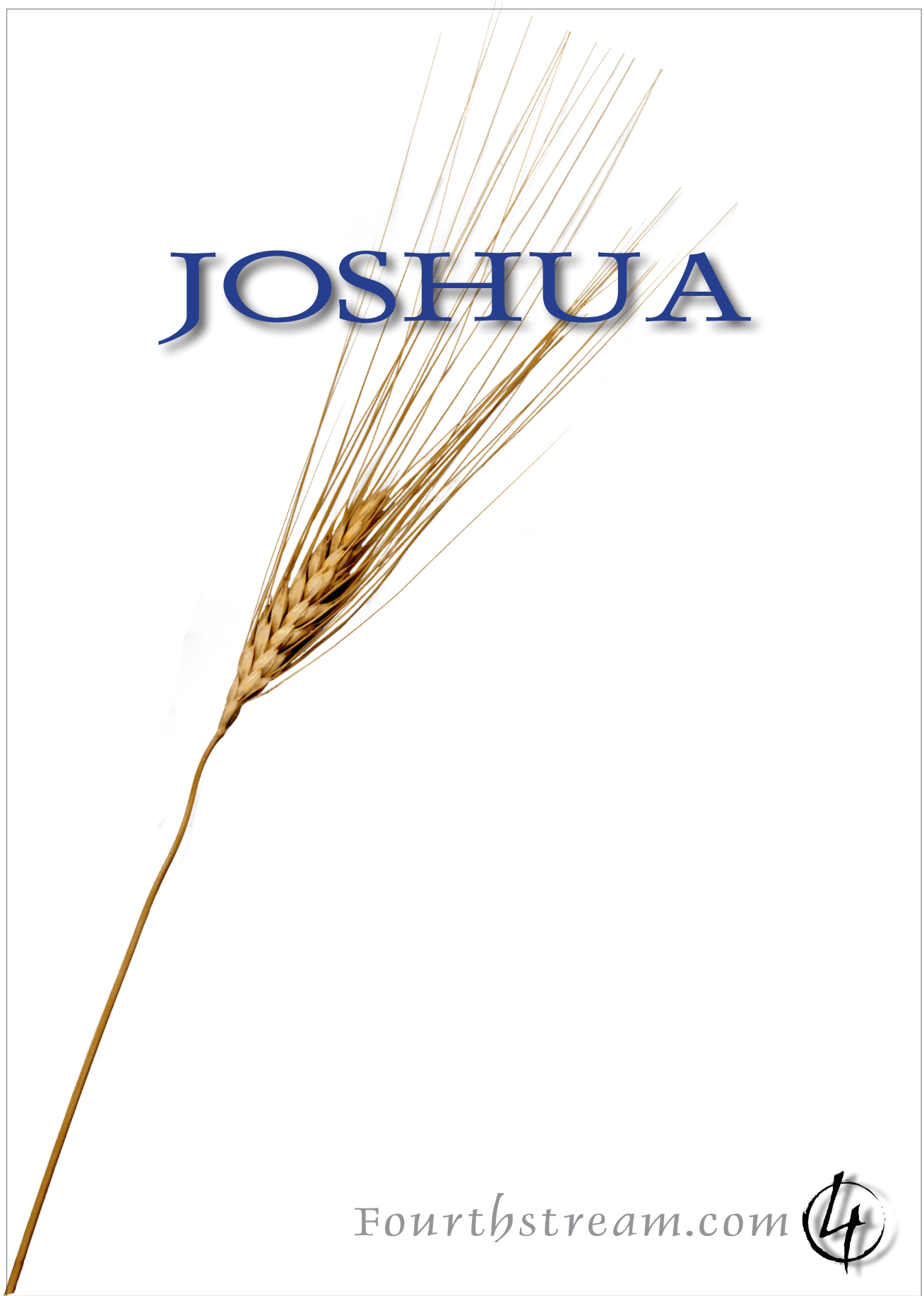


JOSHUA



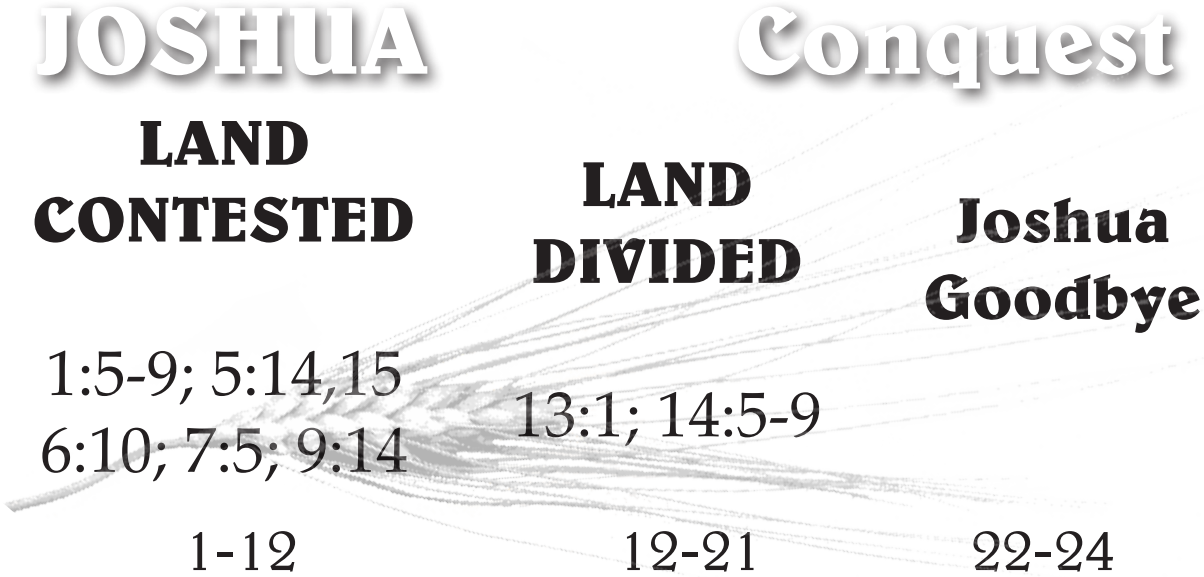
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Welcome to the book of Joshua!

To begin your study of this book of conquest, meditate on the book's content reflected in the overview chart below. What are the major movements of the book? Joshua provides the anticipated transition from wandering to Israel's life of occupying the land "flowing with milk and honey". It is a book of military action and godly expectation. Israel is now prepared to take possession of what God had promised so long ago! This new generation is prepared for war, and unlike their fathers, ready to encounter the rigors of what appear to be insurmountable odds.

The book of Joshua reveals principles of being a warrior of God. God's desire was to fight on behalf of His people, just as He does for those who belong to Christ today! As we enter these historical books, pay close attention to God's actions on behalf of the Jews, and their willingness to move forward by faith.



"The land flowing with milk and honey!" 11:23

Open your heart as you read!

God is not as often interested in the achievements of His children as He is in their character growth as they encounter adversity. It is as spiritual warriors that we impact eternity (Ephesians 6:10-20). Do you have a desire to be God's warrior? Are you prepared to war in God's power and by the strength of His might!? Our struggle is not against flesh and blood!

AUTHOR AND NAME

The Hebrew name Joshua, or Jehoshua, means the Lord saves (or delivers). Its Greek name equivalent is Jesus. This name applies well to Joshua, the son of Nun, who led God's people to victory and deliverance from her enemies as she entered and occupied the land of Canaan.

DATE

Because Jerusalem was inhabited by Jebusites (18:16, 28) and the fact that Rahab, the harlot, was still alive at the time of the writing (6:25) indicate an early date. The narrative describes events covering a period of about thirty years and was probably written between 1400 and 1350 B.C.

PURPOSE

Joshua is a book of conquest. It begins where Deuteronomy leaves off. The history of Israel's seven year military campaign over Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, and the conquest and consolidation of the land under the twelve tribes is recounted.

You will quickly discover the symbol of warfare in the book of Joshua. There is a warfare parallel between that of the Jew of Joshua and believer of today, especially with the book of Ephesians. Note some of the battle similarities:

1. Both books speak of a rich inheritance for the heirs of God.
2. Both books reveal how victory is gained despite and even because of conflict.
3. Both books make it strikingly clear that the life of a believer is a battleground, not a playground.
4. In Joshua, the Israelites are equipped and energized by God as they encounter formidable enemies. The same is true of the warrior-believer of today (Ephesians 6:12-18).

While the sons of Israel conquered their enemies in the land of Canaan, as believers through faith we are assured that we can be more than conquerors through Him who loved us, (Romans 8:37).

WHY STUDY THE BOOK OF JOSHUA?

1. This book emphasizes an important principle for the local church today of the need for unity and working together. It took all twelve tribes to go in and conquer the land, and it takes each member of a local body working together to go and conquer your "Jerusalem" for Jesus Christ.

2. The man, Joshua, serves as a worthy example of the local church leader today--a godly leader who faithfully guided the nation Israel into their promised inheritance. As a leader, you might not get the recognition of a Joshua; but then God did not call you to be flattered, but to be faithful in your responsibilities.

3. This book also shows the devastating effect the disobedience of a single individual (Achan) can have on a people. One member's sin in a church can bring defeat to that church as a whole if it is not dealt with according to the Scriptures.

4 Joshua Chapter Chart

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Preparing for Victory

Read Chapters 1-2

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
1		
2		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of success was Joshua promised?
2. On what was that success to be based?
3. How did the report of these two spies differ from that of the twelve spies in Numbers 13?
4. Why would God choose a harlot to protect the two spies?
5. What makes Rahab special?
6. What is the significance of the "scarlet cord"?

What about today?

1. What does 1:8 have to do with the believer of today?
2. What kind of a spy would you have made for Joshua?
3. What are your standards for prosperity and success and what are the standards of your culture? The standards of your friends with whom you associate?

Paul's perspective on success involved three things (2 Timothy 4:7,8).
 What are they and how does each one relate to your current spiritual victories?

My thoughts on what brings about spiritual victory:

Over the Jordan!

Read Chapters 3-5

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
3		
4		
5		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Why was it necessary for Joshua's authority to be validated?
2. How did God choose to make that validation and why?
3. Why were the memorial stones important and why do you think that there were two sets?
4. What was the result of Joshua's validation?
Among the Jews? Among the surrounding nations?
5. What sense do you get for the personality and leadership style of Joshua?

What about today?

1. What did crossing the Jordan symbolize for the Jews? What does it symbolize for you?
2. How do memorials affect your life? What memorials do you have?
Why are they important?

God has told the Jews that He will do their fighting for them! Read Romans 8:31-39 with regard to God fighting for us. In what ways do you see God specifically fighting for you?

My thoughts about memorials in my life:

Joshua, Jericho, Achan, and Ai!

Read Chapters 5-8

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
5		
6		
7		
8		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Why was it necessary to circumcise the nation once again?
Why do you think that they were not circumcised "along the way"?
2. Why did the manna cease? What does this tell you about the Jews' relationship to the manna?
3. How would you have felt if you were approaching Jericho and received your orders?
4. What part was the ark now playing in the lives of the sons of Israel? How did this differ from its previous role?
5. What were the lessons about "things under the ban" and why were they necessary?
Why was Achan dealt with so harshly?
6. How could God allow (and even command) such brutal killing of entire cities?

What about today?

Joshua encountered God in much the same manner as Moses did at the burning bush (5:13-15). Why is that significant? What does Joshua learn from the answer to his question? What can we learn from the answer? Note the place of the law among the warriors (8:34, 35).

My thoughts about justice when it comes to the loss of human life:

The Final Battle!?

Read Chapters 9-12

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
9		
10		
11		
12		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the Gideonites do what they did?
What does this tell you about these people, (note 10:2)?
2. What were the short range affects of this deception?
3. What do you think would be the long-term implications?
4. What actually happened in 10:12-15 and why is it remarkable?
5. How complete was the conquest and how do you view the harshness of it?
6. Note the summary verse for Joshua, found in 11:23. Why does this make a good summary verse for the book, and are there others that you would choose?

What about today?

The leaders of the people made a far-reaching error by not consulting the Lord concerning the Gideonites (9:14). It is easy to isolate our "real life" decisions as separate from our "spiritual" decisions. In God's sight, all of the decisions that we make have kingdom impact. To be too independent or in too much of a hurry to request God's counsel can be very costly! What did James indicate about this subject (James 4:13-17)? How do you measure up in this area?!

My thoughts about God's guidance:

The Land is Divided!

Read Chapters 13-17

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What has happened to Joshua?
2. How was Caleb's memory?
3. What was Caleb's inheritance?
4. Why was it important to apportion the land?
5. What sense do you get for the military climate as you consider 17:12-18?
Has there been a shift? If so, what has caused it?

What about today?

The inheritance of the Jews was specific by tribe. They received their own land, and their own challenges for settlement. Ephesians 1 talks about the inheritance of the believer. Though the land was a gift, inhabiting it took faithful obedience and rigorous warfare. What would be some correlation to a believer today?

My thoughts about my inheritance:

We Will Serve the Lord!

Read Chapters 18-24

Chapter **Title** **Key Verse**

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was the method for the remaining apportioning of the land?
2. What was the inheritance of Joshua?
3. What was the purpose of the city of refuge?
4. What made the altar offensive?
5. What was the chief concern over this bogus altar?
6. What similarities and differences do you notice between Joshua's goodbye and that of Moses?
7. Why is the final act of the book significant?

What about today?

Just as 11:23 summarizes the events of the book, 24:14, 15 reveal the spiritual message of Joshua. What is your resolve for your household? How do we communicate a resolve such as this to our own family members?

My thoughts about how my household can serve the Lord:

WHEN YOU ARE A SOLDIER

God uses the metaphor of being a soldier over and over in the scriptures. It is apparently His intent that we see life as a battle, and that we engage that battle with all the wisdom and zeal that we possibly can provide.

Read the following passages. What do they teach us about what it means to be a God-pleasing warrior? What do they teach us about the nature of the battle? What do they teach us about being "ready?"

Ephesians 6:10-20

2 Timothy 4:1-8

Revelation 19:11-16

As you reflect upon the battles that occurred during the time period of Joshua, what principles of God fighting "for us" do you see?

In what ways do you see a battle occurring in your own life?

What is the difference between seeing the "battle" with flesh and blood or as a part of an even bigger picture?

When you think about the "armor of God" where do you stand?