

Joshua 1-24

As we come to the book of Joshua the Lord sets His blessing on Joshua and commissions him to do what Moses was not allowed to do; enter the land with the nation of Israel.

Joshua 1:1-3 ^{NAU} Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, ² "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. ³ "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses.

If you were to look at the land of Israel today it is a mere slice of what God had originally promised to them. The land as it was originally promised extended as far west as Egypt and as far north and east as the river Euphrates which is in Iraq and Iran.

^{NAU} **Genesis 15:18** On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

It also went north to the land of the Hittites which could have included parts of what we know today as Turkey. And so, the Promised Land was intended to be a pretty large piece of real estate. And God was going to use Joshua to enter the land with the intention of conquering the land.

Joshua 1:5-11 ⁵ "No man will *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. ⁶ "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ "Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. ⁸ "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. ⁹ "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." ¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days

you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, to possess it."

But before they enter the land Joshua sends spies to scope things out.

Joshua 2:1-14 ^{NAU} Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there. ² It was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." ³ And the king of Jericho sent *word* to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land." ⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from." ⁵ "It came about when *it was time* to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." ⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. ⁷ So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate. ⁸ Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, ⁹ and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. ¹⁰ "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹ "When we heard *it*, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. ¹² "Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth, ¹³ and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." ¹⁴ So the men said to her, "Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."

And so, Rahab was blessed along with her family when the Israelites went up to Jericho to destroy it and capture it.

Joshua 6:23-27 ²³ So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them outside the camp of Israel. ²⁴ They burned the city with fire, and all that was in it. Only the silver and gold, and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. ²⁵ However, Rahab the harlot and her father's household and all she had, Joshua spared; and she has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. ²⁶ Then Joshua made them take an oath at that time, saying, "Cursed before the LORD is the man who rises up and builds this city Jericho; with *the loss of* his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and with *the loss of* his youngest son he shall set up its gates." ²⁷ So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

By the way, so as not to fall into the trap of thinking that the destruction of Jericho is only an historical account, we need to remember the intent of all of Scripture which is what?

Redemption of God's people through the seed of the woman who will bring into this world the promised Messiah. It's all about Jesus Christ.

Luke 24:25-27 ²⁵ And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

So , what does the destruction of Jericho have to do with the coming Messiah?

Matthew 1:1-6 ^{NAU} The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham: ² Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. ³ Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram. ⁴ Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon. ⁵ Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse. ⁶ Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah.

And we know that Jesus came from the line of David. Again, to suggest that all of this was coincidence is to miss the eternal decree of God who has planned every detail of His coming into this world to redeem a people for Himself.

It was Rahab's faith that ensures whereby she would be intimately involved in the coming of the Messiah into this world.

^{NAU} **Hebrews 11:31** By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

But like you and I she was chosen by God to enter into the world at a particular time in a particular place for a particular purpose that was designed by God to bring Him glory and to fulfill His will.

Ephesians 1:5-12 ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

It is the will of God that determines what His good pleasure and will will be and he chooses us in Christ before the foundations of the world to work His will out in time.

John 1:12-13 ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

When and only when God changed our natures from haters of God to lovers of God were we able to employ our faith in Him; and even that was a gift from God.

Ephesians 2:8-10 ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

And so, when we look at Rahab we are really looking at a person who is not so different from us. She was chosen for a specific task and by faith she carried out that task to the glory of God. To glorify God in every day life, so that we might glorify Him forever.

By the time we come to Joshua chapter 12 God has given many of the kings into the hands of Israel. 31 kings from many different regions of Canaan were defeated because God was their King.

But these 31 kings were only the beginning of God's plan to dispossess the inhabitants of Canaan and give it to His people.

Joshua 13:1 ^{NAU} Now Joshua was old *and* advanced in years when the LORD said to him, "You are old *and* advanced in years, and very much of the land remains to be possessed.

Much of the remainder of the book of Joshua is how God gave the land to Israel and how it was to be divided among the tribes of Israel. But as Joshua was near the end of his life he exhorted Israel to remember how they got the land.

Joshua 23:1-4 ^{NAU} Now it came about after many days, when the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies on every side, and Joshua was old, advanced in years, ² that Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and their heads and their judges and their officers, and said to them, "I am old, advanced in years. ³ "And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has been fighting for you. ⁴ "See, I have apportioned to you these nations which remain as an inheritance for your tribes, with all the nations which I have cut off, from the Jordan even to the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun.

Joshua 23:14-16 ¹⁴ "Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed. ¹⁵ "It shall come about that just as all the good words which the LORD your God spoke to you have come upon you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the threats,

until He has destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you. ¹⁶ "When you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you will perish quickly from off the good land which He has given you."

By the way, just as a reminder, God fulfilled the prophecy we have here in Joshua 23:16. The nation perished as a nation and was taken off of the good land which God had given them. The land Israel possesses today, in a sense has been given to them by God, but not because they have repented and submitted themselves to God.

They're living in the land because of a deal that the allies made with Israel and Palestine at the end of W.W.II. Ironically, the allies, particularly Britain and the U.S., had written a treaty to where both Israel and Palestine would each be given statehood with their own nation status in their own distinct region of Palestine.

The Jews accepted the terms, the Palestinians did not. And shortly after the Jews took up their status as a nation war broke out between them and the Palestinians. And it has been nothing but war since.

Israel today is not the Israel under the Covenant that God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That covenant has been fulfilled in the new covenant in Christ's blood, and now the Israel of God are all who place their faith in the Messiah, both Jew and Gentile.

Romans 2:28-29 ²⁸ For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹ But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Galatians 6:14-16 ¹⁴ But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. ¹⁶ And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

The creation of which Paul speaks are all people who have fallen upon the cross and the Messiah who made atonement for the sins of His people. They are the Israel of God. But back to our text.

And so, Joshua gathers Israel together and before his death he recaps their entire history from Terah, the father of Abraham, to the present.

Joshua 24:1-33 ^{NAU} Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel and for their heads and their judges and their officers; and they presented themselves before God. ² Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, *namely*, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father 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 multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. ⁴ 'To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and to Esau I gave Mount Seir to possess it; but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt. ⁵ 'Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt by what I did in its midst; and afterward I brought you out. ⁶ 'I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and Egypt pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. ⁷ 'But when they cried out to the LORD, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them and covered them; and your own eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness for a long time. ⁸ 'Then I brought you into the land of the Amorites who lived beyond the Jordan, and they fought with you; and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land when I destroyed them before you. ⁹ 'Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel, and he sent and summoned Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. ¹⁰ 'But I was not willing to listen to Balaam. So he had to bless you, and I delivered you from his hand. ¹¹ 'You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho; and the citizens of Jericho fought against you, *and* the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Girgashite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Thus I gave them into your hand. ¹² 'Then I sent the hornet before you and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites from before you, *but* not by your sword or your bow. ¹³ 'I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them; you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.' ¹⁴ "Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵ "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for

yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." ¹⁶ The people answered and said, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did these great signs in our sight and preserved us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. ¹⁸ "The LORD drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who lived in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God." ¹⁹ Then Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression 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 He has done good to you." ²¹ The people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD." ²² Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves the LORD, to serve Him." And they said, "We are witnesses." ²³ "Now therefore, put away the foreign gods which are in your midst, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." ²⁴ The people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God and we will obey His voice." ²⁵ So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in 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 oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. ²⁷ Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be for a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us; thus it shall be for a witness against you, so that you do not deny your God." ²⁸ Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his inheritance. ²⁹ It came about after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being one hundred and ten years old. ³⁰ And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of Mount Gaash. ³¹ Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the LORD which He had done for Israel. ³² Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the piece of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of money; and they became the inheritance of Joseph's sons. ³³ And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him at Gibeah of Phinehas his son, which was given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

You might remember that Joseph himself had made this request to remove his bones from the land of slavery to the land of promise.

^{NAU} **Genesis 50:24-25** Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." **25** Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here."

Why do you think Joseph was so intent on having his bones carried from Egypt to the Promised Land?

Joseph was the son of Jacob, a fellow-heir of the Promised land. If he couldn't possess it before his death, he would possess it after. And the first sight he will see at his resurrection will be the land of promise. And though the possession of the land in those days will still not be the ultimate possession, it will mark the beginning of the end and beginning of the new earth to come which all of Joseph's relatives looked forward to.

By the way, if you do the math, the bones of Joseph had been kept by a number of people in Israel from his death to the capture of the lands of Canaan. Remember, it was after Joseph's death that Israel stayed in Egypt for some 400 plus years. It was then another 40 years that Israel wandered the desert and then several years before Joshua conquered Canaan. So, it was probably close to 500 plus years after the death of Joseph that his bones finally end up in the Promised land.

Evidently, Joseph's request was taken seriously and the nation of Israel used his bones as the hope of one day finally ending up in the land of promise.