

Quarter Four: Lessons of Faith from Joshua

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Lesson 13—Choose This Day!

Sunday: You Were There!

December 21, 2025

- **Last Week:** “God Is Faithful”
 - Joshua 23
 - First of the two final addresses from Joshua: danger of idolatry & intermarriage
 - Importance of spiritual purity & how-to walk-in obedience
- **This Week:** “Choose This Day!”
 - Joshua 24
 - Final address of Joshua: covenant renewal ceremony
 - Conquest of Canaan: 6 – 7 years
 - Receiving / dividing of inheritance
 - Maybe 20 – 25 years after the dividing of the inheritance
 - Renewal ceremony & final address from Joshua
 - Joshua is close to 110 years old
 - Covenant renewal at Shechem
 - Abram built an altar at Shechem (Gen 12:6, 7)
 - Jacob called his household to get rid of their gods (Gen 35:1 – 15)
 - Joshua renewed the covenant after sin at Ai (vicinity of Shechem) (Joshua 8)
 - Covenant renewal ceremony has elements of ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaty
 - Soo’-zer-en-ty = covenant relationship where Yahweh pledges to be the king over Israel while Israel is to be faithful to the covenant bond. God is the One who is faithful, who protects, provides & guides
 - God is Israel’s King
 - Elements mentioned in lesson:
 - 1. A preamble in which the initiator (suzerain) of the treaty is identified
 - 2. The historical prologue, which describes the relationship between the overlord & the vassal
 - 3. The covenant stipulations asking the vassal to manifest total allegiance to the suzerain based on, and motivated by, gratitude
 - 4. Blessings for obedience & curses for breaking the covenant
 - 5. Witnesses to the pledge of the vassal
 - 6. Deposition of the document for future reading
 - 7. Ratification of the covenant

Memory Text: “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve ... But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** You Were There! (Jill)
 - Josh 24:1 – 13 – review of Israel’s history & God’s sovereignty over Israel; God defeated their enemies & brought them into this land; God is the main subject
- 2. **Monday:** In Sincerity and Truth (SQ)
 - Josh 24:14, 15 – choice & call to serve the Lord
- 3. **Tuesday:** Free to Serve (James)
 - Josh 24:16 – 21 – Israel’s choice to serve the Lord; Joshua’s caution to be 1. Serious in their decision; 2. Their own decision; 3. Not done in their own strength
- 4. **Wednesday:** The Dangers of Idolatry (John L)
 - Josh 24:22 – 24 – Joshua’s appeal to the people to serve the Lord & forsake idols
- 5. **Thursday:** Finishing Well (Ryan J)
 - Josh 24:29 – 33 – death of Joshua, burial of Joseph’s bones, death of Eleazar; Israel settled in their inheritance. Will they remain faithful to the covenant?

Sunday: You Were There!

Josh 24:1 – 13; Gen 12:7; Gen 35:2 – 4; Josh 24:23; Deut 5:3

6 Lessons from Israel’s History: Joshua recounts the history & what God has done

- #1 & 2 of the covenant renewal
 - God is identified
 - History is recounted
- Josh 24:1 – “Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.”
 - **Takeaway #1: Leaders are responsible for those under them**
 - The tribes were there – specific mention of the leaders
 - Elders of Israel, heads, judges & officers
 - All the people partook of the covenant renewal – but especially the leaders
 - Responsibility of leaders
 - Elah, Zimri, Tibni, Ahizah, Athaliah, Shallum = evil kings of Israel / Judah
 - Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jotham, Hezekiah, Josiah = good kings
 - Heard more of the good kings
 - What is the standard of a good king?
 - Not wealth, expansion of territory, peace or war
 - Standard = “He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” or
 - “He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord”
 - One standard = obedience to God
 - Good kings
 - First objective when get into power – break down the high places
 - Remove idol worship
 - People followed God
 - Not just subjects – but also surrounding nations

- 2 Chron 17:10 – And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, so that they did not make war against Johoshaphat.”
 - Average age of good kings = 34 years
 - Evil kings
 - Led the people into idolatry, witchcraft, rebellion, immorality & even caused their children to be burned in idol worship
 - Average age of evil kings = 18 years
 - #1: Leaders are responsible for those under them
 - Prov 14:34 – “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”
- Josh 24:2 – 4 – “And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. (3) Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. (4) To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.””’”
 - History of the Patriarchs
 - **Takeaway #2: Our past does not define us**
 - Abraham’s family served other gods (on the other side of the River)
 - Did that matter?
 - God called Abram out from that
 - Abram obeyed & went out, not knowing where he went
 - God blessed Abram and made of him a great nation
- Josh 24:5 – 7 – “““Also I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to what I did among them. Afterward, I brought you out. (6) Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. (7) So they cried out to the LORD; and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you dwelt in the wilderness a long time.”””
 - History of the Exodus
 - **Takeaway #3: God’s covenant – and promises – are for all**
 - 5 switches in the narrative between “you” & “they” (the fathers)
 - Vs 5 – “I brought you out”
 - Yet most had not experienced the Exodus nor deliverance from Egypt
 - Covenant not just for one generation – it was for all who would accept it by faith & walk in obedience
 - Deut 5:3 – “The LORD did not make tis covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.”
 - On the borders of the promised land; many in the wilderness had died
 - Many young ones born – yet covenant from Sinai still applied to them
 - The lessons of the past must be appropriated for us all

- Josh 24:8 – 10 – ““And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, and they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you. (9) Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose to make war against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. (10) But I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he continued to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hand.”””
 - History of the wilderness years
 - **Takeaway #4: God is the main character of the story** (Israel is the object)
 - God “took” Abraham
 - God “led” Abraham; God “multiplied” his descendants
 - God “gave” Jacob & Esau
 - God “plagued” Egypt
 - God “brought” them out
 - God “put darkness” between the Israelites & the Egyptians
 - God “brought the sea” on them and “covered” them
 - God “gave” the Amorites into their hands
 - God “destroyed” their enemies before them
 - God “delivered” them out of Balaam’s hand
 - God is sovereign
 - God is faithful
 - God keeps His promises
 - God keeps covenant with His people
- Josh 24:11, 12 – ““Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you—also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand. (12) I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, also the two kings of the Amorites, but not with your sword or with your bow.”””
 - **Takeaway #5: God fights for us**
 - The kings were delivered & killed – but not with “your sword or with your bow”
 - Ex 14:13, 14 – “And Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. (14) The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.’”
 - Crossing of the Red Sea
- Josh 24:13 – ““I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.”””
 - **Takeaway #6: Everything is by faith – not works**
 - Entered land they did not labor
 - Cities they did not build

6 Lessons from Israel’s History

- #1: Leaders are responsible for those under them
- #2: Our past does not define us
- #3: God’s covenant – and promises – are for all

- #4: God is the main character of the story
- #5: God fights for us
- #6: Everything is by faith – not works