

- I. Joshua
  - a. Purpose: In this session we will survey the book of Joshua by covering the topic of authorship, setting, purpose, structure, a closer look at the book of Joshua and the place of this book in the canon of Scripture.
  - b. Authorship: Joshua
    - i. “*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*” (Joshua 24:26)
      - 1. This is towards the end of the book of Joshua, in the final chapter.
      - 2. Here we see the mention of Joshua’s writing and adding it to the law of God thus showing him add writings to the Scriptures.
      - 3. It would make more sense this is referring to the book of Joshua.
    - ii. Jewish tradition as recorded in the Talmud does attribute the book of Joshua as being written by Joshua: “Joshua wrote the book which bears his name and [the last] eight verses of the Pentateuch” (Baba Bathra 14b-15a).<sup>1</sup>
  - c. Setting
    - i. The timing of Joshua and the geo-political situation was at a providential moment that allowed for the birth of Israel: “Thus during the life of Joshua in the LB age (1550– 1200 BC) the land of Canaan was nominally under Egyptian control, while great international powers from Syria, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor were in no position to become involved in Canaanite affairs. Also the Canaanites internally were unable to present a united front against the Israelites since the land of the Canaanites was divided into 31 separate city-states (Josh 12: 9– 24).”<sup>2</sup>
  - d. Purpose
    - i. According to Mark Rooker: “The purpose of the book of Joshua is to show the fulfillment of God's covenant promise to the patriarchs to give the land of Canaan to their descendants (Gen 12: 2; 15: 16; Deut 30: 20).”<sup>3</sup>
    - ii. According to Andrew Hill and John Walton: “The purpose of the book is to convey how God kept his covenant promise to bring the Israelites into the land he had showed to Abraham.”<sup>4</sup>
  - e. Structure
    - i. How do we structure the book of Joshua?
      - 1. One helpful key is to note the key verbs in each section.

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<sup>1</sup>Eugene Merrill, “The Historical Books” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 9788.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 9901-9904.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 9973-9974.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Hill and John Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 226.

2. In **Joshua 1-5:12** the key verb is “ābar, “cross.”<sup>5</sup> It appears in **Joshua 1:2,11**( twice), **14; 2:23; 3:1-2, 4, 6, 11, 14, 16-17**( twice); **4:1, 3, 5, 7-8, 10-13, 23** ( twice); **5:1**.<sup>6</sup>
  3. In **Joshua 5:13-12:24** the key verb is lāqa, "take."<sup>7</sup> It appears in **Joshua 6:18; 7:1, 11, 21, 23-24; 8:1, 12; 9:4, 11, 14; 11:16, 19, 23**.<sup>8</sup>
  4. In **Joshua 13-21**the key verb is hālaq, "divide."<sup>9</sup> It appears in **Joshua 13:7; 14:5; 19:2, 10, 51**; the nominal form ēleq is found **Joshua 14:4; 15:13; 18:5-7, 9; 19:9**.<sup>10</sup>
  5. In **Joshua 22-24** the key verb is ābad, "serve."<sup>11</sup> It appears in **Joshua 22:5, 27; 23:7, 16; 24:2, 10, 14** ( twice), **15**( twice), **16, 18-19, 21-22, 24,31**. The nominal form ebed, "servant," is found in **Joshua 22:2, 4-5; 24:17 and 24:29**.<sup>12</sup>
- ii. The outline<sup>13</sup>:
1. Crossing into Canaan (**Joshua 1-5:12**)
  2. Conquest into Canaan (**Joshua 5:13-12:24**)
  3. Carving up Canaan (**Joshua 13-21**)
  4. Complying in Canaan (**Joshua 22-24**)
- f. Looking more closer at the book of Joshua
- i. Crossing into Canaan (**Joshua 1-5:12**)
    1. This section include preparation and instruction for entrance into the promise land.
    2. There is a topic of obedience in this section
      - a. In the first chapter God told Joshua the following: “*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*

<sup>5</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 10004.

<sup>6</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 10277.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 10005.

<sup>8</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 10278-10279.

<sup>9</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 10006.

<sup>10</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Locations 10280-10281.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Location 10007.

<sup>12</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 10282-10284.

<sup>13</sup> Modified from Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 9974-10002. Transliteration is my own.

*to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.” (Joshua 1:7-8)*

- i. Note how God wants to encourage Joshua by telling him “*be strong and very courageous*” (v.7a) which was also an encouragement and exhortation uttered in the **previous verse**.
  - ii. These two verses also emphasize their success is based upon Joshua’s and the people’s obedience. Note the stress on obeying God.
  - b. In **Joshua 5:1-12**, the concluding narrative for this section of obedience to God is a continued topic as Joshua circumcised the next generation of male Israelites.<sup>14</sup>
  - c. Thus both the beginning and end for this section stress the theme of obedience.
3. Parallel of previous events in Redemptive History
- a. **Joshua 2** records the account of two spies in the land of Jericho; it parallels the spies sent in **Numbers 13-14**.
  - b. **Joshua 3** records the account of Israel’s miraculous crossing of the Jordan river; it parallels the previous miracle of God allowing the Hebrews to cross the Red Sea.
  - c. **Joshua 5:1-12** records the circumcision and Passover (v.10) being observed; this recalls God’s work of
- ii. Conquest into Canaan (**Joshua 5:13-12:24**)
    1. Like the first section this second section begins with a divine encounter with God in **Joshua 5:13-15** which emphasizes it is God who leads them into victory.
    2. Four full-length descriptions of the military conquest<sup>15</sup>:
      - a. Conquest of Jericho (**Joshua 6**)
      - b. Second attack on Ai (**Joshua 8**)
      - c. Southern Campaign (**Joshua 10**)
      - d. Northern Campaign (**Joshua 11**)
    3. This section also includes narratives of Israel’s failure to obey God:
      - a. Israel’s defeat at Ai because of Achan’s sin (**Joshua 7**)
      - b. The Gideonites’ deception (**Joshua 9**)
  - iii. Carving up Canaan (**Joshua 13-21**)
    1. Like the two sections it opens with God speaking to Joshua.
    2. This section is very detailed in terms of the land being divided for each tribe of Israel.
    3. There is also a city of Refuge (**Judges 20**).
    4. In **Judges 21** the Levites were in cities scattered among the tribes of Israel.
- g. Place of this book in the Canon

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<sup>14</sup> Mark Rooker, “The Book of Joshua” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 10014-10015.

<sup>15</sup> Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 101.

- i. “The book of Joshua (about 1450 to 1375 BC) forms a bridge from the first five books of the Torah to the books of Judges and the other earlier prophets of Samuel and Kings.”<sup>16</sup>
- ii. Anticipating the Messiah
  1. The book shows even God’s grace to the Gentiles in the case of Rahab in light of God’s promise to bless the nations (“Gentiles”) in **Genesis 12:3**.

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<sup>16</sup> Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 100.