

- 1) **INTRODUCTION:** The Book of Joshua was named after its principal character, Joshua the son of Nun. Joshua was Moses' second in command and along with Caleb a principal agent in leading the nation into Canaan. The book picks up the story line following Moses' death and burial at the end of Deuteronomy.
  - a) **Joshua's Place in Scripture** - The "English Bible" has Joshua and Esther sequenced together into a section known as "Historical Books" while the Hebrew Bible lists Joshua through Kings as the "Former Prophets." From our previous study of "Hermeneutics - the Art of Biblical Interpretation" we learned that all Scripture is both theological and prophetic where the author is saying something about his understanding about God, and God is revealing something about Himself and redemptive history. These revelations in Scripture occurred to real people who lived in the context of human history. As such, we can often pull historical context out of the text. However, providing a strict historical timeline is not what was intended by the authors, although the net result of later writings of Scripture is that they were built upon their predecessors.
  - b) **Characteristics of "Former Prophetic Scripture** - Paul House suggests 5 characteristics:
    - i) They assess the past based on God's Covenant with Israel.
    - ii) Predictions occur in the context of noting how God has blessed or punished Israel in the past, and stating what specific promises the Lord makes to individuals [as to David].
    - iii) They create plot by selecting events and persons for inclusion that fit the prophetic view of past, present, and future.
    - iv) They assess characters in the story based on their conduct and whether they help gain to promote loss in terms of the Promised Land.
    - v) They encourage the return to the Lord so they may experience blessing instead of punishment [Deut 27-28]. The book of Deuteronomy heavily influences the prophetic writers.
  - c) **Historical Timeline** - approximate dates based on tradition, textual context, cross-textual analysis, and archeology. Although there is room for discussion and even argument, these dates seem plausible for our purposes of cultural & historical context:
    - i) **Bronze Age in the Ancient Near East - 3300-1200 BC**
      - (1) Early Bronze Age - 3300-2200 BC
      - (2) Middle Bronze Age - 2200-1550 BC
      - (3) Late Bronze Age - 1550-1200 BC
    - ii) **Moses - 1526-1406 BC**
    - iii) **Exodus and Wilderness Wandering - 1446-1406 BC**
    - iv) **Joshua - 1466-1375 BC**
    - v) **Judges Period - 1375-1050 BC**
      - (1) Othniel - 1350-1310 BC
      - (2) Ehud - 1309-1229 BC
      - (3) Deborah and Barak - 1209-1169 BC
      - (4) Gideon - 1162-1122 BC
      - (5) Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Jephthah - 1078-1072 BC

- (6) Samson - 1075-1055 BC
- (7) Eli - 1100-1060 BC
- (8) Samuel - 1105-1020 BC
- vi) Iron Age Begins - 1200 BC
- vii) The Early Hebrew Monarchy - The United Kingdom [1 & 2 Samuel & 1 Chronicles]
  - (1) King Saul - 1050-1010 BC
  - (2) King David - 1010-970 BC [Psalms]
  - (3) King Solomon - 970-930 BC [Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon]
- viii) The Later Hebrew Monarchy - The Divided Kingdom - 930-586 BC [1 & 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles]
- d) Historical Setting - The Land of Canaan was home to the Semitic Amorite Culture around 2400 BC that was contemporary with ancient Akkadian and Sumerian cultures, and later conquered by the Hittite, Babylonian and Assyrian cultures. Canaan was surrounded by the ancient Near East Empires of the Egyptians (south), the Hittites (north), Babylonians and Assyrians (east). These empires comprised the super-powers of the region at that time of the Exodus. There were also lesser Kingdoms immediately surrounding Canaan of Midian and Edom in the south east; Moab, Ammon and Bashan in the east. Archeology has demonstrated there were well fortified city states and small kingdoms with a rich cultural background with some distinctive cultural themes that differentiated each from their neighbors.
- e) Author and Date of Writing - The earliest date would be following the Pentateuch attributed to Moses, and Jewish tradition holds that Joshua himself wrote the book except for the portion regarding his own funeral arrangements. There are some who argue for a later date attributed to Samuel who may have assembled and integrated earlier documents. There is reasonably uniform agreement that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, thus there is no good reason to doubt that Joshua wrote his own book following the same tradition.
- f) The Power of a Name - throughout Scripture an individual's name was directly associated with their identity. Often when a person's identity changed, their name changed also:
  - i) Abram - comes from the root word Ab [Abba] for "father." Abram's name was changed by God to Abraham - meaning "father of a multitude" as a prophetic statement by God of a future Abraham would never live to see. Abraham was a descendent of Noah's son Shem making Abraham a "Semite."
    - (1) Major religious faiths that had their inception with Abraham include Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Mormonism.
    - (2) Tribes that descended from Abraham include the Israelites, the Ishmaelites, the Midianites, and the Edomites.
    - (3) Lineage descendents include - Isaac, Ishmael, Jesus, and Muhammad.
  - ii) Sarai was Abraham's wife - actually his niece the sister of Lot who Abram married. Sarai means "my princess" most likely from Abraham's perspective. Sarai's name was changed to Sarah

meaning “Princess” most likely prophetic in light of the royalty who would result as her descendants.

- iii) Moses - was named by the daughter of Pharaoh meaning “to draw out” as she had rescued the infant drawing him out of the Nile River. The name was obviously prophetic as Moses would later “draw out” the people of God rescuing them from slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt.
- iv) Joshua - the Hebrew word translated as Joshua is “Yehoshua” meaning “Yahweh [God] is salvation.” The Aramaic translation of the word is “Jesus” and in the Greek it is “Yeshua” or “Jeshua.” “Hoshea” or “Hosea” are other Hebrew translations of the name. Prophetically, as Joshua would be God’s instrument to fulfill the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants by leading God’s people into the promised land, Jesus would fulfill the Old Covenant promises of Messiah who would introduce the New Covenant, and serve to lead God’s people into heaven itself.

### 2) LITERARY STRUCTURE OF JOSHUA - Chiastic in 3 parts... David Dorsey:

#### a) Israel’s Initial Success in Entering Canaan - Chapters 1-8:

- A. Opening focus on the “Book of the Law of Moses” - 1
- B. Encouragement from a believing Canaanite - Rahab hides the spies - 2
- C. Jordan “stands up” - as Yahweh miraculously enables Israel to cross over the River Jordan and enter Canaan - 3-4
- X CENTER: Israel worships Yahweh in the Promised Land - 5  
Passover, arrival of the commander of Yahweh’s army, the manna ceases, Israel eats the produce of Canaan for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, Israel is now on Holy Ground.
- C’ Jericho “falls down” - as Yahweh miraculously enables Israel to cross over the walls to enter Jericho.
- B’ Discouragement from a faithless Israelite - Achan hides illegal plunder - 7:1-8:29
- A’ Closing focus on the “Book and the Law of Moses” - 8:30-35

#### b) Israel’s Conquest of the Rest of Canaan - Chapters 9-12:

- A. All the kings of Canaan act as one to oppose Joshua - 9:1-2
- B. Mercy is given for a believing remnant: Israel makes peace with the Gibeonites - 9:3-27
- C. Defeat of the southern coalition led by the king of Jerusalem - 10:1-15
- X CENTER: Ritual ceremony at Makkedah and conquest of 7 cities of the south - 10:16-43
- C’ Defeat of the northern coalition led by the king of Hazor - 11:1-15
- B’ No mercy given for the hard-hearted Canaanites: Israel makes peace only with Gibeonites - 11:16-23
- A’ All the Kings of Canaan conquered by Joshua are listed one by one - 12:1-24

#### c) Allotment of the Land of Canaan - Chapters 13-24:

- A. Introduction - 13:1-7 - a) Yahweh’s challenge to Joshua when he is old to divide the land

## Bible Survey - OT Early Prophecy - Joshua - 6.1

---

b) Theme - the land that remains whose inhabitants Yahweh will drive out.

B. Trans-Jordan tribes - 13:8-33

C. Levites - 14:1-5

D. Personal allotment for hero of Kadesh - Caleb - 14:6-15

E. Non-Rachel tribal allotment - Judah - 15:1-63

F. Rachel tribal allotment - Joseph - 16:1-17:18

X CENTER - allotment at Shiloh - 18:1-10

F' Rachel tribal allotment - Benjamin [next to Joseph] - 18:11-28

E' Non-Rachel tribal allotments - Simeon [inside Judah] & others - 19:1-48

D' Personal allotment for hero of Kadesh - Joshua - 19:49-50

C' Levites - 20:1-21:45

B' Trans-Jordan tribes - 22

A' Conclusion-23:1-24:33- a) Joshua's closing challenge to Israel when he is old

b) Theme - the land that remains whose inhabitants Yahweh will drive out

3) OUTLINE OF JOSHUA - in 3 parts:

a) The Book of Conquest - the taking of the Land - 1-12

i) The Preparation 1-5

(1) Charge to conquest - 1

(2) Evidence of Canaan's spiritual weakness - 2

(3) Crossing the Jordan - 3-4

(4) Final spiritual preparation - 5

(a) Circumcision

(b) Passover

(c) Manna ceases

(d) Revelation of the Lord of Hosts - assurance God is with Joshua

ii) The Campaigns - 6-11

(1) The central campaign [Jericho, Ai, Bethel] - 6-9

(2) The southern campaign [Lidnah, Lachish, Hebron] - 10

(3) The northern campaign [Shiloh, Shechem, Hazor] - 11

iii) Summarization of Campaigns - 12

b) The Book of Distribution of the Promise - the Allotment of the Land - 13-21

The Land is to be a Sanctuary - a functional recreation of the Garden. This portion is bracketed by blessings to Caleb and Joshua - God's men of faith.

i) Doctrine that much land remains - 13:1-7

ii) Trans-Jordan assigned by Moses - 13:8-32

iii) Territory assigned to Judah and Joseph at Gilgal [Hebron given to Caleb] - 14-17

iv) Territories assigned to the rest of the tribes at Shiloh [Timnath-Serah given to Joshua] - 18-19

- v) Assignments of the cities of refuge - 20
- vi) Assignment of the cities of the Levites - 21
- c) **The Book of Consecration - Remaining in the State of Blessedness in the Land - 22-24**
  - i) The consecration of the tribes of the Trans-Jordan - 22
  - ii) The consecration of the remaining tribes [farewell speech by Joshua] - 23
  - iii) The renewal of the covenant [Joshua recites history and validates covenant] - 24

**Psalm 78:54-55** “Thus he brought them to the border of his holy land, to the hill country his right hand had taken. He drove out nations before them and allotted their lands to them as an inheritance; he settled the tribes of Israel in their homes.”

**The sanctuary of God is the place we are delivered to where the Spirit of God dwells and brings peace. In the OT this was the Land; in the NT Jesus is the land.**

#### **4) THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE LAND**

- a) **The General Setting:** The importance of the Land as the place where God’s promises and His Spirit remain. Geography necessarily shapes politics and economics - the Land was strategically oriented at the crossroads of the known world at that time; politics and economics then give shape to spirituality - where the unique conditions and situation of the land gave rise to the supernatural attempts to control and influence their environment. These elements shaped the original dwellers of Canaan that God’s people were to supplant, and ultimately it shaped the faith of Israel. This strategic position was intended to influence all of humanity demonstrating the power and redemption of God.
  - i) **The Land as the Bridge between Continents and Civilizations:**
    - (1) Israel as a land block was about 350 miles long, and about 60 miles wide.
    - (2) This strip had the most exceptional climate and topographical structure in the region.
    - (3) The mountain ranges north and east bisected the land and insured appreciable rainfall.
    - (4) The sea on the west, mountains to the north, barren desert wastelands east and south provided natural barriers for defense.
    - (5) The “Fertile Crescent” starts here and continues into Mesopotamia and India.
    - (6) The area of Palestine was the poorest and smallest of the surrounding countries. Its main importance was as a land bridge that connected Egypt in the south, Babylonia and Assyria in the east, and the Hittites to the north.
    - (7) Key Great rivers - the Tigris, Euphrates, and the Nile, provided water, transportation, and irrigation that allowed the great surrounding empires of the Fertile Crescent to develop and thrive. While minor rivers - the Orontes, the Litani, and the Jordan provided a smaller localized water source for Palestine.
    - (8) Palestine and Syria became the major crossroads from both an economic and political perspective. Connecting Egypt and Mesopotamia.

- (9) Palestine and Syria became cultural melting pots because of their geographical position, and many of humanities great cultural achievements came into being here - including alphabetic writing and mono-theism.

ii) Geography - Conflict between Sea and Desert:

- (1) Climate - the location of Palestine is a contrast of conflict between the westerly cool ocean breezes which bring rain in winter, and the easterly hot desert breezes that bring oppressive summer heat and dryness. The "*sirocco*" summer winds off the desert bring dust storms and desolation, by contrast the wet winter storms bring life and fruitfulness.
- (2) Drought - is always an issue due to climate instability. Temporary relief was found in building cisterns to catch and hold rain water for use later. Wells were plentiful but also inconsistent. It wasn't until the Roman occupation that a consistent water supply was solved through a network of aqueducts.
- (3) Coastal harbors - were few and they provided limited access for shipping and fishing. In the Northern lands of Achaia harbors were more plentiful.
- (4) Deserts - bordered the east and the south and their nomadic herders would raid the coastal valleys to supplement their subsistence.
- (5) The Jordan River flowed down the rift valley between the coastal range and the desert highlands. The Jordan flows through the Sea of Galilee brings life and nutrients to the inland lake. The Dead Sea was where the Jordan ended... the southernmost end of the river and the lowest place in the region. The river water flowed in bringing dissolved salts and minerals, but because it was so low, nothing flowed out. The Dead Sea is thought to be the place where Sodom and Gomorrah once stood on its banks. At one time it was probably drinkable, but God's judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah also doomed the lake. It has remained a source of natural occurring salts - some types used for preserving foods, other types used by the Egyptians for their embalming and mummification process.
- (6) The composite view of the geography provided a picture of the continual struggle between nature and culture. In addition to these natural characteristics, the region was subdivided by mountain ranges which helped to discourage unity among the people. In time their identity as a people called out and anointed by God as a blessing to the world would become a confused identity.

iii) Geology - a land of conflicts and unrest:

- (1) Tectonic plate shifts marked the region with earthquakes common and their resultant subduction and up thrust and volcanic activity. Glacier activity was another factor that has left its imprints on the region.
- (2) Subduction pulled organic materials below ground where heat and pressure created marble - one of the region's premiere building materials.
- (3) Up Thrust brought to the surface the Granitic and basaltic materials that were formed deep below the surface under extreme heat and pressure.

(4) Sandstone and limestone are other common rock types that have resulted from glacier and sea level changes through time. Cisterns, caves, and grave tombs were commonly carved out of this stone... the most famous being the Stone City of "Petra."

- b) **Geographical Contrasts:** there are 4 main geographical zones - coastal plain, central mountain ranges, the Jordan rift-valley, and the trans-Jordan highlands.
- i) The coastal plain - was where most of the rain water fell as storms compressed on their way over the coastal ranges moving east. The coastal plains were rich ground for agriculture, and the coast for fishing.
  - ii) The central mountain range - is where Jerusalem and other fortified cities were built. The location provided protection and views out over the coastal plain and interior rift valley.
  - iii) Jordan Rift Valley - at its highest point of 300 feet above sea level in the north to its lowest depression in the south at the Dead Sea the elevation descends to 1200 feet below sea level... the lowest point on earth. The valley on either side averages about 10 miles wide with fairly steep assents on either side.
  - iv) The Desert Highlands - beyond the Jordan further east would be the inhospitable desert highlands... Scripture often refers to this area simply as the "wilderness."
- c) **The Promised Land:** a land of Blessings denoted as a land of "Milk and Honey."
- i) Context of the Blessing - the Abrahamic Covenant was for a nation that would arise from Abraham's offspring which would be a blessing to all the other nations. The Mosaic Covenant was of a land where God's people would live in peace and prosperity and be an example to all the nations.
    - (1) Abraham believed God when logic and reason spoke otherwise. In contrast, the young nation refused to believe that God would do what He said He would do.
    - (2) Joshua is now about to lead the nation purged of the faithless during the 40 year wilderness experience into their promised land. As with Abraham, the key to the fulfillment of the promise would be accepting God at His Word... living in faith and trusting God not their own reason or deviant faith practices.
  - ii) Problem 1 is that the land was already inhabited. The Exodus nations fear of the inhabitants and their lack of faith in God prevented them from entering the land 40 years earlier. Now, the purged nation is ready to follow Joshua and Caleb in faith.
  - iii) Problem 2 is that the land has a difficult history of geologic and climatic challenges. The conflict and inconsistencies of the land led the Canaanites and their surrounding nations into Pagan worship as an attempt to control their material world. The nature of Pagan worship is to manipulate or cajole the "gods" to do what their idol-worshipping practitioners wanted them to do. This is the polar opposite of the faith God is calling the new nation into.
  - iv) Problem 3 is that God had judged the Pagan Canaanites and commanded the young nation to utterly destroy them, rather than conquer and assimilate them which would have been the norm. God warns His people that the indigenous Canaanite worship would be a snare that would



prevent the people from enjoying God's promise. The people unwisely relied upon their own judgment and agree to a binding treaty of peace with a contingent of the Pagan Canaanites, and true to God's warning their desire to control their destiny through idolatry, witchcraft, etc. led to the same spiritual, moral and ethical impurity found in Sodom and Gomorrah that was practiced throughout the region. Rather than being a blessing to the world in being a light to illuminate the true God, they were descending into the same practices for which the Canaanites were condemned. Before the divided kingdom at the end of Solomon's reign, he set up high places for idol worship as a concession to his many Pagan wives. This was a critical error from which the nation fell into apostasy.

- v) From a Spiritual Formation standpoint, one may well ask what God saw in this troubled and conflicted land? It makes sense in accepting that God saw the Land as it would be when perfected, much like He sees each of us as we will be in heaven.
- d) Canaanite Pagan worship included a number of false gods [idol worship] that were condemned in Scripture. For the Pagan, these gods would need to be regularly appeased to insure their continued health and prosperity, and to gain any special favors these worshipers wanted. Worship shrines were commonly placed on hills and other "high places" to get the worshiper closer to their god's spiritual dwelling place to catch their attention.
  - i) These idols included:
    - (1) Molech - [Ammonite] also known as Chemosh [Moabite] was considered the "king of heaven" was an ancient Canaanite demon-god to whom worship included child sacrifice. Yahweh found these practices detestable - Lev 18:30; Deut 12:31; 18:9; 1 Kings 11:7.
    - (2) Asherah - considered the "queen of heaven" was an ancient Akkadian god of fertility. Worship included wild sexual orgies and local phallic shrines where flowers and prayers would be offered.
    - (3) Ba'al - considered the "lord of heaven" was an ancient Akkadian god of rain & thunder, and fertility & agriculture. Worship included animal sacrifice, grain and other food offerings, as well as water and drink offerings to ensure rains. Ba'al and Asherah were usually worshiped together - Num 25:3-5; Jud 2:13; 6:31; 1 King 18:18.
  - ii) From God's perspective, the purpose for Canaanite Idol worship stemmed from a number of reasons including:
    - (1) Their desire to control their notoriously difficult environment, rather than rely on God's faithfulness - 1 Kings 18:18-40.
    - (2) Their desire to manipulate the supernatural powers for their own personal benefits, rather than accept God's provision.
    - (3) Their fears because they knew they were not in control of their destiny... Paganism promised a means of protection and control, but once begun it was necessary to maintain and the god's [demons] they served were capricious, unpredictable, and distant. The irony is that the powers they sought were even worse than the reasons they sought their help.



## Bible Survey - OT Early Prophecy - Joshua - 6.1

(4) Scripture refers to the supernatural powers as “prince” - both as demon/idols in Ez 30:13; 38:2; Dan 10:13, 20; Mat 9:34; John 12:31. And also as angels in Dan 12:1.

### 5) Theological Themes:

#### a) **Redemptive history begins in the Old Testament and concludes in the New Testament. Hampton**

**Keathley makes the following observations:** The Bible may be divided into eight basic sections: four for the Old Testament and four for the New (see chart below). However, it should be noted that in each of these, Christ is the hope and underlying theme of all the books of the Bible because Christ claimed that He is the theme of all of Scripture:

- i) In Matthew 5:17 He said, “I have come not to abolish the Scriptures but to fulfill them.”
- ii) When walking with the disciples on the Emmaus road, Luke tells us that, “... beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself [Messiah] in all the Scriptures.”
- iii) Later that evening, the Lord spoke to ten of the disciples and regarding that, Luke tells us in Luke 24:44-47, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”
- iv) In John 5:39-40, when in dialogue with the Jews, Jesus said, “You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and yet you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.”
- v) In Revelation 19:10 we are told that “the testimony of Jesus (about Jesus) is the spirit of prophecy.” In other words, the very nature and purpose of prophecy, and all of Scripture for that matter, is to reveal Jesus as the Christ [Messiah]. Obviously, due to the fall and need of man, Christ is the theme of both the Old and New Testaments for it is only through Him that we can have both eternal life and life abundantly (John 10:10).
- vi) The following chart underscores how Jesus as the Messiah [Christ/King] courses throughout redemptive history as revealed in the Scriptures:

<b>Old Testament (four-fold division)</b>		
1) Law—the <i>Foundation</i> for Christ	Preparation, Foundation, and Messianic Hope for redemption	The Old Testament in its four-fold division lays the foundation for the coming of the Messiah Savior anticipating Him as Prophet, Priest, and King and as the suffering Servant of Isaiah... the promised Savior who must die for man’s sin before He reigns as King (Christ means King).
2) History— <i>Preparation</i> for Christ		
3) Poetry— <i>Aspiration</i> for Christ		
4) Prophecy— <i>Expectation</i> of Christ		

## Bible Survey - OT Early Prophecy - Joshua - 6.1

<b>New Testament (four-fold division)</b>		
1) Gospels	Manifestation	Tells the story of the coming of the long-anticipated Savior revealed as Jesus of Nazareth, and His person and work.
2) Acts	Propagation	Through the work of the Holy Spirit, Acts proclaims the message of the Savior who has come and the birth of the Church... Jesus chosen vehicle for His mission in the world.
3) Epistles	Explanation & Application	Develops the full significance of the person and work of Christ, and how this should impact the walk and ministry of all the Christians throughout time as Christ's ambassador in the world.
4) Revelation	Consummation	Anticipates the end time events and the return of the King (Christ), His end time reign, and the eternal state.

**b) The Land was a gift from God to His people - Josh 1:1-10.**

- i) God's servant Moses brought the people to the land, but another servant would lead them into it - 1:1.
- ii) Israel must trust God and take possession of it initially by crossing the River Jordan - 1:2.
- iii) The land is a gift in past, present and future tenses - 1:2-6.
  - (1) It is all theirs... it is the best of places because it is where God providentially provides; nothing is withheld.
  - (2) Recognizing the wonder of the gift, it must now be appropriated and contended for. The history of God's people has brought them to this momentous time and place.
- iv) Israel is told to be "wise and courageous" - 1:6-9; Deut 31:6-7, 23.
- v) The land is the place where the Law would be fulfilled - 1:8.

**c) The transfer of leadership from Moses to Joshua**

- i) Joshua is a unique leader... he is never punished or rebuked for personal sin. He becomes the example of the archetype leader of God's people... imperfectly carried out by David, and perfectly carried out by Jesus.
- ii) Deut 17:14-20 acknowledges that Israel will have a King.
- iii) Deut 18:15-20; 34:10-12 acknowledges Moses as the archetype prophet, and that others like him will come to lead the people.
- iv) Deut 1:37-38; 3:21-22, 28; 31:2-8, 14-15, 23; 34:9; Josh 1:2-9 - demonstrates God's provision for leadership of His people.

- v) Leadership means leading people through difficult situations rather than running around them.
  - d) The transition from the disobedience that caused the wilderness experience and the faith that would ensue in the land.
  - e) The faithfulness of God who keeps His covenant:
    - i) The witness of Joshua - 23:14; 24:17-18.
    - ii) The witness of the Gentiles who are “grafted into the nation by faith, in contrast to the faithless disobedient Jews who are cut off from the nation - 2:9-11.
    - iii) The witness of the Hivites - 9:9-10.
  - f) Living with a Holy God means that faith, loyalty, and obedience in love are constantly required - 23:15; 24:14-15, 19-20.
    - i) When the nation’s leadership were faithful and obedient the nation prospered and was blessed; when the leadership failed the nation suffered.
    - ii) There is a reciprocal relationship between the nation and its leaders to God - each must be faithful and obedient in the station God has placed them in, and committed to pursue God in love - Deut 6:5; 11:1, 13, 22; 30:16, 20; Joshua 22:5; 23:11; Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27.
- 6) Development of the Theme of the Land in Redemptive History:
- a) The Garden of Eden - the land is the perfect place where heaven (the abode of God) and earth (the abode of humanity) intersect. The land is the source of food and life for humanity - Gen 1:9-13. Humanity is commissioned with the responsibility to care for and cultivate the land - there is an obvious reciprocal relationship here... contingent upon trust and obedience.
  - b) The Fall from the state of Grace in the Garden - the land is cursed because of humanity’s duplicity in following their own reasoning... they trust in Satan’s deception rather than God’s promise. Death, pain, suffering, and the struggle for existence are now the norm for humanity - Gen 3:17-19, 22-24.
  - c) Antediluvian Period [after the Garden and before the Flood] - humanity is alienated from God and becomes a wanderer on sin-cursed earth with no permanent place of life, blessing, or rest. Humanity becomes so wicked they are alienated from one another - the earth is washed clean and humanity purged by the Flood because it has become so polluted with violence and depravity, only Noah is found to be righteous and worth saving for posterity - Gen 6.
  - d) The Patriarchal Period - the Abrahamic Covenant is based upon the promise of “seed” [a nation], and “land” [an inheritance]:
    - i) Abraham is given the promise which he accepts by faith trusting God will do what He promised, which is later inherited by Isaac and Jacob, and then Jacob’s 12 sons who become the nation.
    - ii) The promise is based on future events that are separated by intervals of time. The promise takes shape in time... especially in looking back upon it from the future position. This is an outstanding quality of Scripture that looks backward at God’s past faithfulness in anticipation of God’s future fulfillment at an unknown time... the duration of the possession is forever.
  - e) The Mosaic Period - God’s covenant with Moses: Deut 2:5, 9; 14:19; Ex 6:8; Lev 25:23.

- i) The Land was a gift from a loving and covenant keep God fulfilling His promise to the Patriarchs.
- ii) The land [as well as all creation] belongs to God, but He has given the nation of Israel the right to use, care for, and enjoy it.
- iii) The Abrahamic promise was unconditional, the Mosaic/Sinai promise is conditional - Israel must continue to love and obey God. The Law provides a standard for conduct that is both moral and ethical in treatment of humanity... it is a restraint on the natural Fallen human tendencies toward wickedness and depravity.
- f) Joshua - represents the time of fulfillment of the Mosaic/Sinai promise"
  - i) The land is a gift from God - the people didn't earn it and they don't deserve it - it is grace - Deut 4:37-38.
  - ii) The Canaanites lost the right to the land because of God's judgment against them - Deut 9:4-5.
  - iii) God is Sovereign - He ultimately assigns all peoples to the land He has allotted them - Deut 2:5, 9; 4:19.
  - iv) Entrance to the land is contingent on faith - Num 9:13; Deut 20; Joshua 7.
  - v) Remaining in the land is contingent on obedience - Deut 8:1; 28:1-14.
  - vi) Immoral behavior defiles the land and renders individuals and/or groups to judgment - Lev 19:29; Num 35:29-34; Deut 21:23; 24:4; Jer 14.
  - vii) Enjoyment of the land was dependent on moral & ethical behavior - Deut 11:8ff; 1 Kings 8; Psalms 4.
  - viii) Israel's future is predicted - they will experience blessings or curses in accordance with their faith and actions - Deut 30:2-10.
- g) The Monarchy - added the element of the King being God's "anointed" - set apart and called to leadership ministry as a servant to God. The prophet was the one who identified the King, anointed/consecrated him for service, and held him accountable to God. The priest mediated for the king and the people in performing the ritual sacraments.
  - i) Gift of the land was a blessing and continued occupancy was contingent on ethics - 1 Kings 9:6-9; Micah 6:8-16.
  - ii) The monarchy moved God's anointed closer to the people and held out the promise of the Messiah who would be the God/man on earth. The king is adopted into a Father-son relationship (2 Sam 7) and is given the whole earth as an inheritance... promised but not fulfilled until Messiah - Ps 2; 72; 110.
- h) The Pre-exilic Prophets - Amos, Micah and Isaiah announce that the time of the exile [expulsion from the land] is at hand. God has had enough of faithless leadership and their judgment is upon them. However, since God's covenant is eternal there will come a time when God's judgment will have abated and the blessing will return to Israel. Ultimately, this blessing will be extended beyond their imagination as Messiah's inaugurated Kingdom of God encompasses the world - Micah 7:11-13; Isa 54:2-3.
- i) The Exilic Prophets - Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah announced that Israel's return to the land would

precede a New Covenant - Ezek 34:11ff, 25; 36:24ff; 37.

- i) The renovation of the land in the new covenant would be associated with the gift of a “new heart” - Ezek 36:25-36.
- ii) The land as a place of rest is established in a covenant of peace - Jer 30:31; Isa 40:-66; Ezek 33-48.
- j) The Post-exilic Prophets - Ezra, Nehemiah, Zechariah, Malachi, Esther announce that though Israel is back in the land they are not fully cleansed - Ezra 9:1-4; Neh 13:15ff. The promise of the return is fulfilled, but its fullness has not yet been consummated:
  - i) Fulfilled - Ezra, Nehemiah.
  - ii) Not consummated - Zech 8:7-8; Esther.
  - iii) The ultimate blessing and New Covenant are still in the future - Mal 3.
- k) The New Testament marks significant changes:
  - i) There is a notable absence of reference to the “land” - and in the 2 places a reference does occur the promise is extended beyond Israel to include the entire earth!
    - (1) In the Beatitudes - Jesus announces the meek shall inherit the earth - Matt 5:5. This is the expansion of the promise of Psalms 37:9, 11, 22, 34.
    - (2) In Romans - Paul announces that it was not through the Law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise, but through the righteousness that comes by faith that he would be heir to the world - Rom 4:13.
  - ii) Jesus substitutes the promise of the “Kingdom of God” for the “land” - obviously a much more wonderful and expansive promise.
    - (1) The Kingdom of God is associated with the Person of Jesus in the Presence of God.
    - (2) The Kingdom is a gift - Matt 3:1ff
      - (a) It is a blessing - Matt 6:33
      - (b) A place of Rest - Matt 11:28-30
      - (c) It can only be received by faith
      - (d) Entering into it requires endurance and perseverance in this world
    - (3) The Kingdom is both present and future
    - (4) The inauguration of the Kingdom means that creation is longing to be made Holy... and Jesus being exalted to the Davidic Throne has all authority and has given His disciples have a role to play:
      - (a) The Great Commandment - Love the Lord your God, and love your neighbor as yourself - Matt 22:36-40.
      - (b) The Great Commission - Go and make disciples of all the nations - Matt 28:18-20.
  - iii) Paul refers to the promise of “eternal Life in Christ” in preference to the “life in the land.”
    - (1) Eternal life is a gift - Rom 6:23.
    - (2) The ultimate blessing is Life in the Spirit - Rom 8.
    - (3) Endurance and perseverance are a work assured by the presence of the Spirit - Eph 1:13-14.
    - (4) Spiritual Gifts abound and are distributed according to election as God’s sovereignty knits the

Body of Christ together in love.

(5) The “Holy Land” is no longer merely Israel, but wherever the Spirit inhabits His people.

iv) Hebrews replaces the Land with Jesus as the place of rest:

(1) The promise of rest in the land is now fulfilled in rest in Christ - Heb 4:1-16.

(2) Abraham was looking for the City of God... the place where God resided rather than the land upon which he walked. The land he walked was a reflection of the wonder to come.

(3) None may enter into the full promise of God apart from Jesus - Heb 11:10, 39-40.

v) Revelation - gives us a vision of the New Heaven and Earth - this is redeemed creation... the place where God and humanity reside together - Rev 21-22.

(1) Redeemed creation is not limited only to the Garden... now the entire earth and cosmos are made Holy.

(2) When considering the Land as “a place of milk and honey” and a place of “rest” as God foretold in the Mosaic/Sinai Covenant, and knowing that the land of Palestine was a conflicted and troubled place that was evident from the geological, political, and geographic turmoil reviewed earlier in this study, one can only surmise that God was speaking prophetically of the time when all things are restored by Messiah. Much in the same way God looks at His redeemed children on Fallen earth and sees the perfected son and daughters He loves... the perfect reflection of His Son Jesus. WHAT A WONDER!

### 7) BREIF REVIEW OF THE CONTENT OF JOSHUA:

#### PART 1 - THE BOOK OF CONQUEST - CHAPTERS 1-12

a) The Preparation - 1:1-5:12

i) God commissions Joshua, this reaffirms what Moses had revealed - 1:1-9

ii) Joshua commissions leaders, much like Moses had commissioned the 72 - 1:10-18

iii) Joshua wisely reconns the city with his spies while God provides help in occupied territory through Rahab - 2:1-14.

(1) Moses had sent spies out before the wilderness experience, but their fear [except for Joshua and Caleb] prevented them from accepting God’s gift.

(2) The spies Joshua sends know that God has sustained them through the wilderness experience where they were born and raised. The older generation that refused God’s gift has been purged.

iv) Rahab the harlot is promised safety... an interesting twist that God can use even the unrighteous to fulfill His righteous plans - 2:15-24.

(1) It is interesting that Rahab knows God has chosen Israel and given them the land. She wisely aligns herself and her families hope with theirs.

(2) The spies are unfazed by the threat and accept Rehab’s help. They have seen what God has done and trust Him.

v) Israel crosses the Jordan - 3:1-17. As the nation crosses the Jordan into the land, the first things

that Joshua does speak of his heart and dependence on God:

- (1) He sets up memorial stones representing the 12 tribes - this provides a witness of God's faithfulness. Through the years the memorial would serve to strengthen the resolve of the nation and encourage their faith - 4:1-24.
- (2) He circumcises the new generation of fighting men - this makes no sense in terms of strategy as these men would be fairly helpless in battle until they healed, but it says volumes on Joshua's dependence on God. Joshua knew that the conquest of the land would be an act of preparation and faith - in circumcising the army he reaffirms the Abrahamic covenant - 5:1-9.

vi) Joshua celebrates the Passover on the plains before the great city of Jericho:

- (1) This is the first day they ate the produce of the land - and the manna ceases as the nation enters its promise - 5:10-12.
- (2) The angel of the Lord appears to Joshua and announces that he has been sent to help Joshua - 5:13-14.
- (3) The angel tells Joshua to remove his sandals because he is standing on "Holy Ground" - in an obvious reflection of God's command to Moses from the Burning Bush - 5:15.

b) The Campaigns - Chapters 6-11

- i) Central Campaign - Joshua is commanded to march around the city for 6 days and on the 7<sup>th</sup> day he is instructed to march and shout - this is an obvious reflection of the creation cycle 6:1-27.
  - (1) Joshua and the nation are powerfully reminded who is in control - they did nothing to earn the defeat of Jericho except that which God desires most... to listen and obey.
  - (2) The nation is told to take nothing from the city except the gold, silver and bronze... the city is to be utterly destroyed and never rebuilt. We learn later that a small contingent disobeyed and kept booty for themselves.
  - (3) From a perspective of reading the text for Spiritual Formation, one can understand that this passage has application for every believer:
    - (a) Each of us is asked to stand our ground in faith believing and allow God to do battle for us. There are things we can do, and much more that God knows we cannot do.
    - (b) Each of us needs to resist the desire to go to battle on our own terms, rather than stand in faith and allow God to lead. The worst thing we can do is getting out in front of God, rather than follow Him.
    - (c) When God brings victory over sin or disbelief in some area of our life, each of us must resist the desire to hold onto some elements we value that God has decreed for destruction. Relying on our own understanding rather than faith is almost always a problem.
    - (d) God provides us much flexibility in how our spiritual life unfolds, but we need to decide how important it is to us to pursue faith on God's terms... knowing His way is always best.
  - (4) Joshua moves on to the next battle ground - he spies out the land of the Amorites. When they engage in battle Israel is routed. The loss causes Joshua and the elders to humble



themselves before God and petition Him, and God reveals the hidden sin of Achan who kept booty he was told to destroy - 7:1-26.

- (a) This reveals that nothing is hidden from God - He knows the mind and heart of the individual.
- (b) There will always be consequences for doing what is wrong - God will cut off wrongdoers from His people.
- (c) The consequences of an individual or small group can have devastating impacts upon the entire nation. The nation is seen here as an "Organism" - it an integrated holistic community, rather than an "organization" - a group of people who collaborate together for mutual and self interest. This is a major shift in thinking... one that is often overlooked and forgotten to the detriment of those who do so.
- (d) This sin is a prophetic reflection of the New Testament story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5... you cannot lie to the Spirit.
- (e) Once the sin is purged and the wrongdoers are destroyed, they utterly destroy Ai - 8:1-29. Joshua re-consecrates the nation by building an altar for sacrifice and reading the Law of Moses to all the people. The "strangers living among them" is most likely a reference to Rahab and her family who would be required to live in accordance with the requirements of the people of God. God's purpose was "inclusionist" even in the early birthing of the nation, and Moses predicted that there would be "sojourners" among the people who would follow the Law of the Lord.

(5) The Gibeonites understand that they cannot stand before God's people, so they cleverly decide to deceive Joshua and the nation to avoid what they know will be certain death by pretending to be a distant people who desire to align themselves with God's people - 9:1-13.

- (a) The text clearly shows that Joshua and the leaders failed to seek God's counsel, and instead make a binding treaty of peace with the people God had previously commanded to be destroyed. Interestingly, God didn't condemn Israel or Gibeon for this error when the ruse was discovered. Instead it is their judgment to make the Gibeonites perpetual servants... which they gladly accept - 9:14-27.
- (b) This deception is a reflection of Adam & Eve in the Garden when they accepted Satan's deception at face value and acted in their own wisdom instead of consulting God. The theological lesson here is always to employ Spiritual Discernment and inquire God's will and purpose before acting. It is also a reminder that humanity cannot see into the "hearts of men" but God can - John 2:25.

ii) The Southern Campaign [Lidnah, Lachish, Hebron] - chapter 10

- (1) When the kings of the surrounding city states realize that the Gibeonites have betrayed them, they act together to attack Gibeon. This too is interesting... instead of destroying the Gibeonites, the Israelites are defending them and God assures Joshua that he will prevail.
- (2) The text makes it clear that the "stones from heaven" killed far more than the warriors of

Joshua... another clear reminder that God is going to war on their behalf - 10:1-11. This is the true meaning of “Jihad” - it is God going to war for His people, not the other way around. God’s power does not necessarily rely on the action of His people as He is perfectly able to act for Himself.

(3) The text reveals that Joshua “spoke to the Lord” when God delivered the Amorites to the sons of Israel - he asked God to halt the movement of the sun and moon... which God did for Joshua.

(a) In terms of redemptive history, the text concludes that God’s response to Joshua was a day like no other before or after. When God listened to man and responded - 10:12-15.

(b) In terms of spiritual formation, it poses an interesting challenge that echoes in Jesus’ “ask” statements - Jesus invites His disciples to ask God to act. As our minds and hearts are conformed to God’s He delights in working in us and through us - Matt 7:7, 11; 9:38; 18:19; 21:22.

(4) The final conquest at Makkedah closes out this victory over the 5 kings of the south - 10:16-28.

iii) The Northern Campaign [Shiloh, Shechem, Hazor] - chapter 11

(1) The Northern kings unite in the face of the threat from Israel - with an impressive and great army with extensive war equipment. God tells Joshua not to be afraid - 11:1-6.

(2) Israel totally destroys the northern kingdom’s army, and returns to complete the rout at Hazor - 11:7-12.

(3) God did not require the Israelites to burn the cities they captured in the north except for Hazor, so the Israelites took them and occupied them - 11:13-15.

(4) Joshua completed the campaign with the destruction of the “Anakim” - these were the “giants” that Moses’ spies saw and cowered before leading to their wilderness journey. The nation has now been galvanized and under Joshua’s leadership they consolidate their victory and cleanse the land - 11:16-23.

iv) Summary of the Campaigns - Chapter 12

**PART 2 - THE BOOK OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROMISED LAND - CHAPTERS 13-21** Distribution to the Tribes - read casually, this section is often overlooked as boring and uneventful. However, there are several pertinent issues being addressed.

a) The advanced age of Joshua and the time frame yet required to complete the task of conquest and reapportionment is yet to be completely fulfilled. Chapter 13 begins with an assessment of Joshua and his advanced age: 13:1-7 - there is much left of the land that remains to be consolidated.

b) 13:8-32 - the Trans-Jordan had already been assigned by Moses. There is scarcely little evidence outside of Scripture that performs the function of land allocation, yet that is exactly what this section of Scripture affirms - that this is an eternal promise to be honored throughout history. Interestingly, Jerusalem and the Trans-Jordan remain to this day the most contentious areas of land claims anywhere in the world.

## Bible Survey - OT Early Prophecy - Joshua - 6.1

- c) 14:1-17:18 - depicts the tribal inheritance of Judah and Joseph at Gilgal... with Hebron given to Caleb.
- d) 18:1-19:51 - depicts the tribal inheritance of the rest of the tribes at Shiloh... with Timnath-Serah given to Joshua.
  - i) It may be reasoned from this apportionment that God blessed the most obedient and faithful with the best of the land... being what the tribe valued most and was most appropriate for their use and identity. While the theology of differential rewards is one that is much in contention in the faith community, it may well be presumed that each would provide that which was most desirable to the individual tribe and most conducive to their spiritual development in the land.
  - ii) Caleb and Joshua are given specific blessings, and it is apparent that the people were more than happy to see their leaders so blessed.
- e) The diagram below displays how the land was distributed as recorded in the Book of Joshua:



- f) Distribution of the Lord's dedicated portion - the cities of refuge and of the priests:
  - i) 20:1-9 - depicts the cities of Refuge set aside throughout the land. These cities are places where an accused wrong doer could run and escape immediate retribution. Here they would be guaranteed a fair hearing before the elders and before God.
    - (1) That these cities are spread throughout the territories makes it apparent that God does not want people acting in retribution against perceived wrongdoers unconstrained by mercy and grace.
    - (2) Even in our present enlightened age of reason there are many within the church congregations that are quick to judge and condemn... the spiritual requirements of tolerance

and forbearance should restrain and constrain our actions until the truth is made known. The goal of all judgments should be to promote reconciliation over punishment in the Kingdom of God... knowing that justice does often demand sacrificial repayment by the wrongdoer.

- ii) 21:1-45 - depicts the cities set aside for the Levites... while the Sinai Covenant made provision that the priestly service of the Levites was an inheritance in itself and that they would receive their portion set aside in the ritual sacrifice, they would need a place apportioned throughout the land to provide access for God's people to the priests and to provide a positive influence throughout the land.

**PART 3 - THE BOOK OF CONSECRATION - CHAPTERS 22-24:** Consecration of the Tribes - differing from the Garden experience where humanity was created pure, Fallen humanity needs to be cleansed and consecrated to be presented to the Lord, and then the restorative influence of the Law and ritual cleansing & sacrifice instituted in order to remain in the land in God's Presence.

- a) Consecration of the Trans-Jordan tribes [Eastern Tribes]... a good start - 22:1-9.
- b) An Altar of Offense - the Trans-Jordan [Eastern] tribes built an altar which caused offense with the tribes on the other [Western] side of the Jordan.
  - i) Fearing the Altar was an affront to God and the unity of the People of God, the Western tribes confront the Eastern tribes with the threat of war - 22:10-20.
  - ii) The Eastern Tribes explain the Altar is a witness of solidarity not a threat of separation... this satisfies the Western Tribes - 22:21-34.
  - iii) It is clear from the Pentateuch's Tabernacle and the nation's Jerusalem Temple that God desired one central place of worship for all of His people. A unified center of faith practice and worship would help assure both their unity and integrity over time. As time passed the Book of Judges observes that the unifying notion of an integrated people of God would become confused, and cycles of blessing and cursing occurred.
  - iv) It is equally clear from Scripture that God desires individuals to be consecrated to Him and have relational intimacy with Him. Authentic worship occurs wherever God's people are responsive to God and His call upon their lives. Whether with King David in Israel or Daniel in Babylon, God is immediate and available to the penitent worshipful heart.
- c) Consecration of the Western Tribes and Farewell Speech - 23:1-16
  - i) Joshua makes his farewell address - in modern parlance we speak of an exit strategy of important leaders. Each leader must find a way of passing along what is important so posterity may remain steadfast and resolute in their convictions. Israel's failures in the future were always preceded by the personal failures of the leaders.
  - ii) Joshua provides a model to remind them of what God has done on their behalf, which in turn should invoke loyalty and fortitude. Joshua reminds the leaders that God acted on their behalf, it wasn't the efforts of the leaders or the people that prevailed, but rather God giving them a place and a future.
- d) Renewal of the Covenant by the Great Assembly at Shechem - 24:1-28

- i) Joshua acknowledges “as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” - 24:15
- ii) And the people also acknowledge “we too will serve Yahweh for He is our God” - 24:18
- iii) Joshua renews the covenant between the people and God - 24:25; and confirmed the covenant in the Book of the Law - 24:26; and erects a Stone Pillar as a maker of remembrance - 24:27.
- e) The Death of Joshua and the end of the Beginning - 24:29-33
  - i) The text states that Israel served Yahweh throughout Joshua’s lifetime, and also the lifetime of the elders who served under Joshua.
  - ii) The challenge for all leadership is to pass along the passion and purpose of the founding or preceding generation to successive generations. While this has always been challenging and rarely successful, God always reserved a faithful remnant who would honor and obey Him.
  - iii) The promise has been to “God’s People” which has been defined both as Israel and the Church. The reality of entering into the blessing of God’s Promise is that each person must enter into it by themselves. Joshua spoke for himself first and foremost... and secondly for his family. The promise may be given to a nation, a people or a tribe... but it is accepted person by person and God holds each accountable for their choices. Leaders are also held to a higher level of accountability by God... both in the nation and in the church; and people are accountable also for who they follow. The choices of right and wrong, and good and bad are for each to make in dependence upon our knowledge and faith.