimes the unfaithfulness and disobedience of God’s people rob them of the full reception or enjoyment of what God has given.

22:1-4 Num 32:20-22; Deut 3:18-20.

22:5 Deut 10:12-13.

commanded you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments, and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul”.

⁶So Joshua blessed them and sent them away. And they went to their homes. ⁷Now to *one* half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given *territory* in Bashan; but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave *territory* among their brethren on the western side of the Jordan. And so when Joshua sent them away to their homes, he blessed them, ⁸and he spoke to them, saying, “Return to your homes with great riches and with very much livestock, with silver and with gold and with bronze and with iron and with a great quantity of clothing. Share the plunder from your enemies with your brethren”.

⁹And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned *home*, leaving the children of Israel from Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the region of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had taken in accordance with the word of the LORD through Moses.

¹⁰And when they came to the vicinity of the Jordan, in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar near the Jordan, in appearance a great altar.

¹¹And the children of Israel heard *it* said, “See, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar on the border of the land of Canaan, in the vicinity of the Jordan, on the side *belonging* to the children of Israel”.

¹²And when the children of Israel heard *of it*, the whole congregation of the children

of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go out to war against them.

¹³And the children of Israel sent *men* to the children of Reuben and to the children of Gad and to the half tribe of Manasseh into the land of Gilead. *They were* Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, ¹⁴and ten leaders with him, a leader from each chief household throughout all the tribes of Israel. Each one was the head of the household of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.

¹⁵And they came to the children of Reuben and to the children of Gad and to the half tribe of Manasseh to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying, ¹⁶“This is what the whole congregation of the LORD says, What *is* this unfaithful deed that you have committed against the God of Israel, turning away this day from following the LORD by building an altar for yourselves to rebel this day against the LORD? ¹⁷Was the sin at Peor too little for us? We are not cleansed from that until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD. ¹⁸And must you turn away this day from following the LORD? And *since* you are rebelling today against the LORD, it will come about that tomorrow he will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel.

¹⁹“If, however, the land of your possession *is* unclean, *then* cross over to the land of the LORD’s possession, where the LORD’s tabernacle is staying, and take possession of *land* among us. But do not rebel against the LORD, or against us, by building an altar for yourselves in addition to the altar of the LORD our God. ²⁰Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit an unfaithful deed in *regard* to the accursed thing? And anger fell on all the congregation of Israel. And that man

22:7 17:1-3.

22:8 “*Riches*”— gained from the captured land and cities of Canaan.

“*Brethren*”— those left behind in the territories east of the Jordan (Lev 17:8-9; Deut 12:5-13).

22:10-34 This records a misunderstanding that almost had disastrous consequences (v 12). The misunderstanding was the result of a hasty conclusion about an ambiguous action. Fortunately the Israelites sent delegates to learn the facts, and trouble was averted. We should always be careful not to leap to conclusions about things we hear about others, and not to form opinions without real evidence.

22:11-12 God commanded the people not to give offerings on any altar except the one He

chose – Lev 17:8-9; Deut 12:5-13. The nine and one half tribes in Canaan thought that the two and one half tribes east of the Jordan River were planning to break this command and set up a rival altar. The unity of the nation was in danger.

22:13-14 Fortunately they were not as hasty in going to war as they were in misunderstanding and condemning. Cooler heads prevailed and the matter was thoroughly investigated.

22:15-20 These ambassadors expressed the reason for the concern Israel felt. Rebellion would bring God’s anger on the whole nation (v 18).

22:17 “*Peor*”— note at Num 25:1-9.

22:20 They well remembered the lesson God taught through Achan’s sin. See 7:1-26.

did not perish alone in his sin”.

²¹Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered and said to the heads of the thousands of Israel, ²²“The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, he knows, and Israel should know. Do not save us this day if *it is* in rebellion or in unfaithfulness against the LORD ²³that we have built an altar for ourselves to turn from following the LORD, or if *we built it* to offer burnt offering or grain offering on it, or if to offer peace offerings on it. May the LORD himself demand *an account*, ²⁴if we have not rather done it for fear of *this* thing, saying, In the future your children might speak to our children, saying, ‘What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel? ²⁵For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between us and you, you children of Reuben and children of Gad. You have no part in the LORD.’ So your children may cause our children to stop fearing the LORD.

²⁶“Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build an altar for ourselves, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, ²⁷but *that it may be* a witness between us and you, and our generations after us, that we will serve the LORD before him with our burnt offerings and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, so that in the future your children may not say to our children, ‘You have no part in the LORD.’ ²⁸“Therefore we said that it shall come about, if they say *this* to us or to our future generations, that we may say *in response*, See this copy of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices, but as a witness between us and you.

²⁹“God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, in addition to the altar of the LORD our God that *is* before his tabernacle”.

³⁰And when Phinehas the priest, and the leaders of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them. ³¹And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the children of Reuben and to the children of Gad and to the children of Manasseh, “Today we see that the LORD *is* among us, because you have not acted unfaithfully against the LORD. Now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD”.

³²And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest and the leaders *left* the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the land of Gilead, and returned to the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought back word to them. ³³And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel praised God and spoke no more of going up against them in battle, to destroy the land where the children of Reuben and Gad lived.

³⁴And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar “Witness”. “For”, they said, “it *shall be* a witness between us that the LORD is God”.

23 And it came about a long time after the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies on every side, that Joshua became old *and* advanced in age.

22:22 The repetition of these names of God suggests strong emphasis.

22:23-29 Here is an emphatic denial of wrong motives and a clear explanation of their actions. The tribes of Israel were independent to some extent but were united by their worship of Jehovah which was carried on at one central place (at that time this place was Shiloh). The two and one half tribes were building an altar, not for sacrifice (v 26), but as a witness to the unity of God’s people (v 27). What they were accused of was the exact opposite of the truth. So easily the inner thoughts and motives of fellow believers can be misunderstood because of some unexplained action. Believers now should have no less burden than the Israelites to maintain their unity in

the Lord in the bonds of peace (Eph 4:3-6,13; Phil 4:2; Col 3:11).

22:23 “Peace offerings”— Lev 3:1.

22:31 “Delivered”— by their clear explanation of their actions they had averted an unjust and unreasonable war between the tribes, which would surely have brought the anger of God on the whole nation.

22:33 The result of reconciliation and unity. Compare Ps 133.

22:34 The witness was that the LORD (Jehovah), the God who chose Israel and made a covenant with them, was the only God in existence. See 20:1-6; Deut 4:35; Isa 43:10-12; 44:6; 45:21-22.

23:1 “Rest”— 1:13.

²And Joshua called for all Israel *and* for their elders and for their heads and for their judges and for their officers, and said to them, “I am old *and* advanced in age; ³and you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake; for the LORD your God is the one who has fought for you. ⁴See, I have apportioned to you by lot these nations that remain, with all the nations that I have cut off, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan to the great sea on the west. ⁵And the LORD your God will expel them from before you, and drive them out of your sight; and you shall possess their land, as the LORD your God has promised to you.

⁶“Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, so that you turn not aside from it to the right hand or to the left, ⁷so that you do not mingle with these nations, these that remain among you, or mention the name of their gods or make oaths *by them* or serve them or bow down to them, ⁸but cling to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day.

⁹“For the LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations; but *as for* you, no man has been able to stand before you to this day. ¹⁰One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the LORD your God *is* the one who fights for you, as he has promised you.

¹¹Therefore be careful about yourselves. See that you love the LORD your God.

¹²“For if you ever turn back and cling to the survivors of these nations, these that remain among you, and intermarry with them and go in to them and they to you, ¹³know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no longer drive out *any of* these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps to you and whips on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you. ¹⁴And, see, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth. And you all know in your hearts and in your souls that not one of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed. All have been fulfilled for you, *and* not one word of it has failed. ¹⁵Therefore this *is how it* will be: just as all the good things which the LORD your God promised you have come on you, so the LORD will bring on you every bad thing until he has destroyed you from this good land which the LORD your God has given you. ¹⁶When you break the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land which he has given to you”.

23:2 Israel’s leader, after a lifetime of faithful service, desired to give parting words of wisdom and counsel.

23:3 10:14,42; Ps 44:3.

23:4-5 Joshua calls to mind all that God had already given to His people. Every believer should always keep in remembrance the grace of God shown toward them in the past, and so have confidence for the future. The promise in v 5 refers to those enemies that still remained in the land (13:1,13; 16:10; 17:12-13).

23:4 “Great sea”—Mediterranean.

23:6 1:7. Joshua had learned by experience the importance and blessedness of this. The promise of v 5 was based on this condition. If they did not do this, God would not do that.

23:7 “Mingle”—Ex 34:15-16; Deut 7:1-4; 1 Cor 15:33; 2 Cor 6:14-18. Fellowship with evil people who do not want to walk in God’s ways will almost surely corrupt God’s people.

“Bow down to them”—Ex 20:1-5; 23:13; Ps 16:4. God’s people must maintain their separation from the evils and godless standards of the world around them, and from the many gods of the world.

23:8 “Cling”—Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20.

23:10 Lev 26:8; Deut 32:30. The presence of the Lord with even one of His people provides greater power than is possessed by all the forces of evil (Ps 18:32-39; Rom 8:31; 1 Cor 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14; Phil 4:13; 1 John 4:4).

23:11 “Love”—Deut 6:5; 11:1; Matt 22:36-40; John 14:15,21,23. Love for God would be the motive power that would cause them to obey God’s commandments, and keep them from the evils of the world.

23:12 Deut 7:3-4. Marriage is forbidden between God’s special people and those who are not. This is a principle clearly taught in the New Testament also (2 Cor 6:14-15).

23:13 Ex 23:33; 34:12; 7:16. God’s promises were based on certain conditions. Obedience would bring great blessing, disobedience would bring disaster.

23:14 21:45.

23:15-16 Lev 26:14-33; Deut 28:15-63. These verses show very clearly that these promises God made to them were based on conditions.

23:16 “Anger”—notes at Num 25:3; Ps 90:7-11.

24 And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel and for their heads and for their judges and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

²And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘In olden times your fathers, Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor, lived on the other side of the *Euphrates* river; and they served other gods. ³And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the river and led him through the whole land of Canaan, and increased the number of his offspring and gave him Isaac. ⁴And I gave Jacob and Esau to Isaac; and I gave Mount Seir to Esau to possess. But Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

⁵“And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt by what I did among them; and afterwards I brought you, ⁶and I brought your fathers out of Egypt; and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. ⁷And when they cried out to the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea over them and covered them. And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt; and you lived in the desert for a long time.

⁸“And I brought you into the land of the Amorites who lived on the other side of the Jordan. And they fought with you; and I gave them into your hands, so that you might

possess their land. And I destroyed them from before you. ⁹Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent *men* and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. ¹⁰But I would not listen to Balaam. Therefore he had to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hands.

¹¹“And you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho; and the men of Jericho fought against you, *as did* the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Girgashites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. And I delivered them into your hands. ¹²And I sent hornets before you, which drove out the two kings of the Amorites from before you, *but* not with your sword or with your bow. ¹³And I have given you a land for which you did not labour and cities which you did not build, and you live in them. You eat the *fruit* of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.’

¹⁴“Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, today choose whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD”.

¹⁶And the people answered and said, “God forbid that we should forsake the LORD to

24:1 This chapter records a public renewal of the covenant God made with Israel.

24:2 “*Thus says the LORD God*”— from here to v 14 Joshua speaks the very words God had given him to say.

“*Fathers*”— Gen 11:27-32.

24:4 Gen 25:25-26; 46:6-7; Deut 2:15.

24:5 Ex 4:14-16; 7:8—10:29; 12:29,51.

24:6 Ex 14:1-9.

“*Horsemen*”— or it could be translated “charioteers”.

24:7 Ex 14:10-31.

“*Long time*”— 40 years.

24:8 Num 21:21-35.

24:9 Num 21:1-6.

24:10 Numbers chapters 23,24.

24:11 6:1-27.

24:12 “*Hornets*”— Ex 23:28; Deut 7:20.

“*Bow*”— 10:14,42; Ps 44:3,6,7.

24:13 Deut 6:10-12. The land was God’s gift to them. It was all of grace. Just as the believer’s possessions in Christ are all of grace (Eph 1:3-6).

24:14 Now Joshua himself speaks to Israel.

“*Fear*”— notes at Gen 20:11; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10; Prov 1:7.

“*Serve him...in truth*”— faithfully – an essential quality for the people of God (1 Sam 12:24).

“*Put away*”— it seems from this that, at least in heart, some of the people were worshipping false gods even then (v 23).

24:15 “*Choose*”— he calls them to an open, deliberate choice. See 1 Kings 18:21. And the choice was to be made immediately “today”. A decision like this is not to be put off into the indefinite future. To put it off is to reveal that there is no intention of serving the true God. As for himself Joshua’s choice had already been made and he publicly testifies to it.

“*Household*”— he was not one to let his family members serve other gods. Doubtless he spoke in faith. Compare 6:25; Acts 16:31; Eph 6:4; 1 Tim 3:4-5; Heb 11:7.

24:16-18 The people knew much of God’s Word and doings; they professed strongly their intention to be faithful to Him. Yet false gods were in their midst (v 23), and in heart they were a rebellious

serve other gods. ¹⁷For the LORD our God is the one who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us all along the way where we travelled and among all the people through whom we passed. ¹⁸And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, the Amorites who lived in the land. *Therefore we too will serve the LORD; for he is our God*".

¹⁹And Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for he *is* a holy God, he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. ²⁰If you forsake the LORD and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you harm and make an end of you, after the good he has done you".

²¹And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD".

²²And Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve him". And they said, "We are witnesses".

²³"Now therefore", *he said*, "put away the foreign gods which *are* among you and turn your heart to the LORD God of Israel".

²⁴And the people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God, and obey his voice".

²⁵So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and set before them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. ²⁶And Joshua

wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone and set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.

²⁷And Joshua said to all the people, "See, this stone will be a witness to us; for it has heard all the words of the LORD which he spoke to us; so it will be a witness to you, that you should not deny your God".

²⁸So Joshua let the people depart, each one to his inheritance.

²⁹And it came about after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* a hundred and ten years old. ³⁰And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-Serah, which *is* in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. ³¹And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, and who knew all the deeds of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.

³²And in Shechem they buried the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, in a plot of ground which Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of silver. And it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

³³And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill *that belonged to* Phinehas his son, which was given to him in the hill country of Ephraim.

(v 19) people. In every generation some who profess to be God's people are ignorant of the power of their sinful natures and easily think and say they will serve God (Ex 19:8; Jer 17:9). **24:19** "Cannot"— Joshua knew them better than they knew themselves. And the whole book of Judges (not to speak of the rest of the Bible) shows how right he was in this.

"Holy"— notes at Lev 20:7.

"Jealous"— Ex 20:5-6.

"Not forgive"— this should be understood in the light of the next verse and verses like Lev 26:14-45. Of course God always forgives the individual who comes to Him in repentance and faith (Ex 34:6-7; Ps 130:4; Luke 24:47; Acts 3:19; Eph 1:7).

24:23 Verse 14.

24:24 Three times they insisted on this. But

the people did not keep their word very long (Jud 2:6-13).

24:25-27 Joshua made this occasion as solemn as possible to impress on the minds of the people the importance of obedience and faithfulness.

24:26 "Book of the law of God"— God's revelation, instructions and commandments contained in the writings of Moses.

24:31 Jud 2:6-13.

24:32 "Bones"— Gen 50:24-25; Ex 13:19. The burial of Joseph's bones in Shechem was a fitting reminder of the faithfulness of God to the nation from the time of Jacob to their possessing the promised land.

"Jacob bought"— Gen 33:19.

24:33 Eleazar was the high priest who served with Moses and Joshua—Num 20:28; Josh 14:1; 17:4; 21:1.

