

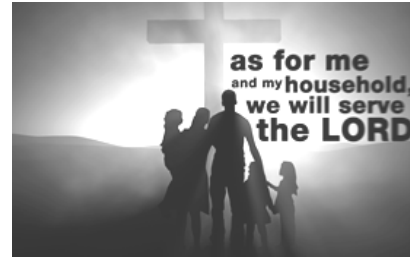
THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

"Be Strong and Courageous!"

-Joshua in the Old Testament

-Jesus in the New Testament

Date: 8-2-15 Lesson: 22



A. TEXT: Chapter 24

(1) Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves **before God**. (2) And Joshua said to all the people, "**Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel**, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.

(3) Then **I took your father Abraham** from beyond the River and **led him** through all the land of Canaan, and **made his offspring many**. **I gave him Isaac**. (4) And to Isaac **I gave Jacob and Esau**. And I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. (5) And **I sent Moses and Aaron**, and **I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it, and afterward I brought you out**.

(6) "Then **I brought your fathers** out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. (7) And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness a long time.

(8) Then **I brought you** to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and **I gave them into your hand**, and you took possession of their land, and **I destroyed them before you**. (9) Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you, (10) but **I would not listen to Balaam**. Indeed, he blessed you. So **I delivered you** out of his hand. (11) And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And **I gave them into your hand**.

(12) And **I sent the hornet before you**, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow. (13) **I gave you** a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.'

(14) "Now therefore **fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness**. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. (15) And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

(16) Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake **the Lord** to serve other gods. (17) **for it is the Lord our God who brought us** and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and **who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us** in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. (18) **And the Lord** drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. **Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God**."

(19) But Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve **the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins**. (20) If you forsake **the Lord** and serve foreign gods, then **he will turn and do you harm and consume you**, after having done you good."

(21) And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will **serve the Lord**." (22) Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses."

(23) He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and **incline your heart to the Lord, the God of Israel**." (24) And the people said to Joshua, "**The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey**."

(25) So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at 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 terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. (27) And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard **all the words of the Lord that he spoke to us**. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God."

(28) So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance. (29) After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being 110 years old. (30) And they buried him in his own inheritance at Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash.

(31) Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that **the Lord** did for Israel. (32) As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money. It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph. (33) And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of Phinehas his son, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

B. STUDY NOTES:

1. The final official act of Joshua – a renewal of the covenant with the Lord God. As the Lord’s servant and mediator for the Lord’s work among them, it is similar to the final covenant renewal of Moses in Deut. All the leaders of the people, God’s spokesman Joshua and the ark of the covenant before them – a dramatic scene.
2. To say, “Thus says the Lord...” is to be the authoritative mouthpiece of the Lord – a serious responsibility. He recounts Israel’s history including the calling of Abraham from polytheistic worship in Ur (where they created 4,000 gods) to the true God, the deliverance out of Egypt and the establishment by the Lord of the people in the land of Canaan. This was all an act of God’s grace, not based on any merit on their part (**Dt. 6:10-12**)
3. The Lord turned Balaam’s curse into a blessing (**Num 23-24**) even foretelling the future Christ as a star and scepter (**Num 24:17**).
4. The hornet was the symbol of northern Egypt and their campaign before them to drive out the nations. (**Ex 23:27,28**)
5. The gods of the forefathers included: Nanna, Sin, Apis – sacred bulls and calves, and moon gods – made into wood, rocks and stones which could be destroyed.
6. The creedal confession centered on the nature of the true God: **“it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. And the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”**
7. The witness to their covenant – a stone – was a landmark to remind future generations (**Dt 30:19**). This was the 7th and final memorial reminding Israel that it was the Lord God who gave them victory. Archaeologists found the remains of a temple at Shechem that included a large upright stone (massebah).
8. Now established in their new homeland, it became the burial place for Joshua, Joseph and Eleazar. God has kept his promise to Abraham and his seed.
9. The number “110” (**Gen 50:26**) – considered the ideal number of years on earth.
10. The ending, describing how Joshua’s generation served the Lord, is anticipating the future when their descendants would not...
11. Shechem – Joseph’s bones returned to the plot of land his father Jacob had bought from Hamor (**Gen 33:19; 50:24-26; Ex 13:19; Acts 7:15-17**)
12. Aaron had served as priest for Moses. Eleazar served as priest for Joshua.
13. “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!” This is the beckon call for all generations ...

(Ruth 1:16; 2:12; 1 Ki 18:21; Dan 3:18; Mt 7:24-27; Lk 19:9,10; Jn 8:35,36; Acts 2:36-42; 2 Cor 5:1-7; Heb 3:1-6; 8:10-13; 10:19-25; 1 Pet 2:5)

14. When Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law, it may mean that he wrote this Book of Joshua to be added to the Five Books of Moses as canonical.
15. The Law and Gospel approach here shows that this is how God has always interacted with his people. Joshua sternly warns them that if they worship other gods, God would destroy them. His mind’s eye can see past the present time into the future when Israel would fall back into idolatry. The point is this:
Every generation (which is 25 years) must decide on their own whether to serve the true God or false gods.
16. Jesus is the new Joshua – the Yeshua – Savior – through whom we are brought into the Promised Land of Heaven (**Mt 1:21-25; Lk 1:31-33; Rom 5:12-17**)

C. LIFE APPLICATION:

1. When we confess the three ecumenical creeds, the Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, how do we also proclaim: therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God ?
2. What do we see in these 4 generations (100 years) here in the USA about parents and their children and whether they stay in the Christian faith or not?
3. How do we incline our hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel and say that the Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey?
4. How does each generation of Christian renew the pledge: But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord?

NEW STUDY BEGINS SUNDAY AUGUST 9TH:

“God’s Design for Marriage – Man and Woman – Husband and Wife in Christ”

-God’s good gifts for his people modeled on the relationship of Christ the Bridegroom and the Church the Bride.