



The Summit
Green Campus of Canton Baptist Temple

Resources for Your Life

Joshua
9 Sessions

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Resource Guide

This resource was compiled from the personal Bible study and blog entries created by Tom Hogsed, pastor of the Summit in Green. You can find the original blog entries at www.tomhogsed.com.

The **introduction** to this book has been written so the reader has a better understanding of the Biblical author, his purpose in writing, and important points to understand before reading.

Following the introduction, each new page represents a **verse by verse overview** of the Scripture passage. The best way to study is to first read the Scripture verses from your Bible relying on the Holy Spirit to provide understanding and then to support your understanding with the commentary written below.

At the end of each Scripture commentary, there is a short **prayer** written so the reader can personally apply what has been discovered; however, it is suggested that you also pray from your heart in response to God's Word.

Feel free to make your own personal notes in your Bible, on this page, or even in a journal.

If this resource has helped you or you have further questions, please send an e-mail to tomhogsed@gmail.com.

Introduction to Joshua

For 40 long years, Moses (see God's calling of Moses in Exodus 3) had led the children of Israel through the wilderness until they finally arrived at the Jordan River where they were now awaiting their entrance into the land of Canaan. Moses would not be the one to lead Israel into Canaan because of his disobedience at Kadesh (Numbers 20). Instead, the leadership of Israel was passed from Moses to Joshua, who was described as a man "full of the spirit of wisdom" (Deuteronomy 34:9) and the one appointed by God to be their next leader (Deuteronomy 31:1-13). He was also known as a man of faith (see Numbers 14:6-10) and an influential military leader (see Exodus 17:9-13) capable of leading the Israelites in a battle against the inhabitants of Canaan. Hundreds of years before this time, God had promised to give Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan as their own possession (Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:18-21). Many years passed between God's everlasting covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) and their arrival outside the Promised Land. Here are some of the highlights leading up to this point in Israel's history: Israel's bondage and escape from Egypt (Exodus 1:1-12:36), Israel's wandering in the wilderness for 40 years because of their disobedience (Exodus 12:37-18:27; the book of Numbers), God's giving of the law to govern the people (Exodus 19:1-40:38; the book of Leviticus), and Moses' calling Israel to obey God once entering the land (the book of Deuteronomy). All of these events brought Israel to the brink of Canaan and now Joshua would be the one to lead them the rest of the way.

Joshua, whose name means Jehovah saves or the Lord is salvation, is the understood author of this book, although it is widely accepted that someone close to Joshua (possibly Eleazar or Phinehas) finished the book with the details concerning his death in Joshua 24:29-33. The book of Joshua is the first of twelve historical books in the Old Testament and was likely written somewhere between 1405-1385 BC. The contents of this book focus on three major events: entering the Promised Land (Joshua 1:1-5:12), conquering the Promised Land (Joshua 5:13-12:24), and dividing the Promised Land (Joshua 13:1-24:33). Entering the Promised Land would be the first test of Israel's faith in God as they encountered their first obstacle - crossing the Jordan River. In order to enter the land of Canaan, Joshua would need to successfully lead approximately two million people across the overflowing river (Joshua 3:15). Once they entered the Promised Land, Joshua would then lead the nation of Israel in conquering the inhabitants of the Promised Land. Joshua and Israel would need God's help if they desired to overtake the land. After conquering the people of Canaan, Israel would receive the land as their own and it would be divided among them.

Israel had been awaiting this promise to be fulfilled for many centuries, but it was now up to them to evidence faith in God and obey Him at every step. God promised to be faithful to them, but would Israel be faithful to Him? The book of Joshua holds the answers to these questions as Israel is about to take one of the biggest steps in her history.

Dear God, give me understanding as I read the book of Joshua and help me to apply the principles in my own life.

Joshua 1:1-2:24

After leading the nation of Israel through the wilderness for 40 years, Moses died (Deuteronomy 34; Joshua 1:1) and the Lord commanded Joshua to lead the people across the Jordan River into the land God had promised to give to Abraham's descendants (Genesis 12:1-3; Joshua 1:2-3). God describes the borders of this land as the Mediterranean Sea in the west, the Euphrates River in the east, the wilderness to the Nile of Egypt in the south, and Lebanon in the north (1:4). There were probably some natural fears about entering the land, but God said to Joshua, "no man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you" (1:5). With God's continual presence promised (1:5, 9), Joshua would not have to rely on his own strength; however, he would need make sure that he and Israel obeyed the law God had given to Moses (1:6-7). God's law (Scripture) would need to become a very important part of Joshua's daily life; in fact, God says to Joshua, "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success" (1:8). Joshua's prosperity and success was dependent on his continued obedience to God's word.

Following the Lord's challenge to Joshua (1:2-9), the officers of Israel commanded the people to prepare themselves for crossing over the Jordan River and entering the Promised Land within three days (1:10-11). Joshua also reminded the Reubenites, Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh about their promise to assist the rest of the tribes in the conquest of Canaan, even though their territory was east of the Jordan River (1:12-15). The details of their request are documented in Numbers 32. These three tribes residing east of the Jordan responded to Joshua saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the Lord your God be with you, as He was with Moses. Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage" (1:16-18). These tribes gave their word that they would fight until the rest of the tribes had settled in Canaan.

During these three days of preparation, Joshua sent out two spies to view the land and especially the city of Jericho (2:1a). These two men resided at the house of a prostitute named Rahab because their presence there would not raise suspicions (2:1b); however, the king of Jericho found out that they were there to search out the city and demanded that Rahab bring the spies to him (2:2-3). Rather than turning the spies over to the king, Rahab hid them on the roof (2:6) and told the king's soldiers that they had already left (2:4-6). The soldiers then pursued the spies (2:7). Although Rahab's lie was a sin, she was later commended for her faith (see Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25). After the soldiers left, Rahab admitted to the spies that her people were in fear of the Israelites (2:8-10) and even declared her own faith in the God of Israel (2:11). Rahab then requested that her family be spared when Israel conquered Jericho (2:12-13) and the spies promised to preserve her family as long as she did not speak of their mission (2:14); furthermore, when Israel did invade the city, Rahab's house was to be marked with a scarlet cord and all members of her house were to stay inside during the battle if they wanted to be spared (2:17-20). Rahab agreed to their terms (2:21) and helped them escape down a rope hung out the window of her house, which was built on the city wall (2:15). She also advised them to escape to the mountains for three days before returning to the Israelites (2:16), which they did (2:22-23). The two spies brought back a report to Joshua saying, "Truly the Lord has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us" (2:24). With God fighting for them, Israel would surely win the battle.

Dear God, I desire to have Your continual presence in my life.

Joshua 3:1-4:24

Forty years of wandering in the wilderness ended with the Israelites encamped not too far outside the city of Jericho. The only barrier that remained between the people and the Promised Land was the Jordan River, which God had commanded them to cross after three days (Joshua 1:2, 10-11). During that three days, Joshua sent two spies to Canaan and they reported back to him saying, "Truly the Lord has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us" (Joshua 2:24). Upon hearing this good news from the spies, Joshua began making preparations for the nation of Israel to move from the Acacia Grove (Shittim) to the Jordan River (3:1). They lodged near the Jordan River and the officers of Israel told the people, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before" (3:3-4). The ark of the covenant symbolized God's presence and by placing it ahead of the people it would remind Israel that the Lord was leading them. Joshua also demanded that the people consecrate themselves in preparation for what God was about to do among them (3:5). The priests then took the ark of the covenant and went before the people (3:6). The Lord spoke to Joshua saying, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you" (3:7). These words from the Lord would have given Joshua confidence that God was going to do something spectacular in the sight of all Israel that very day.

All of Israel stood before Joshua and he revealed to them that God was going to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan so they would know that the living God was among them (3:9-10). After assuring Israel that they would be victorious over the inhabitants of the land, Joshua told them that the ark of the covenant would cross over the Jordan River before them (3:11-12). Since the Jordan River was at flood stage during this time of year (see Joshua 3:15), the Israelites were probably wondering how they were going to cross over the river, but Joshua informed them that as soon as the soles of the priests who were carrying the ark touched the water, the river would be miraculously stopped from upstream (3:13). The words that Joshua had spoken were fulfilled and the entire nation of Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry ground (3:14-17; 4:10-13, 15-19). When all the people had crossed over, the Lord commanded that twelve stones from the Jordan River be gathered and placed in the camp where they lodged that night (4:1-5). These twelve stones would become a memorial to future generations about God cutting off the water of the Jordan so that Israel could cross on dry land (4:6-7, 20-23). The children of Israel gathered the stones from the Jordan River and laid them down where they lodged that night (4:8); furthermore, while the men were gathering the stones, Joshua made his own twelve stone memorial to mark the exact spot where the priests' feet had touched the water and caused it to stop upstream (4:9). Following this incident, the Lord exalted Joshua and all of Israel feared him as they feared Moses (4:14). God had been faithful to Joshua and the children of Israel and now He was making Himself known to all the peoples of the earth (4:24).

Dear God, thank You for being faithful to Your people.

Joshua 5:1-6:27

God had miraculously cut off the waters of the Jordan River upstream so that the nation of Israel could cross over on dry ground and begin their conquest of Canaan (Joshua 3-4). Hundreds of years earlier God had promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan (Genesis 13:12-18) and now this promise was about to be fulfilled. When the kings of the Amorites, who dwelt on the west side of the river, heard that God had dried up the Jordan and the children of Israel had crossed over, they became fearful (5:1). Before the Israelites could move forward though, the Lord commanded Joshua to circumcise all males under 40 years of age (5:2). God had initially instituted circumcision (cutting away of the male foreskin) for all males as a sign of faith concerning the Abrahamic Covenant and an identifying mark of being a descendant of Abraham (see Genesis 17:9-14); however, during Israel's wandering in the wilderness, they had abandoned this commandment (5:3-6). In order for Israel to remain in fellowship with God, circumcision would need to be reinstated so Joshua ensured that every male under 40 was circumcised (5:7-8) and God's favor on Israel was restored (5:9). While Israel was camped at Gilgal, they celebrated the Passover (5:10) which would have reminded them about God miraculously delivering them from Egyptian bondage (see Exodus 7-12). On the day following the Passover, the manna God had been providing for them to eat during their 40 years of wandering ceased and they ate food from the land of Canaan (5:11-12). Eating of the fruit of the Promised Land must have been a joyful time among Israel as they anticipated a permanent dwelling in Canaan.

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, 'Are You for us or for our adversaries?'" (5:13). This Man standing before Joshua was Jesus Christ (known as a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ or Christophany) and the fact that He had a sword in His hand indicated that God was about to give Israel victory over those inhabiting Canaan. Joshua was unsure of this Man's identity, but when He identified Himself as the Commander of the army of the Lord, Joshua immediately fell on his face and worshiped (5:14-15).

The people of Jericho had shut themselves tightly inside their city walls because they were fearful of the approaching Israelites (6:1). The Lord took this opportunity to give Joshua specific instructions concerning overtaking Jericho. Rather than implementing a typical battle strategy, God said to Joshua, "You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him" (6:3-5). Although this seemed like a bizarre strategy, Israel would be reminded that the Lord fights on their behalf. Joshua and all of Israel carefully followed the Lord's instructions (6:6-14) and on the seventh day they marched around the city seven times and the walls fell flat (6:15-20). Only Rahab and all who were in her house were spared because she had hidden the two spies of Israel (6:17, 22-25; see also Joshua 2). Although Israel was victorious over Jericho, the Lord commanded that everything in the city be destroyed and nothing was to be taken as their own possession (6:18-19, 21). Total destruction of the city and restraining themselves from taking anything would be an expression of giving God the initial spoils of the land (firstfruits). Joshua also pronounced a curse on anyone who would attempt to rebuild Jericho because the location of this city was to be devoted to God. After this victory over Jericho, "...the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country" (6:27). Because Joshua and the people had obeyed the Lord's commands, they were seeing Him bless them as a people.

Dear God, help me remember that obedience leads to blessing.

Joshua 7:1-8:35

Israel had just experienced another great miracle from God as he supernaturally brought down the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6), which moved them one step closer to inhabiting the land they had been promised by God (Genesis 13:12-18). Although God gave Israel the victory over the city of Jericho, He commanded them not to take any of the spoils for themselves because Jericho was God's possession (Joshua 6:19); in fact, Joshua also commanded that no one build a city on top of the destroyed site of Jericho (6:26). Israel's celebration of their victory over Jericho was short lived when God's anger burned against the nation for one man's disobedience. Achan, of the tribe of Judah, had disobeyed the command of God and took for himself some of the spoils from Jericho (7:1). His sin was not immediately exposed but would eventually be discovered because of what occurred next in the history of Israel.

Joshua sent men to spy out Ai, which was the next city to be overtaken by Israel, and the spies returned to tell Joshua that only 2,000-3,000 soldiers were needed to defeat Ai (7:2-3). "So about three thousand men went up there from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them from before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent; therefore the hearts of the people melted and became like water" (7:4-5). After such a decisive victory over Jericho, Joshua and all of Israel could not understand why God would allow them to be defeated by a small nation like Ai. Joshua cried out to God for answers (7:6-9) and the Lord revealed to him that they had been defeated because of a disobedient action within the nation of Israel (7:10-11). Until Joshua dealt with the sin in Israel, God would withdraw His presence and they would not be able to stand against their enemies (7:12-13). Joshua immediately went into action and every individual from every tribe was brought before the Lord until the guilty person was exposed (7:14-18). Even though God could have pointed out Achan from the very beginning, He chose to involve all the tribes so that they could see the seriousness of disobeying God. As Achan stood before Joshua, he admitted that he had taken some of the spoils from Jericho and hidden them in his tent (7:19-21). Joshua sent messengers to Achan's tent and they brought back the items he had taken from Jericho (7:22-23). "Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. And Joshua said, 'Why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day.' So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones" (7:24-25). Although this punishment may seem harsh, God wanted the children of Israel to obey Him in all things and understand that disobedience would not be tolerated. If Israel was going to progress as a nation, they would need to learn to live in total obedience to God's commandments.

Now that Achan's sin had been exposed and punished, Israel was ready to go to battle against Ai. The Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush for the city behind it" (8:1-2). Joshua obeyed the voice of the Lord and defeated the city of Ai (8:3-29). After his defeat of Ai, Joshua built an altar on Mount Ebal and wrote on the stones the law of Moses (8:30-32; see also Deuteronomy 27:1-26). After Joshua wrote the law of Moses on the stones, he read the entire law in the presence of Israel (8:33-35). This ceremony, prescribed by Moses and carried out by Joshua, was an important reminder about the blessings for obedience as well as the cursings for disobedience. Israel would need to be fully obedient to God in order to experience His presence among them.

Dear God, may I walk in daily obedience to You.

Joshua 9:1-10:43

Since miraculously crossing over the Jordan River (Joshua 3-4), Israel had conquered the cities of Jericho (Joshua 6) and Ai (Joshua 7-8). Israel's victories over these two cities caused fear in the kings who were still residing in the hills, lowlands, and coastal plains (9:1). Because Israel was completely destroying their enemies, these kings decided that they should form one army so that they might have a better chance at defending themselves against Joshua and the nation of Israel (9:2). Not all the kings were convinced that they could defeat Israel so instead of joining in an alliance with the other the kings, the inhabitants of Gibeon decided to make peace with Israel. The Gibeonites devised a plan to trick Israel into thinking that they were a people who lived very far away so that Israel would make a promise not to destroy them (9:3-6). When this group of people first approached the leaders of Israel they were skeptical (9:7), but the group of travelers assured them that they had come because of all the great things they had heard concerning the great God of Israel (9:8-13). Rather than seeking the counsel of the Lord in this matter, the leaders of Israel quickly made a covenant of peace with the Gibeonites and promised not to destroy them (9:14-15). God had already commanded Israel not to make any covenants with the inhabitants of Canaan, but to destroy them (see Deuteronomy 7:1-2). Israel's covenant with the Gibeonites would be considered an act of disobedience since they did not seek the Lord in their decision. A couple of days later, Israel found out that the Gibeonites actually resided in Canaan and not outside Canaan as they had said (9:16). When the children of Israel traveled to their cities, they did not attack them because of the covenant they had made with them; however, Joshua declared that the Gibeonites would become woodcutters and water carriers for Israel (9:17-27).

The news of Israel's victories and their treaty with the Gibeonites continued to spread throughout the region and Adoni-Zedek (king of Jerusalem) joined with four other cities to attack Gibeon for their traitorous actions (10:1-5). Upon hearing about the plans of these five cities to attack them, the men of Gibeon begged Joshua and his army to help them (10:6). Joshua agreed to defend them and the army of Israel destroyed the five-city coalition (10:7-10); furthermore, as the enemy army retreated, God miraculously sent down large hailstones from heaven to destroy these people so that "there were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword" (10:11). Another miracle had also taken place that day in order for Israel to destroy their enemies. Joshua had prayed that the sun would stand still over Gibeon until Israel had taken revenge on their enemies (10:12-13). Although this miracle is scientifically unexplainable, it is easily explained when one considers that the all-powerful God slowed down the earth's rotation so that it made a full rotation in 48 hours instead of 24 hours. The extra daylight allowed Joshua and Israel to defeat their enemies before the sun went down. This miraculous event was unlike any other (10:14) and was also recorded in the Book of Jasher, a collection of Hebrew songs to celebrate the accomplishments of Israel's leaders. The five kings who had aligned themselves together against Gibeon were captured and Joshua killed them, left them hang on trees until evening, and then threw their bodies into the caves where they had been found hiding (10:16-27). After conquering these five cities, Joshua quickly moved into the rest of southern Canaan and conquered Makkedah (10:28), Libnah (10:29-30), Lachish (10:31-33), Eglon (10:34-35), Hebron (10:36-37), and Debir (10:38-39). Joshua, led by the mighty hand of the Lord, had conquered the southern part of Canaan (10:40-43) and were now poised to overtake the northern region.

Dear God, thank You for being faithful to Your people even when we are not faithful.

Joshua 11:1-12:24

The nation of Israel had miraculously crossed the Jordan River by the mighty hand of God (Joshua 3-4) and then conquered the central part of Canaan, Jericho (Joshua 6) and Ai (Joshua 7-8), as well as the southern region of the land (Joshua 9-10). When the kings on the northern region heard about Joshua and Israel's conquest in the southern part of Canaan (11:1a), they formed an alliance in hopes that they would be able to defeat Israel before they conquered the northern parts of Canaan (11:1b-3). Although the enemy kings gathered a great multitude together to fight against Israel (11:4-5), the Lord assured Joshua that they would be victorious over their enemies (11:6). After hearing that God would give them the victory, Joshua organized a surprise attack and defeated them as the Lord had said (11:7-9). Joshua returned to each city in northern Canaan to defeat their kings and capture the city (11:10-15). The largest city in the north, Hazor, was burned with fire most likely to show that the Lord and Israel could not be defeated (11:10-12). Burning Hazor would be a visible reminder to other cities who tried to unite themselves against Israel.

Joshua's conquering of the northern region of the land formally concluded Israel's conquest against Canaan, which lasted seven years (approximately 1405-1398 BC). Before detailing how the land of Canaan would be divided among Israel as their inheritance (Joshua 13-21), Joshua summarized Israel's conquest of Canaan (Joshua 11:16-12:24). First, Joshua reviewed all of the lands he had conquered (11:16-23). Out of all the cities he defeated, he only made peace with the inhabitants of Gibeon, who had deceived Israel (11:19; see also Joshua 9). Joshua then wrote the following words to summarize all the victories in the first eleven chapters of this book, "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war" (11:23). Even though Joshua had not necessarily conquered every single city throughout the land (see Joshua 13:1-2), he had overtaken all of the key areas of Canaan which would enable Israel to occupy the land. In summarizing the conquest of Canaan, Joshua also listed the thirty-one kings (12:24) who had been defeated since the conquest of Canaan began (12:1-24). Moses had defeated both of the kings in Sihon (Numbers 21:21-32) and Og (Numbers 21:33-35), who occupied the region east of Canaan (12:1-6). The eastern region of Canaan (across the Jordan River) would eventually be occupied by Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh (Numbers 32). Joshua also reviewed the kings whom he had defeated in the conquest of Canaan (12:7-24): western kings (12:7-8), central kings (12:9), sixteen southern kings (12:10-16), and fifteen northern kings (12:17-24). All of Joshua's victories were accomplished by the mighty hand of the Lord and His blessing over the nation of Israel. God had promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 12:7), so the victories of Joshua were further proof that God was fulfilling His promise.

Dear God, thank You for keeping Your promises to us.

Joshua 13:1-21:45

Israel, led by Joshua, had already entered the Promised Land by miraculously crossing the Jordan River (Joshua 1:1-5:15). Over the next seven years (Joshua 11:18), God enabled the people of Israel to conquer the inhabitants of the land (Joshua 6:1-12:24) which included the central part of Canaan, Jericho (Joshua 6) and Ai (Joshua 7-8); the southern region of the land (Joshua 9-10); and the northern section of Canaan (Joshua 11:1-15). Although Joshua had conquered those kings and cities in Canaan that posed the biggest threat to the future of Israel, some of the areas had not been occupied by the nation, so as the people spread out into those areas they were to drive out the remaining inhabitants. The areas of Canaan that were not yet inhabited by the Israelites included Philistia (13:2-3), Phoenicia (13:4), and Lebanon (13:5-6).

Since Joshua was getting older (13:1), God commanded him to carry out the last phase of his life by dividing the land of Canaan among the nine and a half tribes of Israel (13:7). The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh were settling east of the Jordan River as had been promised to them by Moses (13:8-33; see Numbers 32). The other nine and a half tribes received allotments of land which are established in Joshua 13:15-19:51. Caleb (14:6-15; 15:13-19) and Joshua (19:49-51) would also receive their own portion of land because of their faith and obedience to God almost 45 years ago (Deuteronomy 1:36). Here is a listing of each tribe and the passage that details the land that they will receive.

Land East of the Jordan River (13:8-14)

Reuben (13:15-23); Gad (13:24-28); Half the Tribe of Manasseh (13:29-33)

Land West of the Jordan River (Joshua 14:1-5)

Judah (15:1-12; 20-63); Ephraim (16:1-10; 17:14-18); Half the Tribe of Manasseh (17:1-18); Benjamin (18:11-28); Simeon (19:1-9); Zebulun (19:10-16); Issachar (19:17-23); Asher (19:24-31); Naphtali (19:32-39); Dan (19:40-48)

Along with establishing the territories for all the tribes of Israel, Joshua also identified six cities of refuge, which were locations that a man could flee for safety if he accidentally killed another person (20:1-9; see Numbers 35:9-34). Along with identifying the cities of refuge, forty-eight cities throughout the land were given to the Levites (21:1-42). Since the Levites were the spiritual leaders of Israel, they were not given an allotted territory; however, they would be scattered among the people so that could assist them in worship ceremonies.

Israel had experienced several centuries of captivity in Egypt. After their exodus from Egypt, Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Following their wandering in the wilderness, Israel spent the next seven years conquering the land of Canaan and now they were finally able to enjoy dwelling in the land that God had promised to Abraham's descendants. Although this had been a long and painful journey, Israel could now rest in the faithfulness of God. "So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. The Lord gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass" (21:43-45)

Dear God, You are faithful.

Joshua 22:1-24:33

Israel had entered the Promised Land (1:1-5:15), conquered the Promised Land (6:1-12:24), and now inhabited the Promised Land (13:1-21:45) which had been divided among the twelve tribes. Since the nine and a half tribes on the west of the Jordan now had rest in the land of Canaan, Joshua gave the two and a half tribes (Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh) permission to return east of the Jordan to inhabit the portion of land that had been promised to them (22:1-4). As they were ready to return to return to the land east of the Jordan River, Joshua said to them, "But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul" (22:5). Even though God fulfilled His promise to give Israel the land, He still expected them to live in obedience to Him. After Joshua's reminder to them about obeying God, the two and a half tribes traveled back east of the Jordan to settle in their land (22:6-9). When they arrived in the region of the Jordan that was still in the land of Canaan, they built a "great, impressive altar" as a symbol of unity between the western and eastern tribes (22:10). The construction of the altar was misinterpreted by the western tribes who believed that it had been built in rebellion against God and as an alternative altar to the one which was a part of the tabernacle in Canaan (22:11-20); however, the eastern tribes quickly defended their actions and explained that they had constructed it as a witness to future generations that they could cross the Jordan and worship in Canaan (22:21-29). After hearing the explanation of the eastern tribes, the western tribes were satisfied and permitted the altar to stand as a symbol of the unity between the tribes dwelling west and east of the Jordan River (22:30-34).

Many years had passed since the conquest of Canaan (1405-1398 BC) and Joshua was advanced in age (110 years old when he died). The year was probably somewhere between 1385-1383 BC when Joshua called together all the leaders of Israel and spoke to them some final words before his death (23:1-2). First, Joshua reminded them about all that the Lord had done for them in defeating their enemies and giving Israel their land as an inheritance (23:3-4). Although some of their enemies were still dwelling in the land, Joshua told them that the Lord would eventually drive them out (23:5). One of the dangers that would remain until the Canaanites were completely driven out was that Israel would be tempted to disobey God and follow after other gods. Joshua challenged them to remain faithful to God and separate themselves from pagan influences (23:6-11). If they disobeyed God and intermarried with the Canaanites, God would remove His blessing and they would not be able to stand against their enemies (23:12-16).

Following Joshua's reminder of God's faithfulness and the importance of obedience, Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel together and they presented themselves before God (24:1). Joshua briefly reviewed the history of Israel (24:2-13) from Abraham (Genesis 11) to Israel's exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12) as well as Israel's wandering in the wilderness (Exodus 13-Deuteronomy 34) and their conquest of Canaan (Joshua 1-22). Reviewing Israel's history would remind them that it was God who brought them into the land they now possessed. Since God had been faithful to Israel, Israel now needed to "... fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt..." (24:14). Joshua made a firm stand in choosing to serve the Lord and he challenged Israel to do the same (24:15). Upon hearing Joshua's challenge to serve God alone, Israel responded by declaring, "The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!" (24:16-24). Joshua then renewed the covenant with the people (24:25), added these words of Joshua to the Book of the Law of God (24:26a), and inscribed the statutes of the covenant on a large stone as a reminder to the people (24:26b-27). After Joshua did these things, the people returned to their territories in the Promised Land (24:28). After 110 years of life, Joshua died in approximately 1383 BC (24:29-33). He had left a legacy to the nation of Israel which was summarized by the following words, "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel" (24:31).

Dear God, help me to leave a godly legacy to all those who follow me.