

## Sunday Night Message

May 27, 2018

Joshua 24 – *Joshua's Covenant with Israel*

Series – *Joshua*

Text – Joshua 24; Text Verses – Joshua 24: 14 - 15

### Introduction (v. 1)

In chapter 23, Joshua gathered the people together and delivered what sounded like a farewell address where he reviews all of the wonderful works of God, challenges them to continue trusting God in the future, and finally he warns them to keep themselves separated from the remaining people of Canaan.

Here in chapter 24, Joshua regathers the people but the location is Shechem, not Shiloh. Shechem was the place that God originally gave the covenant regarding the land to Abraham:

*"And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him."* (Genesis 12:6-7)

Perhaps Joshua was bringing Israel into a full circle. This is where they started. This where God promised them the Land. Now, 700 years later, the promise has been fulfilled.

### I Joshua Selectively Reviews Some of Israel's Victories (vs. 2 - 13)

Joshua first reminds them where they came from. Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldees, on the banks of the Euphrates River. The Hebrew word translated, "flood" (nahar), is the word for a river or flowing body of water, not a deluge, which is a different word (mabbuwl). "Other side of the flood" is referring to a river: whether it be the Jordan, which overflowed its banks at the time of harvest (Joshua 3:15), or possibly the Euphrates River. Abraham's people were a polytheistic people who worshipped many gods. Joshua reminds the people that God delivered them from that.

Joshua does not record all that God did from the time of Abraham through the 700 years until He brought them into and gave them the Land of Israel, but He does mention some significant victories.

Practical Point – Throughout the Bible, God's people make a point of remembering the victories that God had won for them. We need to remember the victories that God has won for us.

### II Joshua Sternly Reminds the People to Serve the Lord (vs. 14 – 15; 19 – 20; 22 - 23)

From verses 14 through 24, we have recorded a dialogue between Joshua and the elders of Israel where Joshua is strongly admonishing them to keep serving the Lord.

### III Israel Satisfactorily Responds (vs. 16 – 18; 21; 24)

After all three of the warnings, God's people respond positively. They promise to do the right thing.

### IV Joshua Scripturally Records His Covenant with Israel (vs. 25 – 28)

Notice that the scene changes from Shechem to Shiloh in these verses. The stone that Joshua set up was not an altar, but rather a reminder. It would remind the generations to come of the covenant that they made with Joshua and with God.

### V Joshua and Eleazar Suitably Rest from their Labors (vs. 29 – 33)

Joshua and Eleazar are buried, and so are the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel dug up and carried away from Egypt at the Exodus.

*"And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." (Genesis 50:25)*

*"And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you." (Exodus 13:19)*

Unfortunately, after the deaths of Joshua, Eleazar, and the men of their generation, Israel forsook the Lord.

### Conclusion

It seems as if America is doing the same thing today. Our generation hasn't fought and died as the past generations before us; and we are forsaking the principles that they fought and died for. Our nation was founded on the principles of righteousness taught in the Bible, but we are throwing the Bible and the Lord out of our nation. Instead of remembering and revering, we are forgetting and forsaking the principles that made this nation a great and godly place.

### Critique of Joshua's Life

- 1 **He Was Willing to Serve.** Before he was Israel's leader, he was "Moses minister". It takes a strong and secure man to serve another man faithfully. Joshua was the "behind the scenes guy" in much of the first five books of the Bible, but we never read of Joshua murmuring or rebelling in any way against the leadership of Moses. He served Moses for 40 years as they wandered through the wilderness.

The word minister means to serve. In order to serve someone, you need to be humble. Pride demands to be served; pride demands the spotlight. It takes a humble, yet secure man to serve – most of the times behind the scenes, not receiving the credit.

*"But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel."  
- (Philippians 2:22)*

*"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid  
unto his fathers, and saw corruption:" - (Acts 13:36)*

*"Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing." - (Psalm 100:2)*

In order to serve someone, you will also need to be willing to work. The Bible says that if a man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work. If a man is going to serve his family, he will have to be willing to work. Paul told the men at the church at Thessalonica that if they would not work, they should not eat.

- 2 **He Was a Student of the Word of God.** He was an expert in the Law that God had given Moses. God stated that the "Book of the Law" was in his mouth. (Joshua 1:8) He knew the Bible. He had studied the Scriptures with his mentor for 40 years.

In order for men to serve God, we must know what God expects of us. We are bombarded daily with the philosophies of the world system that surrounds us. Most of these philosophies are in complete contradiction to the principles contained in the Word of God. We spend far too much time being influenced by the world, and not enough time allowing the word of God to influence us.

*"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." - (Psalm 1:1-6)*

*"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." - (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)*

Joshua's source of strength was the Word of God:

*"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." - (Hebrews 4:12)*

*"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is*

*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." - (2 Timothy 3:15-17)*

*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." - (Psalm 119:105)*

*"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." - (Proverbs 3:5-6)*

- 3 **He Was Faithful to Stand for God.** Back in Exodus, when the rest of the congregation, including Aaron, was worshipping a golden calf, Joshua was separated from them, waiting patiently for the return of Moses.

When ten of the spies came back with an evil report after spying the land, Joshua and Caleb came back ready to fight. They knew that their God was far superior to any giants that were opposing them in the land of Canaan.

At the end of his life, he was able to say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord". He told his peers, "You do what you want to do, but we are going to stand for the Lord".

*"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" - (Ephesians 6:13-18)*