

# Joshua

**MEANING:** Joshua means “Salvation.” Numbers 13:8  
Moses altered it to “Yahweh is Salvation.” Numbers 13:16

**AUTHOR:** Joshua

**TIME WRITTEN:** The book of Joshua cannot be dated precisely. We can come close.

**POSITION IN THE BIBLE:**

- 6th Book in the Bible
- 6th book in the Old Testament
- 1st book of History (Joshua - Esther)
- 5 have preceded it. 60 to follow it.

**CHAPTERS:** 24

**VERSES:** 658

**WORDS:** 18,858

**KEY WORD:** Conquest

**THREE KEY PASSAGES:**

1. **Joshua 1:8** - "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe 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."
2. **Joshua 11:23** - "Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war."
3. **Joshua 24:24-25** - "The people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!"  
So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem."

**KEY CHAPTER:** Joshua 24

1. Some of the most critical periods in Israel's history are the transitions of leadership (Moses to Joshua; Joshua to the Judges; the Judges to the kings, and so on.
2. Before his death at age 110, and in preparation for a major transition of leadership by one man (Joshua) to many (the Judges), Joshua reviews for the people God's fulfillment of His promises and then challenges the people to renew their commitment to the covenant which is the foundation for all successful national life.

**OBSERVATIONS ABOUT JOSHUA:**

1. There is a sense in which Joshua serves as a link between the Pentateuch and the remainder of Israel's history.

2. Through three military campaigns involving more than thirty armies, Israel learns a critical lesson — Victory comes through faith in God and obedience to His Word.
  - a. Victory does not come through military might.
  - b. Victory does not come through superior numbers.
  - c. Victory comes through faith in God and obedience to His Word.
3. Joshua was born a slave in Egypt but becomes a conqueror in Canaan.
4. Three great qualities of Joshua.
  - a. His obedient faith in God.
  - b. His great courage.
  - c. His dedication to God and His Word.
5. The entire Book of Joshua describes the entering, conquering, and occupying the land of Canaan.
  - a. The book begins with a statement of the promise of conquest. **Joshua 1:2-3** - "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them -- the children of Israel.  
 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses."
    - b. The book ends with the completion of the conquest. **Joshua 23:14** – "Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed."
6. Joshua records the fulfillment of the land promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 17:8
  - a. **Joshua 24:13** - "I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant."
  - b. Note: In Genesis the Patriarchs received the PROMISE of the land. In Joshua Israel received the LAND of the promise.
7. Joshua has been called "the storybook hero of the Bible."
8. The Book of Joshua divides neatly into three geographical divisions:
  - a. Jordan River - (1 - 5)
  - b. Canaan - (6 - 13:7)
  - c. The twelve tribes situated on both sides of the Jordan. (13:8 - 24:13).
9. Three military campaigns involving more than thirty armies over about a seven year period.
  - a. 1st Military Campaign: Central Canaan - (chapters 6 - 8) (Places a strategic wedge between the northern and southern cities preventing a massive Canaanite alliance against Israel.) The divide and conquer strategy.

- b. 2nd military Campaign: Southern Canaan - (chapters 9 - 10)
- c. 3rd Military Campaign: Northern Canaan - (chapters 11 - 12)
- 10. Joshua became Israel's leader at age 85, led them for 25 years, and died at age 110.
- 11. Joshua may be divided into two sections:
  - a. The Conquest of the land. (1:1 - 13:7)
    - 1. The first five chapters record the spiritual, moral, physical, and military preparation of Joshua and the people for the impending conquest of the land.
    - 2. Two spies are sent out. They return with a favorable report.
  - b. The Settlement of the Land. (13:8 - 24:33)
    - 1. Joshua is growing old, so God tells him to divide the land among the twelve tribes.
    - 2. Much remains to be won, and the tribes are to continue the conquest by faith, after Joshua's death.
- 12. An outline suggesting the dating of events in Joshua.
  - a. One month, March: April, 1405 B.C. (Joshua 1 - 5)
    - 1. Death of Moses: March 1405 B.C. (Deuteronomy 34:5-9)
    - 2. Crossing the Jordan River: April 10, 1405 B.C. (Joshua 4:19)
  - b. Seven years, April 1405 - 1398 B.C. (Joshua 6:1 - 13:7)
    - 1. Caleb was forty years old at Kadesh Barnea (Joshua 14:10)
    - 2. Caleb is eighty-five years old at that time (Joshua 14:10)
    - 3. Note: forty-five years less thirty-eight years of wandering leaves seven years.
  - c. Eight years, 1398/7 - 1390 B.C. (Joshua 13:8-24)
    - 1. Division of the land began, 1398/7 B.C. (Joshua 14:7-10)
    - 2. Joshua dies at age 110, 1390 B.C. (Joshua 24:39)
- 13. Great statement. Great challenge: **Joshua 24:15** - "... **Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, . . . But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**"
- 14. Joshua and Caleb - two of the truly great Bible characters.

## SUMMARY OF JOSHUA

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. Joshua resumes the narrative where Deuteronomy left off, and takes Israel from the wilderness to the Promised Land.
- B. Israel has now reached its climatic point of fulfilling the centuries-old promise in Genesis of a homeland.
- C. There are two division in the Book.

1. The first half of Joshua (1:1 - 13:7) describes the seven-year conquest of the land.
2. The second half (13:8 - 24:33) gives the details of the division and settlement of the land.

### **THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN. (1:1 - 13:7)**

- A. The first five chapters record the spiritual, moral, physical, and military preparation of Joshua and the people for the impending conquest of Canaan.
  1. Joshua is given a charge by God to complete the task begun by Moses (1:2).
  2. After being encouraged by God, Joshua sends out two spies who come back with a favorable report (in contrast to the spies of the previous generation)
  3. Obedience and faith are united in the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River. (3:1 - 4:24)
- B. The three campaigns in conquest of Canaan.
  1. **The Central Campaign.** (6:1 - 8:35)
    - a. Places a strategic wedge between the northern and southern cities in Canaan preventing a massive Canaanite alliance against Israel.
    - b. This divide-and-conquer strategy proves effective, but God's directions for taking the first city (Jericho) sound like foolishness from a military point of view.
    - c. God uses this to test the people and to teach them that Israel's success in battle will always be by His power and not their own might or cleverness.
    - d. Sin must be dealt with at once because it brings severe consequences at Ai (7:1-26),
  2. **The Southern Campaign.** (9:1 - 10:43)
    - a. While the southern campaign is successful, an unwise oath made to the deceptive Gibeonites (9:1-27) forces Israel to protect them and to disobey God's command to eliminate the Canaanites.
  3. **The Northern Campaign.** (11:1-15)

### **THE SETTLEMENT OF CANAAN. (13:8 - 24:33)**

- A. Joshua is growing old, and God tells him to divide the land among the twelve tribes.
  1. Much remains to be won, and the tribes are to continue the conquest by faith after Joshua's death.
  2. Joshua 13:8 - 21:45 describes the allocation of the land to the various tribes as well as the inheritance of:
    - a. Caleb. (14-15)
    - b. The Levites. (21)

- B. The last chapters (22:1 - 24:33) record the conditions for continued successful settlement in Canaan.
  - 1. Access to God, as well as His forgiveness, come only through the divinely established sacrificial system.
  - 2. Civil war almost breaks out when the eastern tribes (Transjordan) build an altar that is misinterpreted by the western tribes.
- C. Realizing that blessing comes from God only as Israel obeys His covenant, Joshua preaches a moving sermon, climaxed by Israel's renewal of her allegiance to the covenant.