


# Note

## Joshua – Part 1 and 2

Era	Characters	Chapters
In the beginning	God create world	<a href="#">Gen 1</a>
Before 4000 BC	Adam Eve	<a href="#">Gen 1~5</a>
Before 3000 BC	Cain Abel Seth	<a href="#">Gen 4~5</a>
Before 2500 BC	Noah	<a href="#">Gen 5~10</a>
About 2000 BC <b>Era of Patriarchs</b>	Abraham Isaac Ishmael Esau Jacob Joseph	<a href="#">Gen 11~50</a>
About 1500 BC~1000 BC <b>Era of Prophets</b>	Moses Aaron Joshua	<a href="#">Exo</a> <a href="#">Lev</a> <a href="#">Num</a> <a href="#">Deu</a>
	<b>Joshua</b>	<a href="#">Joshua</a> 

# Summary

## **Joshua - Part 1 of 2..... 3**

For Christians, the Promised Land is being at the centre of God's will - with peace and joy and victory over all sin.

## **Joshua - Part 2 of 2..... 7**

As with the Israelites' circumcision, we must put off carnal desires to move on in our spiritual lives. To have victory, we must revere God.

First, and most importantly, is to obey God, even if you don't understand His will. Sometimes, God will give us a strategy to overcome. Sometimes, He just requires obedience.

Second, is to eradicate secret sin. Like the cities the Israelites did not conquer, sins we leave unsettled will become problems in our lives. This is how we can enter the Promised Land.

# Transcript

## Joshua – Part 1 of 2

Today, we study the Book of Joshua.

We have moved on from quite an intensive study of the Torah, the Constitution of the Israelites, full of laws, five Books of it; and much of it doesn't seem to be relevant to us. Most of it seems to be for another era, for another group of people.

But, today, we come to Joshua. It's more like an action story. Everybody can understand or, at least, can enjoy these stories. Joshua is now in the section called the Historical Books.

When we think of History, we tend to think of a great hero. We think, "This hero did a lot of things". But, biblical history is not about a person. Biblical history is about the history of God, and not only the history of what God did, but what God did for the Israelites.

The hero in this story, you would think, would be Joshua, but it's not. It's God. Joshua was often just a spectator. Imagine, the river Jordan - he stands there and he sees the river parts. Then, he crosses over and he sees the walls of Jericho just collapse and fall down. And then, he sees hailstones coming and smashing the enemy up. He sees the moon and the sun stand still. All these are God in action.

The name Joshua means Jehovah saves. That's what his name means. If you know the name of Jesus in Hebrew – it is Joshua. Except in the Greek

version, the name Joshua, becomes Jesus. So, actually, Jesus and Joshua share the same name, which means God saves.

That's very interesting, Hebrew names have meaning and are descriptive. The meaning of Moses' name is 'drawn out'. He was drawn out of the water. Moses' job was to draw the Israelites out of Egypt. That was his job. And you say, "He's the saviour, right? He got the Israelites out of Egypt. He should be the one that should be called the saviour." Doesn't make sense, right? Everybody thinks, "Who is the saviour of Israel? Moses."

But I want you to understand: salvation is not just salvation from sin or salvation from hell; but it is salvation from sin and hell to peace and joy and Christlikeness. So, very often, our idea of salvation is just pulling somebody out of problems. No, the fullness of the salvation we enjoy is we are pulled out of sin and hell to peace and joy and Christlikeness.

So, you see the picture so far. Moses got them out of bondage in Egypt, but then they were in limbo for 40 years, neither in the pleasures of Egypt, nor in the peace and joy of the Promised Land. That's not salvation. Moses took them out into wandering for 40 years. Joshua is the one that now brings them into the Promised Land.

So, the Promised Land is not Heaven, as I said earlier; the Promised Land is the place that Christians should be in after they are saved. They find a place where they are in the centre of God's will, where they have peace and joy and victory over sin and become more and more like Christ. That is true salvation. It is two parts: from sin and hell, to peace and joy and Christlikeness.

So, Joshua is bringing them into this Promised Land. And the Promised Land is a picture of us. When we are in the centre of God's will, we have this peace and joy in our hearts. Finally, after 40 years of wandering, they were finally going to a place where they can say, "Ah, this is home". And then as they conquered one city after another, this home got bigger and

better. So, I hope you begin to see the parallel between what the Israelites went through and what we as Christians go through.

When God told the Israelites to go into the Promised Land, He said, "This is the land the Lord thy God hath given to you, go in and possess it". It's always parallel. You're given ownership of the land. This is the land given to you, that's ownership. Now, go in and possess the land. That's occupation, two different things. You can own the land but never occupy it. You can own a beautiful mansion, but you never lived in it or enjoyed it.

So, this picture of ownership and occupation is a picture of what we have from God. God gives us promises: promises of peace and joy, promises that we can conquer our sins. And yet, for many of us, we never claim those promises. You see, the Israelites, when they went into the land, the land is theirs, every city full of enemies. If they took a step of faith, they would conquer it. "Given", God said, "You will conquer it", but they had to take a step of faith. If they didn't do it, that city would be left behind. And, one day, that city full of enemies still in it, would trouble them. That was the history of Israel. They conquered much of the Promised Land, but they left some cities unconquered. The enemy was still there. Every now and then, the enemy would attack them.

It's like us, with areas of sin in our lives that we didn't really settle after we became believers. Some sins that we don't want to let go, that little lust we have for certain things, we just keep it there. And, one day, that will hurt us and harm our lives.

So, I hope you'll understand this parallel we are learning. This beautiful Book is teaching us how God promised us redemption and now He's telling us His plans, how He's going to go about this.

Now, the structure of this Book is very simple, roughly four parts.

The first five chapters are about Joshua entering the Promised Land, leading the people in. Then, the next part of it, from chapters 6 to 12, is about Joshua leading them to battles, conquering one city after another city.

And then, chapters 13 to 22 is about Joshua dividing the land. This part is very boring because it's talking about the geography. It's like trying to study the geography of a place without a map. We don't know the names of the places so it's very irrelevant for us, but for the Jews it's very relevant. These were their boundaries. They needed to know which was their land. So, for this part, you can just listen to it, and that's good enough, you don't have to study it too hard.

And then, the last part of the Book is about Joshua's final words for the children of Israel before he departs.

## Joshua – Part 2 of 2

Let's now learn some lessons from the different chapters of the Book of Joshua.

Chapter one, we see God speaking to Joshua directly. God tells him, “Everywhere the sole of your foot lands will be yours. Nobody can stand before you, I will be with you as I was with Moses”. So, basically, God is talking to him directly. He's a prophet. In fact, the last chapter, you'll find, he talks as if God was talking to him directly - 24:3-13.

So, this actually begins the Era of the Prophets, no more the Patriarchs. Remember the Era of the Patriarchs? This is now the Prophets. Joshua was spoken to - by God.

Joshua 1:8 is very interesting. God tells Joshua, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from you. You shall meditate in it, you shall observe to do everything in it, and then you shall prosper and have great success”.

Now, this is an important principle. Why was Joshua such a successful leader? Because he submitted, he obeyed God's Word. He knew God's Word. He meditated on it. He observed to do all that is written in this Word. So, you say, “What is Joshua's secret for prosperity and success?” It is to obey God.

Of course, the word ‘prosperity’ here - ‘prosper’ - doesn't mean having much money. I don't think Joshua had a lot of money but a lot of hard work. But, the word ‘prosper’ is to fulfill the will of God in your life. Not like the ‘prosperity gospel’, to have more money. So, we see the secret of Joshua's success is the Word - obedience to the Word.

Then, in chapter 2, he sends spies to spy on the land. The first place they can find to stay is a brothel, the place of a prostitute called Rahab. And Rahab believes that the God of Israel is the true God. And she puts her faith in God: she says, “Your God will conquer this land”, and “Please, have mercy on me.”

So, she makes a deal with the spies. And they tell her, “We will be sure, when we conquer the city of Jericho, you will be saved. The way to be saved is to tie this red cord from your window”. Her house, her brothel, was on the wall of the city of Jericho.” So, there was a red cord. And, when that city was going to be conquered, as long as the red cord was hanging there, whoever was in the house would be safe. Isn't this like the Passover, the blood on the door? This is the red cord, on the window of the house. Whoever is in the house, will be safe. All these little hints of the Gospel: the blood protects us from God's judgment.

Rahab, the prostitute, is found in Hebrews 11 as a hero of the faith. She had simple faith in the God of Israel. She is also an ancestor of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 1:5, you can see her name there, in the genealogy of Jesus.

Then, we see Joshua leading the Israelites across the Jordan River. The Jordan River dries up and they cross, as on dry ground. The Jordan River is not very wide, 30 meters at that point, I think. At the time of the season, the water was, probably, 20 feet deep. He had been consecrated by Moses; Moses laid his hand on him and now, he has credibility. So, he can lead and people would look up to him. Consecration always helps. A leader puts his hand on his successor - that gives him a kind of credibility and of course, people are more likely to follow him.



Then when they entered into the Promised Land, one of the first things they did was circumcision. And, circumcision is very important because it speaks of putting away of the flesh, putting away of the carnal nature of our lives. The first generation was circumcised, but this generation was not all circumcised. So, they went through circumcision - putting away of the carnal nature. From this point on, they never looked back at Egypt. While they were in the wilderness, they always looked back at Egypt - thinking, lusting for the desires of the flesh, the fleshly desires of Egypt. From this point on, after this act of circumcision, they never looked back. Now, they could go on to conquer cities in the Promised Land.

So, it's a picture of if you want to move on in your spiritual life by God's grace, you must be able to put off the fleshly desires, the old carnal desires of our life like desiring a lot of things, our ego, our reputation, etc.

After the circumcision, just before Joshua is about to enter the Promised Land, he sees someone coming with a drawn sword. Who is this guy? And then, he asked this person, a very impressive-looking person, "Are you for us or for them?" He didn't know whose side this guy was on, he'd never seen this guy before. This is probably an angel of God, or maybe even the pre-incarnate Son of God. And the answer was, "No". That's not a logical answer. "As Captain of God's army, I am come." You see, Joshua was thinking the battle was, us Israelites against people in Canaan; but this angel or this messenger from God was saying, "The battle is not about you against them. It's not two races fighting. It's about God against them". It was God's battle. He said, "As Captain of the Lord's army, I am come."

So, Joshua is reminded that this is not a national battle between races. This is not ethnic cleansing, as some people would say. It's nothing to do with that. It's about God - not ethnic cleansing, as I said earlier - evil cleansing, clearing out sin: such horrendous sin, of religion about sex, and sacrificing children to their gods. So, this religion was to be destroyed, by God's army. So, the battle is God against them.

The whole picture is now a bit clearer to Joshua. Then Joshua said, "What instructions have you for me? What do you want me to do?" Do you know what this messenger said? "Take off your shoes, this is holy ground." What kind of answer is this? 'First, I asked you, "Are you for them or for us?" and

you said, “No.” That's not even a logical answer. Then, now you say, Take off your shoes, this is holy ground.”

What's the second lesson we need to learn here? You want to have success in life? You want victories in your spiritual life? It's not about tactics. It's about reverencing God: ‘the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom’. Reverence is the beginning. You will get your victories. So, that was his preparation for the battles ahead.

The 1st battle was at Jericho. God tells Joshua, “This is what you do:

Bring the Ark around and the soldiers follow the Ark,

seven priests before, with rams’ horns.

First six days, just go one time around (horn sound: Whoot!).

That’s all. Then, go back to your camp.

On the seventh day, go around seven times.

And then, after the last (Whoot!) making that long seventh blast on the horn, everybody, Shout!”

What kind of battle tactic is this? It’s almost, like, ridiculous. It's almost, like, “Am I supposed to obey this? Walk around the walls of Jericho? 7 days? Just walk around? I mean, if they throw rocks at us and shoot arrows at us won't we be ‘dead ducks’? Won't they think we are a bunch of clowns? What morale would my soldiers have walking around everyday, and after walking around, ‘whoot!’? - and then go back and wait until tomorrow.”

God was teaching him something: Obedience, Submission. Sometimes, you don't need to understand the will of God - just do it. And so, they did it:

six days,

seventh day- do seven times,  
and the last, they shouted, the walls collapsed.

The walls of Jericho and the walls of the cities that they conquered are massive. If you go and look at the archeological findings of those walls, just go to Google and look, those are massive walls. The wall of Jericho was, roughly, 30 feet high. Three stories, even more, probably. There were two walls; there was an outer wall and an inner wall. The outer wall was 6 feet thick. The inner wall was, like, 13 feet thick. And, there was a space between the two walls and houses were built on between these two walls. That's where Rahab had a house. And, they just came ('poof!') down.

And, they went in there, took everything. And God said, "Everything you take from this place, don't touch." It's God's. Nobody is to take anything. See, this is the first city they conquered. It's like first fruits, everything offered to God. But, one guy was tempted. His name was Achan. Achan was tempted to take some silver, some gold and some fancy clothes. He buried it, hid it in the camp. And then, God said, "Go and take the second city." A small city called Ai. They went, and they got defeated in the second city. Badly. And, Joshua came back, "What happened?" And God said, "There is a sin in the camp. And then, they tried to find out 'who is the one, who is the sinner in the camp?' They called, first by tribe, by clans, then by families and finally, they found Achan.

How did they do this?

Let me just teach you a little bit about the Israelite way of finding who is the one guilty or not guilty. They use the Urim and the Thummim. The high priest had two stones, flat stones put inside his breastplate. And, if a tribe was brought up, they would just see which of the two stones is pulled out. If it's the black stone, that guy's guilty; that's the Urim. If they pull out the white stone, the guy's innocent. That's how they decided. In those days, Holy Spirit was not there to guide. God directed them by the Urim and the Thummim. You see that very often in the Old Testament. After the Holy

Spirit came, we don't need the Urim and the Thummim anymore. We ask God to guide us.

So, they found this guy, Achan. And after that, Achan was punished - his family was punished - and they conquered the city of Ai.

But, when God said, 'to conquer the city Ai', it's very interesting. God taught them how to conquer it by using tactics, ambush tactics. In other words, though God wants you to do something, sometimes He also wants you to use strategy. Sometimes, just obedience. If He tells you do something, just do it. If He doesn't give you clear instructions, use your strategy. There's nothing wrong with using strategy. In fact, Joshua became a good military commander. In fact, Israelite generals are very famous for their speed and their tactics up till today. Joshua was a military genius. In other words, God uses talent too.

So, the two battles: Jericho, took a whole chapter; the conquering of Ai, the small city, took two whole chapters.

God was teaching them 2 principles:

Number 1, obedience is the most important.

Number 2, there must not be sin. You cannot conquer when you keep some secret sin in your heart. Whether you're a pastor, or whether you're a Christian and you have some sin that you know of, but you don't do something about it, you're not going to have victorious Christian lives.

Then, after that, we have a story of the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites were a group of Hivites. The Gibeonites came and pretended that they came from a far country. They had old clothes on, they had moldy bread and so on. And they said, "We come from a far country, let's make a league, an alliance. But, actually, they were from a neighboring city; and they knew that the God of Israel would destroy every city in Canaan. But they had

faith, in a simple way, in this God. And, so, they made a league with Joshua. And from then on, the Israelites were not supposed to kill them.

So, would you say, ethnic cleansing? Some people are very troubled by this, “How come the Israelites went in and just took someone's land and kill everybody - isn't that ethnic cleansing?” No. It was God cleaning them out. And yet, God, in mercy, whoever sought Him, whoever put their trust in Him, got accepted.

So, I hope you see. It's a very unique case in history. The rest of us, we're supposed to love our neighbor, we're not supposed to kill people, right? This is a unique exception, because this land was uniquely filthy, and immoral, and idolatrous.

After that, we see from Joshua chapters 9 to 12, there was a war campaign, conquering city after city after city. At the end of chapter 12, to summarize everything, 31 kings and 31 cities taken.

And then, chapter 13 says, ‘Joshua got old and tired. And the fighting stopped’. And it says, ‘there were still many cities that were not conquered yet’. It said, ‘seven tribes still did not have their land’.

So, we see here, as long as they put their heart to it, as long as they wanted to go and conquer, they could. They were undefeatable because the land was theirs; it's just claiming it, literally, taking a step of faith. Go and take the city, one after another. It's the same with our sins. If you really want to conquer something in your life that you know is not good for your spiritual life, you can, by God's grace. In the past, before you're Christian, you can't. There's no way you can. So here we see the parallel between the Israelites entering the Promised Land, conquering cities, but they didn't conquer all. And many of those cities, in the future, became thorns to them, problems

to them, for the rest of their history. Many sins we leave unsettled become problems to our life.

Then, chapters 13 to 22 is all about the division of the land to the different tribes of Israel. And then, finally, the Book ends by Joshua standing up and giving his last speech before he goes.

And he said to them, Choose you this day whom you will serve; the gods of this land or God? But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15.

After I became a believer, my wife and I decided on our family verse. Every house we moved to, it has been on the doorway of our house, Joshua 24:15: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. For you, choose you whom you will serve: gods of money, gods of success, gods of whatever or, the true and living God? - who gives you the Promised Land of peace and joy that passes all understanding, of victory over victory, of getting closer and closer to God.

Finally, the Book ends with three burials. You'd think, "After all these victories, there should be three victory celebrations".

Three burials:

- 1) Burial of Joshua
- 2) Burial of the bones of Joseph. His bones were carried for 40 over years and finally buried in the Promised Land, and
- 3) Eleazer, the son of Aaron the high priest.

Three burials, at the last part of this Book - a little hint that things are not going to go very well.

So, here we look at the summary of this Book of Joshua. What is it about? It's about you entering the Promised Land. Are you in the Promised Land after you got saved? Are you in limbo, neither looking back at Egypt, lusting after those things and never really having peace and rest, nor as a Christian, still struggling, still dissatisfied with your Christian life. A lot of Christians, 2 out of 2,000,000 are not like that; but majority are like that. But, make sure, by God's grace, not only that you get out of bondage, but that you enter the place of peace and rest that passes all understanding, a peace that keeps growing and growing, as you conquer sins in your life.

So, this is the purpose of the Book of Joshua. It's not just about some Israelites, long ago. It's about you and me.

Hope you enjoyed the study of this Book.