



## BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: JOSHUA

TO: LEGISLATORS

FROM: PASTOR RALPH DROLLINGER 661-803-7970 24/7/365

DATE: FEB 20, 2012

**T**his coming week, which is a district work week, I would like to provide you with a Bible study overview of the Old Testament Book of Joshua. This is one of my favorite books of the Bible.

My *Books of the Bible* series is a 66-part study that I am writing with an eye toward governing authorities: To not only help you become more familiar with every book of the Bible, but to know the pertinent application and principles of each relative to your life in public office. How does each book relate to you?

I'm not planning 66 straight lessons, (several years of going from Genesis to Revelation) but Lord willing, I'll add this series to my usual mix here in the Capitol.

The headers / format for each in the series will be the same: Name, Author, Background, Themes, Challenges and Custom Application. If you study diligently with me I can promise that you'll increase your agility in God's Word—and hopefully gain in spiritual maturity.

**WEEKLY MEMBERS BIBLE STUDY**

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF  
FIRST-VOTES-BACK (MONDAY OR TUESDAY NIGHT)  
Capitol Room H324 • Dinner served, Spouses welcome

**WEEKLY STAFF BIBLE STUDY**

11:00 AM THE DAY OF FIRST-VOTES-BACK  
(MONDAY OR TUESDAY)  
Longworth 1504-A

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**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: JOSHUA**

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**I. NAME**

After the Torah (a.k.a. the Pentateuch) the first five books of the Old Testament, what follows are 12 historical books. Joshua is the sixth book of the Bible, and the first of the historical books section. The name of the book is derived from its central figure, the heroic warrior Joshua. His Hebrew name is the equivalent of the Greek name Jesus; both meaning “the Lord is salvation.” In that God was the saving commander who led Israel in her initially-victorious conquest of The Promised Land (cf. Gen. 12:1-3), and in that He used Joshua to lead this conquest, his name is both appropriate and descriptive. (Cf. 5:14- 6:2; 10:42; 23:3, 5; Acts 7:45).

Joshua was the understudy of Moses, who tutored him to someday take his place; in a seamless selfless, submissive-to-God succession, Moses commissioned him to take his spot. State Numbers 27:15-20 in this regard:

***Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, "May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep which have no shepherd." So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; and have him stand before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation; and commission him in their sight." And you shall put some of your authority on him, in order that all the congregation of the sons of Israel may obey him.***

Joshua was born in Egyptian slavery, having survived Israel's wanderings in the wilderness, he was 90 years old before taking leadership (24:29). His most noteworthy characteristics are his unswerving loyalty in serving the Lord (Num. 32:12) and his tenacity as a persevering, conquering soldier (Exo. 17:9-13).

**II. AUTHOR**

Most notable commentators believe the author of the book was Joshua in that he was an eyewitness of most of the events therein recorded (cf. 18:9; 24:26) except of his death in chapter 24, the last chapter. This portion could have been added by one of his understudies or Eleazar the High Priest (or his son Phinehas). The date of its writing is ca. 1405 – 1385 B.C. Chapters 1-12 are about the conquering and 13-24 the division of the land.

**III. BACKGROUND**

Because of Israel's disobedience, God told them they would not see the Promised Land; so they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. When that generation had died off a new generation inherited God's original promise to Abraham (in Genesis 12:1-3 of a land, a seed and a blessing).

The inhabitants of the land were varying tribal descendants of Ham, a people who had degenerated into debauchery, a civilization likened to the one prior to the Flood. Even so, God was patient. States Genesis 15:16 “for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.” In narrative view is the principle of Romans 2:4 illumined: “Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?” God had been abundantly long-suffering with the Canaanites (the Amorite people), but in the end His tolerance ran out. Their worship of many gods in combination with moral decline gave way to His wrath. Joshua's invasion, properly understood is a mediatorial manifestation of God's vindication of and over sin. States Leviticus 18:24-25...

***Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled. For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants.***

**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: JOSHUA**

God was about to vomit-out a people steeped in iniquity. Parallel to Romans 13:1-8, Israel was to be God's instrument of corporate and corporeal punishment. Apart from God's empowerment...

**JOSHUA'S MISSION WAS  
"MISSION IMPOSSIBLE"  
AND GOD DIDN'T ADD  
"SHOULD YOU DECIDE TO ACCEPT IT"**

Joshua was to overcome all the Canaanites and then divide up the land amongst the eleven tribes, dispersing the Levites evenly throughout. This would be no easy task for the last twenty years of his life. Nonetheless he devoted himself to his calling with unfaltering loyalty to God! What similar character do you need in a declining America?

**IV. CHALLENGING PASSAGES**

This book poses several interpretive challenges that may come to mind as you study it on your own. Here are some explanations.

**A. THE VARIOUS MIRACLES**

There are at least five supernatural events that occur in the book. If one holds to the fact that God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1) then believing in ensuing miracles is not inordinate. It follows that if one is trusting in Jesus for salvation, who claims to be the Creator (Col. 1:16; the root word for "created" appears 33 times in the NT) and the performer of many miracles, then the following accounts of miracles should not prove incongruous to one's faith. Miracles were a manifest part of God's purposes throughout biblical history.

**1. HOLDING BACK THE JORDAN  
WATERS 3:7-17**

God dammed-up the waters of the Jordan near a city called Adam (15 miles to the north). Once the crossing was completed He allowed them to flow again. This is a book-end miracle to the Red Sea crossing (Exo. 14). The way in which this part of

Israel's history opens—the Exodus—is the same way it closes as Israel crosses to the Promised Land.

**2. THE FALL OF JERICHO'S WALLS  
6:1-27**

This city had an outer wall and inner wall, plus it was built on a steep hillside, making its conquest almost impossible (apart from a siege). This "off-the-wall" (meant as a double entendre ☺) military strategy gave occasion for Israel to trust in God's promises and served to give Him all the glory in the minds of the conquerors.

**3. THE GIANT HAILSTONES  
10:1-11**

These miraculous balls of ice were large enough to kill those whom they struck. Notice that they hit only the enemy and were a greater force for victory than the swords of the Israelites, again assuring that the glory for victory belongs to the Lord.

**4. THE LONG DAY 10:12-15**

In the middle of a prolonged battle, in order to insure victory over the Amorites, Joshua, led by the Lord, commanded the sun to stand still. This is best taken as a literal miracle because other portions of the passage would not make sense if it were interpreted metaphorically (cf. 10:14). Again, the battle belongs to the Lord (cf. Prov. 21:31).

**5. THE SWARMING HORNETS  
24:12**

There is division among conservative commentators as to if this passage is metaphoric or literal in its language. I take it to be literal in the sense of a parallel to the hailstorms or the earlier various physical plagues God visited on Pharaoh (in Exodus) so as to achieve His will in and by physical aid to Israel. Exodus 23:27-28 provides cogent added insight: This force of God described as hornets, would "make all your enemies turn their backs to you." Can you imagine how advantageous it would be if one's opponent were being swarmed by hornets while in the heat of battle?

**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: JOSHUA****B. BLESSING A LYING HARLOT 2:4-5**

Rahab lied to the leaders of Jericho in order to cover-up the Hebrew spies, and yet she is listed in the Faith Hall of Fame in Hebrews 11 (v.31). In that lying is a sin (Exo. 20:16) and there is always a better way than lying so as to achieve the perfect will of God, the intention of this narrative passage permits the reader to glimpse again the fallen nature of man. Rehab's inclusion in Hebrews 11 vividly portrays the truth of the principle of 1John 1:9:

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Rahab undoubtedly confessed her lack of faith, her sin at a later time—reconciling failure in practice with position in Christ (cf. Col 2:10; Jn. 1:16; Eph. 1:3). The point here is that God is gracious and forgiving; all those listed in Hebrews 11 are sinners who have been, are, and will be forgiven by God due to the finished work of Christ on their behalf.

**C. THE FAILURE AT AI 7:1-15**

God states in 7:12, related to Israel's (Achan's) theft and deception, "Therefore the sons of Israel cannot stand before their enemies...for they have become accursed." The Ai failure serves to illustrate the antithesis to the promise God gave Joshua in 1:8.

**D. THE EXECUTION OF ACHAN'S FAMILY 7:10-26**

God is not unjust; they were all co-conspirators.

**V. APPLICATION TO GOVERNING AUTHORITIES**

Joshua was a man's man. He was strong in stature, strong mentally and spiritually. In every way he was the opposite of a silver-spooned softy. In chapter one, Jehovah God commands him no less than four times to be strong and courageous (vv. 6, 7, 9, 18). God further encourages him by saying "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you" (v. 5).

Like the task set before Joshua relative to a land gone awry, so is the task of every governing official in our nation who is called by God to turn America around. This quest is not for weak men—nor is it a mission that can be accomplished in a matter of months or years. Joshua was faithful, vigilant and persevering for 20 years! How about you?

How did Joshua keep his strength and his focus for such a long time? The answer is the key verse of the book, Joshua 1:8: (cf. 24:24)

*This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it, for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.*

How are your Bible study habits? One cannot ever graduate from the elementary disciplines of daily in-depth, serious Bible study and a devout time of prayer and meditation. It is an essential habit if you are going to remain effective for God's purposes over a long period of time; such is directly proportional to your staying power.

**LEARNING AND APPLYING SCRIPTURE  
IS CENTRAL TO THE OVERALL  
VIGILANCE, PERSEVERANCE AND  
SUCCESS OF ALL SERVANTS OF GOD**

Herein is perhaps the greatest take-home application of the book; Joshua 1:8 reveals the source of strength for the journey and singularly explains how and why Joshua ended well—in a world where many falter in the later years of their career path. God *commands* Joshua and every God-appointed leader in our nation today:

*Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

Read through this book several times in the coming weeks. Ask God to speak to your heart through the life of one of His choicest servants. May God give us many leaders like Joshua in our government!