



Tuesday, September 29, 2021

AB

General Notes for Class:

What Jewish holiday is being celebrated this week?

Four Species of Plants

- palm, myrtle, willow, citron

Special Festival Readings

- Hallel – Psalms
- Hoshana prayers – God save us
- Seventh and last day – Hoshanah Rabba – “The great Hosanna”

Canaanites

- Parts of Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan (they would not know these names today, most of them or their boundaries, than we would just by saying the *Promised Land*. It’s another example of “teleology” – the practice of assigning words that are similar today and their meaning to words from the past.
- Different ethnic groups, as evidenced by burial styles
- Existed in the Levant (Canaan) for several centuries before the arrival of the Israelites. It encompasses the entire coastline from Greece to Egypt; part of the Fertile Crescent; home to ancient Mediterranean trade Centers, such as Ugarit, Tyre, and Sidon. It is home to the civilization known as Phoenicia and, so, the Canaan is also known as Phoenicia.
- Purple people.
- Records indicate they were from different lands, including: Halab, Nihi, Armae and Mukish
- Egyptian Pharaohs and Canaanite kings appear to have had several communications, with the Pharaohs having influence (in fact, it is though the Canaan was plundered at times by Egypt).
- Canaan was also known as Phoenicia
- The earliest habitation of the Canaanites is around Jericho

Reading of Chapter 1 and 2

- Who wrote this? Joshua Son of Nun + 1
- What do you think the message is?
- let’s look at it in the context of the Pentateuch

- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- AB 2021-09-21 Summary NIV Bible Studies

Summary of the Book of Joshua

This summary of the book of Joshua provides information about the title, author(s), date of writing, chronology, theme, theology, outline, a brief overview, and the chapters of the Book of Joshua.

The Conquest and the Ethical Question of War

Many readers of Joshua (and other OT books) are deeply troubled by the role that warfare plays in this account of God's dealings with his people. Not a few relieve their ethical scruples by ascribing the author's perspective to a pre-Christian (and sub-Christian) stage of moral development that the Christian, in the light of Christ's teaching, must repudiate and transcend. Hence the main thread of the narrative line of Joshua is an offense to them.

It must be remembered, however, that the book of Joshua does not address itself to the abstract ethical question of war as a means for gaining human ends. It can only be understood in the context of the history of redemption unfolding in the Pentateuch, with its interplay of divine grace and judgment. Of that story it is the direct continuation.

Joshua is not an epic account of Israel's heroic generation or the story of Israel's conquest of Canaan with the aid of her national deity. It is rather the story of how God, to whom the whole world belongs, at one stage in the history of redemption reconquered a portion of the earth from the powers of this world that had claimed it for themselves, defending their claims by force of arms and reliance on their false gods. It tells how God commissioned his people to serve as his army under the leadership of his servant Joshua, to take Canaan in his name out of the hands of the idolatrous and dissolute Canaanites (whose measure of sin was now full; see [Ge 15:16](#) and note). It further tells how he aided them in the enterprise and gave them conditional tenancy in his land in fulfillment of the ancient pledge he had made to Israel's ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Joshua is the story of the kingdom of God breaking into the world of nations at a time when national and political entities were viewed as the creation of the gods and living proofs of their power. Thus the Lord's triumph over the Canaanites testified to the world that the God of Israel is the one true and living God, whose claim on the world is absolute. It was also a warning to the nations that the irresistible advance of the kingdom of God would ultimately disinherit all those who opposed it, giving place in the earth only to those who acknowledge and serve the Lord. At once an act of redemption and judgment, it gave notice of the outcome of history and anticipated the final destiny of humankind and the creation.

The battles for Canaan were therefore the Lord's war, undertaken at a particular time in the program of redemption. God gave his people under Joshua no commission or license to conquer the world with the sword but a particular, limited mission. The conquered land itself would not become Israel's national possession by right of conquest, but it belonged to the Lord. So the land had to be cleansed of all remnants of paganism. Its people and their wealth were not for Israel to seize as the booty of war from which to enrich themselves (as Achan tried to do, ch. 7) but were placed under God's ban (were to be devoted to God to dispense with as he pleased). On that land Israel was to establish a commonwealth faithful to the righteous rule of God and thus be a witness (and a blessing) to the nations. If Israel became unfaithful and conformed to Canaanite culture and practice, it would in turn lose its place in the Lord's land -- as Israel almost did in the days of the judges, and as it eventually did in the exile.

War is a terrible curse that the human race brings on itself as it seeks to possess the earth by its own unrighteous ways. But it pales before the curse that awaits all those who do not heed God's testimony to himself or his warnings -- those who oppose the rule of God and reject his offer of grace. The God of the second Joshua (Jesus) is the God of the first Joshua also. Although now for a time he reaches out to the whole world with the gospel (and commissions his people urgently to carry his offer of peace to

all nations), the sword of his judgment waits in the wings -- and his second Joshua will wield it (Rev 19:11-16; see notes there).

Title and Theological Theme

Joshua is a story of conquest and fulfillment for the people of God. After many years of slavery in Egypt and 40 years in the desert, the Israelites were finally allowed to enter the land promised to their fathers. Abraham, always a migrant, never possessed the country to which he was sent, but he left to his children the legacy of God's covenant that made them the eventual heirs of all of Canaan (see Ge 15:13,16,18; 17:8). Joshua was destined to turn that promise into reality.

Where Deuteronomy ends, the book of Joshua begins: The tribes of Israel are still camped on the east side of the Jordan River. The narrative opens with God's command to move forward and pass through the river on dry land. Then it relates the series of victories in central, southern and northern Canaan that gave the Israelites control of all the hill country and the Negev. It continues with a description of the tribal allotments and ends with Joshua's final addresses to the people. The theme of the book, therefore, is the establishment of God's people Israel in the Lord's land, the land he had promised to give them as their place of "rest" in the earth (1:13,15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1; see also Dt 3:20 and note; 12:9-10; 25:19; 1Ki 5:4 and note; 8:56). So the Great King's promise to the patriarchs and Moses to give the land of Canaan to the chosen people of his kingdom is now historically fulfilled (1:1-6; 21:43-45).

In the story the book tells, three primary actors play a part: "the Lord" (as Israel's God), his servant Joshua, and his people Israel (the last a collective "character" in the story). We meet all three immediately in ch. 1, where all three are clearly presented in the distinctive roles they will play in the story that follows. Ch. 1 also introduces the reader to the main concern of the book as a whole.

The role of the central human actor in the events narrated here is reinforced by the name he bears. Earlier in his life Joshua was called simply Hoshea (Nu 13:8,16), meaning "salvation." But later Moses changed his name to Joshua, meaning "The Lord saves" (or "The Lord gives victory"). When this same name (the Greek form of which is Jesus; see NIV text note on Mt 1:21) was given to Mary's firstborn son, it identified him as the servant of God who would complete what God did for Israel in a preliminary way through the first Joshua, namely, overcome all powers of evil in the world and bring God's people into their eternal "rest" (see Heb 4:1-11 and notes).

In the Hebrew Bible the book of Joshua initiates a division called the Former Prophets, including also Judges, Samuel and Kings. These are all historical in content but are written from a prophetic standpoint. They do more than merely record the nation's history from Moses to the fall of Judah in 586 b.c. They prophetically interpret God's covenant ways with Israel in history -- how he fulfills and remains true to his promises (especially through his servants such as Joshua, the judges, Samuel and David) and how he deals with the waywardness of the Israelites. In Joshua it was the Lord who won the victories and "gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers" (21:43).

Author and Date

In the judgment of many scholars Joshua was not written until the end of the period of the kings, some 800 years after the actual events. But there are significant reasons to question this conclusion and to place the time of composition much earlier. The earliest Jewish traditions (Talmud) claim that Joshua wrote his own book except for the final section about his funeral, which is attributed to Eleazar son of Aaron (the last verse must have been added by a later editor).

On at least two occasions the text reports writing at Joshua's command or by Joshua himself. We are told that when the tribes received their territories, Joshua instructed his men "to make a survey of the land and write a description of it" (18:8). Then in the last scene of the book, when Joshua led Israel in a renewal of the covenant with the Lord, it is said that

"he drew up decrees and laws" (24:25). On another occasion the narrator speaks as if he had been a participant in the event; he uses the pronouns "we" and "us" (5:1,6).

Moreover, the author seems to be familiar with ancient names of cities, such as "the Jebusite city" (15:8; 18:16,28) for Jerusalem, Kiriath Arba (14:15; 15:54; 20:7; 21:11) for Hebron, and Greater Sidon (11:8; 19:28) for what later became simply Sidon. And Tyre is never mentioned, probably because in Joshua's day it had not yet developed into a port of major importance.

But if some features suggest an author of Joshua's own lifetime, others point to a writer of a somewhat later period. The account of the long day when the sun stood still at Aijalon is substantiated by a quotation from another source, the Book of Jashar (10:13). This would hardly be natural for an eyewitness of the miracle who was writing shortly after it happened. Also, there are 12 instances where the phrase "until this day" occurs.

It seems safe to conclude that the book draws on early sources. It may date from the beginning of the monarchy. Some think that Samuel may have had a hand in shaping or compiling the materials of the book, but in fact we are unsure who the final author or editor was.

The Life of Joshua

Joshua's remarkable life was filled with excitement, variety, success and honor. He was known for his deep trust in God and as "a man in whom is the spirit" (Nu 27:18). As a youth he lived through the bitter realities of slavery in Egypt, but he also witnessed the supernatural plagues and the miracle of Israel's escape from the army of the Egyptians when the waters of the sea opened before them. In the Sinai peninsula it was Joshua who led the troops of Israel to victory over the Amalekites (Ex 17:8-13). He alone was allowed to accompany Moses up the holy mountain where the tablets of the law were received (Ex 24:13-14). And it was he who stood watch at the temporary tent of meeting Moses set up before the tabernacle was erected (Ex 33:11).

Joshua was elected to represent his own tribe of Ephraim when the 12 spies were sent into Canaan to look over the land. Only Joshua and Caleb, representing the tribe of Judah, were ready to follow God's will and take immediate possession of the land (see Nu 14:26-34). The rest of the Israelites of that generation were condemned to die in the desert. Even Moses died short of the goal and was told to turn everything over to Joshua. God promised to guide and strengthen Joshua, just as he had Moses (Dt 31:23; cf. Jos 1:5 and note).

Joshua was God's chosen servant (see 24:29 and note on Dt 34:5) to bring Moses' work to completion and establish Israel in the promised land. To that special divine appointment he was faithful -- as the leader of God's army, as the administrator of God's division of the land and as God's spokesman for promoting Israel's covenant faithfulness. In all this he was a striking OT type (foreshadowing) of Christ (see notes on Heb 4:1,6-8).

Historical Setting

At the time of the Israelite migration into Canaan the superpowers of the ancient Near East were relatively weak. The Hittites had faded from the scene. Neither Babylon nor Egypt could maintain a standing military presence in Canaan, and the Assyrians would not send in their armies until centuries later.

As the tribes circled east of the Dead Sea, the Edomites refused them passage, so Israel bypassed them to the east. However, when Sihon and Og, two regional Amorite kings of Transjordan, tried to stop the Israelites, they were easily defeated and their lands occupied. Moab was forced to let Israel pass through her territory and camp in her plains. Also the Midianites were dealt a severe blow.

Biblical archaeologists call this period the Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 b.c.). Today thousands of artifacts give testimony to the richness of the Canaanite material culture, which was in many ways superior to that of the Israelites. When the ruins of the ancient kingdom of Ugarit were discovered at modern Ras Shamra on the northern coast of Syria (see chart, p. xxiii), a wealth of new information came to light concerning the domestic,

commercial and religious life of the Canaanites. From a language close to Hebrew came stories of ancient kings and gods that revealed their immoral behavior and cruelty. In addition, pagan temples, altars, tombs and ritual vessels have been uncovered, throwing more light on the culture and customs of the peoples surrounding Israel.

Excavations at the ancient sites of Megiddo, Beth Shan and Gezer show how powerfully fortified these cities were and why they were not captured and occupied by Israel in Joshua's day. Many other fortified towns were taken, however, so that Israel became firmly established in the land as the dominant power. Apart from Jericho and Ai, Joshua is reported to have burned only Hazor (11:13), so attempts to date these events by destruction levels in the mounds of Canaan's ancient cities are questionable undertakings. It must also be remembered that other groups were involved in campaigns in the region about this time, among whom were Egyptian rulers and the Sea Peoples (including the Philistines). There had also been much intercity warfare among the Canaanites, and afterward the period of the judges was marked by general turbulence.

Much of the data from archaeology appears to support a date for Joshua's invasion c. 1250 b.c. This fits well with an exodus that would then have taken place 40 years earlier under the famous Rameses II, who ruled from the Nile delta at a city with the same name (Ex 1:11). It also places Joseph in Egypt in a favorable situation. Four hundred years before Rameses II the pharaohs were the Semitic Hyksos, who also ruled from the delta near the land of Goshen.

On the other hand, a good case can be made for the traditional viewpoint that the invasion occurred c. 1406 b.c. The oppression would have taken place under Amunhotep II after the death of his father Thutmose III, who is known to have used slave labor in his building projects. The earlier date also fits better with the two numbers found in Jdg 11:26 and 1Ki 6:1, since it allows for an additional 150 years between Moses and the monarchy. See also Introductions to Genesis: Author and Date of Writing; Exodus: Chronology; Judges: Background; and note on 1Ki 6:1.

Outline of Joshua

- I. The Entrance into the Land (1:1;5:12)
 - A. The Exhortations to Conquer (ch. 1)
 - B. The Reconnaissance of Jericho (ch. 2)
 - C. The Crossing of the Jordan (chs. 3-4)
 - D. The Consecration at Gilgal (5:1-12)
 - II. The Conquest of the Land (5:13;12:24)
 - . The Initial Battles (5:13;8:35)
 - 1. The victory at Jericho (5:13;6:27)
 - 2. The failure at Ai because of Achan's sin (ch. 7)
 - 3. The victory at Ai (8:1-29)
 - 4. The covenant renewed at Shechem (8:30-35)
 - A. The Campaign in the South (chs. 9-10)
 - 1. The treaty with the Gibeonites (ch. 9)
 - 2. The long day of Joshua (10:1-15)
 - 3. The southern cities conquered (10:16-43)
 - B. The Campaign in the North (ch. 11)
 - C. The Defeated Kings of Canaan (ch. 12)
 - III. The Distribution of the Land (chs. 13-21)
 - . The Areas Yet to Be Conquered (13:1-7)
 - A. The Land Assigned by Moses to the Tribes in Transjordan (13:8-33)
 - B. The Division of the Land of Canaan (chs. 14-19)
 - 1. Introduction (14:1-5)
 - 2. The town given to Caleb (14:6-15)
 - 3. The lands given to Judah and "Joseph" at Gilgal (chs. 15-17)
 - 4. The allotments for Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Dan at Shiloh (18:1;19:48)
 - 5. The town given to Joshua (19:49-51)
 - C. The Cities Assigned to the Levites (chs. 20-21)
 - 1. The 6 cities of refuge (ch. 20)
 - 2. The 48 cities of the priests (ch. 21)
 - IV. Epilogue: Tribal Unity and Loyalty to the Lord (chs. 22-24)
 - . The Altar of Witness by the Jordan (ch. 22)
 - A. Joshua's Farewell Exhortation (ch. 23)
 - B. The Renewal of the Covenant at Shechem (24:1-28)

C. The Death and Burial of Joshua and Eleazar (24:29-33)