

Joshua Reviews Israel's History

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel at Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, their heads, their judges, and their officers; and they presented themselves before God. ² Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says: 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the *Euphrates* River, *namely*, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods. ³ Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the *Euphrates* River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac.

Joshua 24

⁴ To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and to Esau I gave Mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt. ⁵ Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt by what I did in its midst; and afterward I brought you out. ⁶ So I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and Egypt pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. ⁷ But when they cried out to the Lord, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them and covered them; and your own eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness for a long time.

⁸ Then I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who lived beyond the Jordan, and they fought with you; but I handed them over to you, and you took possession of their land when I eliminated them before you. ⁹ Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, rose up and fought against Israel, and he sent *messengers* and summoned Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. ¹⁰ But I was not willing to listen to Balaam. So he had to bless you, and I saved you from his hand. ¹¹ You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho; and the citizens of Jericho fought against you, *and* the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Girgashite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Therefore I handed them over to you.

¹² Then I sent the hornet before you and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites from you—not by your sword nor your bow. ¹³ And I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them; you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'

"We Will Serve the Lord"

¹⁴ "Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and do away with the gods which your fathers served beyond the *Euphrates* River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵ But if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve

the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served, which were beyond the *Euphrates* River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

¹⁶ The people answered and said, “Far be it from us that we would abandon the Lord to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for the Lord our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves, and did these great signs in our sight and watched over us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. ¹⁸ The Lord drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who lived in the land. We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God.”

¹⁹ Then Joshua said to the people, “You will not be able to serve the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your wrongdoing or your sins. ²⁰ If you abandon the Lord and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and destroy you after He has done good to you.” ²¹ And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the Lord.” ²² So Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves the Lord, to serve Him.” And they said, “*We are witnesses.*”

²³ “Now then, do away with the foreign gods which are in your midst, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.” ²⁴ And the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the Lord our God and obey His voice.” ²⁵ So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. ²⁶ And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God; and he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. ²⁷ Then Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, because it has heard all the words of the Lord which He spoke to us; so it shall be a witness against you, so that you do not deny your God.” ²⁸ Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his inheritance.

Joshua’s Death and Burial

²⁹ Now it came about after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being 110 years old. ³⁰ And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance, in Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of Mount Gaash.

³¹ Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known every deed of the Lord which He had done for Israel.

³² Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the plot of land which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money; and they became the inheritance of Joseph's sons. ³³ And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him at Gibeah, *the town* of his son Phinehas, which was given to him in the hill country of Ephraim.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Pauls Observations and insights

1. There is a time to call the people together to discuss where you are.
2. Camaraderie and well-being amongst God's people is very important because in unity the Spirit comes.
3. Joshua gives a history lesson, his own personal testimony of his experience working alongside Moses.
4. He says, he was there in the beginning when they left Egypt, he declares his first-hand experience of all the encounters the people had gone through.
5. There was a calling on all the tribes of Israel because everyone has their own unique importance.
6. There comes a time in their lives when God's people need to present themselves before Him.
7. It takes a man of conviction to say 'thus says the Lord'. True leaders have the courage to lead.
8. Joshua says - way back in the old days, our forefathers came from a different place and they were not the people of God.
9. In fact they were followers of other God's, they were just as much in the dark as everyone else.
10. God said, 'it was I who took Abraham to lead him and bless him, I gave to him and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Esau. I gave them land and possessions, I gave provision and protection.
11. To Esau I gave the mountain lands. I protected Moses from Pharaoh and educated him in the courts of Egypt. Under persecution I led your fathers out of the land of slavery.

12. 'It was I who heard the cry for salvation and protected them through the wilderness with provision and blessing. I was there safeguard during the forty years in the desert.'
13. 'I brought you into the land of the Amorites and gave you their land to possess.'
14. 'I refuse to let your enemy curse you and delivered you from the sword and all those who came against you, I protected you with my hand. I delivered you through the land of your enemy, I delivered you from pestilence and famine, I gave the homes of your enemy to you.'
15. Joshua brings this synopsis of their history to a climax with a challenging question, he requests of the people to serve God with truth and sincerity.
16. Joshua asks the people to let go of all of their historical religious roots that they have served alongside serving the Lord – to have no other God but Him.
17. He is inviting them to put an end to all other religious practices and to follow God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength.
18. He wants them to learn to say 'no' to think 'no' and to live 'no' to everything that offends God.
19. So he confronts them with the question 'make a choice as to who Israel will serve'. He presents three choices, the gods of your fore fathers, the gods of the Amorites, or the God who led you out of slavery and protected you through the wilderness.
20. As the great leader he was, he takes the lead on the declaration by saying and making it clear where his heart was.
21. He says 'As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.'
22. All the people gathered respond with the declaration, 'how could we do anything else but serve the Lord who has led us out of slavery and brought us to this point of entering into the Promised Land.'
23. 'Joshua' they say, 'we agree and acknowledge Him as our God and we will serve Him.'
24. Joshua brings a caveat to their declaration, 'before you decide you need to know that this God is a holy God and will require the whole of your heart. He will not forgive, He will do you harm if you are faithless, even though He has done good things by you'.
25. The people's response is to insist 'no Joshua, we will serve the Lord'.
26. Joshua declares these stones are a testimony of your choice to follow this God and all of His ways.
27. He says 'then put all false God's away from you, renounce every evil practice that you do that brings offence to God and His ways.'
28. The people say 'Yes we will serve, we will obey'.
29. So Joshua recalls their decision by declaring them and their names in are in the book of remembrance.

30. We must never deny God, not with our words, not with our actions, not with our thoughts, not with our feelings.
31. At the age of 110, Joshua, the son of Nun dies.
32. While Joshua lived the people remained faithful to God, while the leadership that Joshua set up amongst the people lived the people remained faithful to God. Once they all died the people became unfaithful.
33. When the people of Israel left the land of Egypt, they kept the promise to Joseph by bringing his bones with them to the land of Canaan, because Joseph was a faithful servant of God and he knew God's words and he knew God's ways.
34. Eleazar, son of Aaron died at this time and was buried.