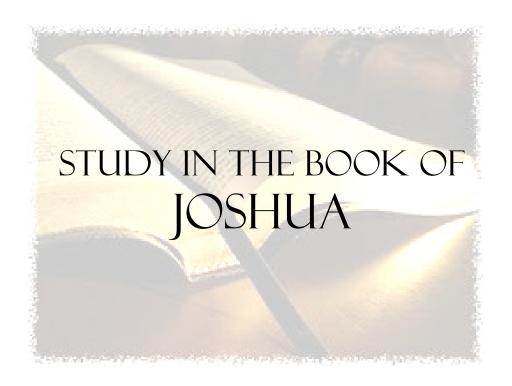


CHRISTIAN RESOURCES



By: Bishop Warwick Cole-Edwardes

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

As one looks at Joshua, there are a number of things that marked him for leadership:

- a) He was from the tribe of Joseph
- b) He had contact with the Egyptian civilization or culture
- c) He had acted as Moses' personal assistant
- d) He was a man of faith and courage
- e) He developed into a great military commander (see when he repelled the forces of Amalek.)

Blair: This was the man so highly qualified by nature, by training and by experience whom God raised up to lead the Hebrew tribe into Canaan. But his supreme qualification lay in the fact that all his gifts, training and experience were fused into a dynamic force by the touch of God. It was at the call of God that all his potentialities were called forth and that call brought to the leadership of Israel a man assured of his divine commission.

STUDY 1

A. <u>HIS CALL AND HIS COMMISSION</u>

A leader does not just happen - he is made, by the grace of God, after years of moulding and preparation.

i) There was Rephadim

It occurred after the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea after their flight and after a few days they came to Rephadim. There they began murmuring against God through ingratitude - led Moses to strike the rock. Almost immediately after that the Amalekites attacked them (Ex.17:9 -) - "Joshua choose us men to go out and fight" Joshua leads the forces against the Amalekites while Moses goes to the top of the hill to pray. When Moses' hands were held high, there was victory. When they were down, there was defeat. Joshua learns that victory is almost always obtained through prayer.

ii) <u>Mt. Sinai.</u> (Ex.24:13)

- a) As Moses ascended Mt Sinai, Joshua went with him to pray (v.17). The sight of the glory of God was like a devouring fire on top of the mountain.
- **b)** Fellowship with God can be experienced.

c) Golden Calf: (Ex.32:17)

Coming down from Mt. Sinai, Joshua says there is a noise of war in the camp - learns there is a place for Godly anger in the child of God especially when there is grievous sin (Moses throws the tablets down.

d) In the Tabernacle (Ex.33: -)

"The Lord spoke with Moses" - God leads and guides us

Prophesying in the camp. (Num. 11:24-29) e)

Joshua says to Moses that Elded and Medad were prophesying in the camp - asks Moses to forbid them. The lesson - Joshua, are you envious for my sake ...? NEVER be jealous. It is not my work but God's.

Schaeffer: A leader must never confuse himself with God.

f) Spying out the land. (Num.13:26 -)

A leader must never be given over to pessimism or negativism

B. A FAITHFUL PAST

F.B. Meyer: In Joshua's case, as always, the eternal rule held good, that faithfulness in a few things is the condition of rule over many things and the loyalty of a servant is the stepping-stone to the royalty of the throne. e.g. William Carey who had a world vision started off as a cobbler. Also, C.T. Studd.

C. A DISTINCT CALL. (1:2-9)

We must never go into the Lords work unless we are called.

F.B. Meyer: When a man knows that he has been called to do a certain work, he is invincible, he is not unconscious of his deficiencies, natural or intellectual, he is not insensible of difficulty. In fact, none may be as quick as he to see the great stones, the iron gates, the walled cities, and the flowing rivers. He is not invulnerable to the shafts of ridicule and criticism. BUT for all these he looks steadily away to the declared purpose of God and he yields himself to be the channel through which it may operate.

i) The Timing

"Moses my servant is dead" - a heavy loss for Israel. He had brought them out of Egypt, the Red Sea, forty years in the desert (**Deut.34:10**) - they wept for 30 days. God asks Joshua to take over. The removal of Moses was heavy loss for Israel. Their leader and legislator for many years, he was now dead - but no man is indispensable.

ii) The Place.

"cross the Jordan River..." i.e. a big difficulty ahead.

iii) The sense of the presence of God

Joshua has a great sense of unworthiness and inadequacy.

F.B.Meyer: Most of us are too strong for God to use - (too full of our own schemes, plans etc.) So God must empty us, humble us and bring us down to the dust of the earth, so low that we need every straw of encouragement.

- a) "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you" (v.5)
- **b)** "I will not fail you"
- c) "I will not forsake you"

v) His Responsibility - the Indwelling Word of God (7-9)

- a) Meditate on God's Word
- **b**) <u>Be strong.</u>

11. PREPARATION FOR CANAAN (1:10-18)

A. <u>HIS CALL</u> (v.10-11)

He gets moving straight away - gets officers together and gives orders to the people.

i) Prepare to leave

- a) Had to eat the right food primary "spiritual" food, i.e. eating the Word of God.
- **b**) Had to get ready to move "get your supplies ready"

ii) Pass over (v.11)

Cross over the Jordan, do not linger in the Wilderness anymore, do not hang on to your possessions, and do not worry about the river ahead.

iii) Possess

B. THE CHALLENGE (12-15) - two principles:

(For background read Numbers 32:1-17 - Reuben, Gad and Manasseh)

i) <u>Children of God are always committed to help one another first.</u>

Joshua allowed Reuben, Gad and Manasseh to inherit their land on the <u>other</u> side. But first they had to come across and help the other tribes to get established. There was the river to be crossed and enemies to be defeated first - must take the blessing for ourselves first.

ii) Then go back and enjoy

C. TRUE COMFORT FROM THE PEOPLE (1:16-18)

- i) Promised him obedience (v.16) "whatever you ..."
- ii) Prayed for God's assurance and presence with Joshua.
- iii) Exhorted him to be strong and courageous.

111. RAHAB (Chapter 2)

The Israelites under Joshua were ready to go in and posses Canaan. But to posses Jericho, one further need was still there - a woman (Rahab) needed to be converted - (the whole work will be held back for the salvation of one soul). Life in Jericho proceeding as usual, business in accordance with everyday custom, yet the city was under the judgement of God and about to be sentenced.

<u>F.B.Meyer:</u> The great majority of the people were either bent on stubborn resistance or they boasted about their river and their walls - their iniquity was full

It was the same in Jericho as it was in Sodom when Lot was to be saved. The spies have now been sent in to test the land (v.1-8) their mission is described. They arrive at Rahab's house. She hid them from the army and later let them down safely through the window. As they leave they promise that she will be saved when the armies come (the red ribbon). Why was she saved?

A. <u>SHE WAS AN OBEDIENT BELIEVER.</u>

She trusted in God (v.9) How did she hear about God?

A. Redpath: This poor sinful woman had come to have faith in the reality of a living God, because of the supernatural evidence that she saw in the lives of God's people.

- i) She developed an <u>exact obedience</u> (v.18) particularly the scarlet cord from her window would save her and her family
- ii) It was <u>in a small matter</u> even to the colour of the rope
- iii) Her obedience rose out of <u>real, living faith</u> mentioned in (Heb.11:31 and James 2:25)

B. THERE WAS OPEN DECLARATION (v.18)

The cord was in the window for the spies to see (and others)
 She could have kept it secret, but the city was soon to be destroyed
 death - so there had to be open, bold profession - it had to be seen.

ii) <u>In the blood</u> - the scarlet cord was a symbol of the blood to be shed later for us on Calvary. We are only saved from judgement through the blood of Christ.

C. AN APPROPRIATED COVENANT. (19-21)

- i) Done by faith
- ii) Her life reflected it

D. <u>A DEDICATED HOUSEHOLD</u>

Had to bring them all into the house. She comes from prostitution to sainthood an (obedient believer, an open declaration, a dedicated household). We see the amazing sovereignty of God - her son was Boaz ... Jesse ... David ... Solomon ... etc.

1V. THE ROYAL ROAD TO BLESSING. (Chapter 3)

A. THEY STOPPED AT THE JORDAN RIVER, (v.1)

For the last 40 years they had been wandering in the Wilderness because of their disobedience. Now they were about to enter the Promised Land.

i) It was a step in faith.

They set out from Shittim and went <u>to</u> the Jordan. They decided to <u>get out</u> of the Wilderness and <u>get into</u> the Promised Land.

They knew that the river was almost impossible to cross and beyond were the mighty walls of Jericho. It was easy to be discouraged, but in faith they went.

ii) There was an early rising "Early in the morning..."

Matthew Henry: Those who would bring great things to pass, must rise early.

B. THEY WERE DIRECTED TO FOLLOW THE ARC. (2-)

They were ordered to allow the Ark to go in front of them. "No one must go before the Ark or go too far behind". "Ark" - a symbol of God's presence (**Hebrews 12:1**) - "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith". The Ark was between the Jordan and themselves - it promised them victory and guidance.

C. <u>CONSECRATION WAS CALLED FOR</u> (v.5)

Joshua issues an urgent call to the Israelites:

- i) Called them to a fresh point of consecration
- ii) Sanctify yourselves

Amy Carmichael: There is no coldness, Lord in thee.
Oh! keep us kindled lest we bring to our dear Lord of Calvary dead ashes for our offering

D. THE CROSSING (10 – end)

As soon as the little group of priests touched the Jordan, it stopped flowing, the ground was dry.

A. Redpath: Let a child of God put his eyes on to Christ and then see that between the impossible and himself is Christ.

V. <u>GILGAL</u> (Chapter 4)

They crossed the Jordan and arrived at Gilgal. This would now become a base for operations in the battles of the people of Israel. Gilgal ranked with Bethel and Mizpah among the holy places where Samuel had exercised his office (1Sam.7:16) It was the rallying point to which people gathered at solemn times of national crises (11:14), but Gilgal has four important lessons:

A. <u>IT WAS A PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE</u> (1-9)

God commanded Joshua to take 12 stones out of the bed of the river and to put them on the victory side of the Jordan as a lasting memory of what had happened on that day. Joshua then took them from the place where the feet of the priests had stood firm in the Jordan River. In (v.9) he took 12 more stones and put them in the river bed. Except for when the Jordan was in flood, the stones would always be visible (e.g. memorials today)

F.B. Meyer: It is well that forgetful hearts like ours should be stirred up by way of remembrance (never forget what God has done)

For us today there is also a memorial, a place of remembrance i.e. the Cross of Jesus Christ (out of the Wilderness to the land of blessing).

B. A PLACE OF RESURRECTION (11-19)

The people camped at Gilgal ... On the 10th day of the 1st month (exactly 40 years previously they had marched out of Egypt. - the Passover lamb had been killed, the blood had been sprinkled and people delivered - yet tragically for 40 years they had lived a life of unbelief, carnally and disobedience. Now they had come through the Jordan - were leaving the old life in the Wilderness and were starting again in the Promised Land. "Gilgal" - "resurrection" (forget past, failure, backsliding, and start again).

C. <u>A PLACE OF RENUNCIATION</u> (4:19-5:2)

In chapter five the rite of circumcision which had not been carried out for over 40 years (while in the wilderness) was again instituted. (**Gen.17:10-14**). Circumcision was a sign of God's Covenant, the mark of the promise that Abraham and his seed would posses the Land of Canaan. They used knives in order to cut - i.e. there must be renunciation.

A.Redpath:

Dear Christian, do not be afraid of the knife (spiritual)
- it is in the hand of the lover of your soul, Jesus Christ
your Lord, whatever be the cost, let Gilgal be for you
today, the place of absolute renunciation of everything
that the Spirit of God reveals to you that is contrary to
His will. This is the true Christian experience, which is
not merely believing a doctrine but the living of the life.

D. PLACE OF RESTORATION (5:10-12)

It wasn't enough to resurrect the rite of circumcision, but the Passover had also to be instituted. Previously it had been observed twice (**Exodus and Mt. Sinai**) and for 40 years there was no Passover. This feast of worship remembrance and fellowship had been abandoned - by <u>choice</u> as well as by God's <u>command</u> He had commanded that no circumcised person could partake (**Ex.48**) i.e. he must be <u>right</u> with God. The Israelites had been fully restored spiritually after 40 years of barrenness.

V1. THE SUPERNATURAL LEADER (5:13-15)

The last thing was needed - for Joshua to be led by God e.g. a ship leaving a harbour needs a pilot to lead it in and out. God tells Joshua He will help him as the "commander" of the army.

A. <u>THE TIME.</u> (13-14)

 After circumcision. - Jesus appears to Joshua immediately after he had performed the ceremonies of circumcision and the Passover.

Spurgeon: By this I understand that the Christian must purge himself in the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ of every fleshly defilement, of every sinful thought, every carnal desire if he is to be used by his master. It is imperative that

this must be done.

ii) After the Passover: - The Passover had only been celebrated twice before (Egypt and Sinai) It is now reinstated and would continue in all the years ahead. The spiritual lesson - the Passover for us represents our daily feeding upon Christ.

Spurgeon: Christian, let us keep this feast, let us draw nigh

unto our Lord Jesus Christ. With pure hearts and let us renew our first faith and early love, taking Jesus to be once more the ground of our hope, the source of our joy and the object of our

desires.

B. THE PLACE (v.13)

"When Joshua was near Jericho ..." - <u>behind</u> Joshua lay the Jordan river, <u>beneath</u> him the camp where people were resting after the long journey, and <u>before</u> him lay Jericho - a time therefore, of anxious suspense as he viewed Jericho's strong fortifications - the task seemed impossible.

C. THE APPEARANCE ITSELF (v.13)

"He saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword..."

A. Redpath: Here is none other than Jesus Christ who has come at that very moment to meet Joshua.

i) <u>He appears as a man.</u>

There He stands in front of Joshua, God over all, yet a man, one before whom people would fall in worship, yet he understands everything about us.

iii) A sword in his hand.

M.Henry: To encourage Joshua to carry on with vigour

because Christ's sword drawn in His hand shows us how ready He is for the defense and salvation of His people, who through Him will do

valiantly.

D. JOSHUA'S BOLD QUESTION (v.13)

"Are you for us or for our enemies?" - a strange question it seems as first.

- i) <u>Shows great concern for the people</u> Joshua had a great task Did not want anyone to detract the people.
- **Shows his courage** Was not ruffled by the suddenness of the appearance, nor was he daunted with the majesty and bravery which appeared in the Person and His sword.

Notice: Jesus" answer to Joshua (v.14) - "I have come as your commander" - as the captain of the army of the Lord. "Army of the Lord" - not of the people camped in Gilgal, but the unseen army, invisible to the human eye, that surrounds the throne of God to all eternity and which is ready to obey his commands and to conduct operations against his foe.

Further example of this: Jacob's ladder on his way back to Canaan, and Elisha (11 Kings 6:17) and his servant Gehazi.

E. JOSHUA'S RESPONSE.

- i) <u>Adoration</u> he fell on his face and worshipped.
- ii) Advance to action.

V11. <u>CELEBRATING VICTORY</u> (Chapter 6)

A. **HAD TO WORK** (6:1)

The Lord told Joshua exactly what was to be done in order that Jericho might collapse. Joshua had to do something!

i) In God's way.

He was told to march around the city once a day. Seven priests with ram's horns were to go before the Ark. On the seventh day they were to march seven times. One of the strangest spectacles ever seen - no shots fired, no talking, but it was God's way.

Redpath:

Are you prepared to give God the right to change you or do you love your ways and methods so much that you dare not abandon them. The answer to your Jericho is on your knees - linking yourself in your weakness and helplessness with the Omnipotent power of God.

- ii) <u>Daily</u> there is no "once and for all" victory in the Christian life.
- iii) In faith (2+5) absolute trust in God meant no possibility of failure.
- iii) Patience and courage.

F.B. Meyer: Israel was probably impatient - eager to be led to the conflict. The men of war, confident of their might, were eager to match their strength with those in Jericho.

B. WAIT

- i) There was a delay prayers often seem unanswered.
- ii) Note of Desperation How would they defeat Jericho this way?

Spurgeon: There is the temptation to look around us and ask for some assistance over and above the power which lies in the gospel and we must not do it.

iii) <u>Insults from Jericho</u> - "feeble Jews, here they go again..."

C. THEY WIN (15-20)

- i) The walls fell strong fortifications collapsed without weapons.
- ii) Rahab was saved. She put her faith in God
- iii) Everything was destroyed devoted the city to the Lord.

V111. <u>SETBACKS - THEIR CAUSES AND CURE</u> (Ch.7)

Joshua has let the people into the Promised Land. So far everything has been victorious (they have crossed the Jordan), renewed their dedication to God at Gilgal, and overcome the impossibility of Jericho - one success after another. But in Chapter 7 Israel is not in retreat, and Joshua on his face before God in despair and there is death. Yet Joshua had thought that Canaan would be a story of unbroken victories he was convinced that there would be no defeats, but now he was shocked. (Joshua 7:12) Four reasons why?

Α. **SELF-CONFIDENCE** (1-5)

Jericho was now a heap of smouldering ruins. Man, woman and young and old were all utterly destroyed because of the absolute faith in God alone. They feared no attach from the rear. Joshua therefore sets his face immediately to the interior. He chose a deep gorge, a little to the north as a passage for his army. Ahead lay the little town of Ai. (Population of 12,000. with an army of not more than 2,000). Joshua sends spies to spy out (v.3) and they return with good news "Ai is insignificant - don't send all the people there - we will defeat them easily". They based their argument on a substitution that they had conquered Jericho, not God. But it was God who defeated (all they did was walk around and shout). The lesson to be learned is this:

F.B. Meyer: We magnify our part in the conflict until it fills the whole range of vision. We boast to ourselves that we have got the land in possession by our own sword and that our own arm has saved us. Counting from our great triumph at Jericho, we despise the little obstacle like Ai. We never need to observe the injunction to watch and pray as when the enemy is flying before us.

Self-confidence led to defeat (36 killed). It was also a disgrace as they were forced to flee. (v.4) - their "hearts melted" they despaired, were very discouraged.

B. A LACK OF PRAYER

(v.2) - obvious that Joshua immediately set out to defeat Ai, but he failed to wait upon God. Flush with the victory at Jericho, he immediately made plans to conquer the next part of territory. He went without prayer (total contrast to what had happened at Jericho) and the result was <u>disaster</u> (v.6) He fell to the ground, broken and dismayed - sees his helplessness, and initially even blamed God. (v.10) - The Lord graciously answers Joshua: "Stand up..." - the problem was then revealed to him.

C. <u>DISOBEDIENCE</u> (Achan steals,) etc (Look up and read)

Redpath: No child of God can grow cold in his spiritual life without lowering the temperature of everyone around him. The victory of the whole community depended on the victorious life of every individual member.

D. <u>CURE</u> (13-26)

(v.24 - they discovered that Achan stole). There has been a thorough examination to find out who had stolen something from Jericho and after a long procedure, Achan was found out (v.20-21 - Achan confesses)

- i) "I saw"
- ii) <u>"I desired"</u>
- iii) "I took"
- iv) "I held"

Because of his sin, he and his family were punished ((1John 1:9) exhorts us "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

IX. <u>RECOVERING LOST GROUND</u> (Chapter 8)

A very large portion of chapter 8 is a record of the ultimate victory over Ai after the humiliating experience of defeat (the battle). Joshua is now filled with fear for the future - he had learned a hard lesson so God draws near to him - "Don't be afraid…" (v.1) "This time you will have victory"
Lesson:

Redpath: The recovery of lost ground in the Christian life is not easy at all.

Notice three things:

- i) No self-confidence as he goes back. (v.3)
- ii) Early the next morning there was prayer (v.10)
- iii) He was obedient.

<u>Results:</u> (v.23-25) - they defeated Ai - there was victory. Immediately they went on a 60 km. pilgrimage to Shechem (a lovely valley) to renew the Covenant with God.

A. <u>ALTAR ON EBAL.</u>

Once they had done all the above, they came to the altar on Mt.Ebal - they were recovering lost ground. "Then" before they took up their places on the mountain side, an altar was erected on the lowest slopes of Ebal. Its construction (special direction given in **Deuteronomy 27** - it was built with uncut stones on which no iron tool had been lifted i.e. an altar undefiled by any handy work of people. The altar itself was a place of communion and worship. Once they had recovered their lost ground, they were now at the altar (a lovely place to be ...), and two offerings were brought.

i) **Burnt offering.**

A whole victim was sacrificed (only altar where this was done). This was a symbol of total and absolute consecration to Christ (Rom.12:1-2)

ii) Peace offerings/fellowship offerings.

The animal here was not totally consumed, only part was eaten by the offerer - this testified that they had fellowship with God and with one another **<u>F.B.Meyer:</u>** We feed on the peace offering when we meditate

on the love and death of our blessed Lord and enter into some of the Father's thoughts of satisfaction of the work He did and the spirit in

which he did it.

B. THE LAW IN CANAAN (v.32)

When the Israelites arrived at the foot of Mt Ebal and erected the altar to God, plaster was put over it and in the plaster, the two tablets of the Law of God were written.

A.Redpath: For the first time since the crossing of the Jordan, the

people's attention was drawn to an altar, a place of communion, of worship and at the same time to the Law of God written on it. It was a place of discipline and

obedience.

<u>F.B.Meyer</u>: And so while we yield ourselves to Christ, we find

ourselves keeping the Law after a fashion which was

foreign to us where it was mere observance.

C. THE CONVOCATION (v.33-35)

When the rites were fulfilled, the third and concluding scene of this extraordinary transaction occurs - in the centre of the valley rested the Ark with its group of attendant priests and Levites. Next to them Joshua and the leaders of the tribes, and then on the slopes of Mt. Ebal were the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulon, Dan and Naphtali - and on the slopes of Mt. Gerasim were the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin. And the Word of God must be central - it is not enough to sacrifice. All the people responded with an "Amen" - i.e. willing to go the way of God (this was a turning point for Joshua)

X. <u>ENEMY STRATEGY</u> (Chapter 9)

Joshua has led the Israelites to recovering their lost ground. They have gone to Shechem and re-dedicated their lives to God (burnt offering), the Law was engraved on the stones to indicate discipline, and obedience, From Shechem, Joshua took the people back to Gilgal. On arriving there, he heard some bad news - the enemies all around were now ready to attack.

Hodge: The Christian conflict is not only real it is difficult and

dangerous. It is one in which true believers are often grievously wounded and multitudes of reputed believers entirely succumb - great mistakes are often committed and serious loss incurred due to ignorance of its nature and

appropriate means of carrying it on.

Redpath: As long as sin lasts, conflict goes on and as long as you and I

live in bodies, whose redemption lies in the future, we will

know continually what it is like to be in a battle.

A. POWER OF THE ENEMY (v.1-3)

Because of Joshua's victories over Jericho and Ai, these tribes united to make war against him and stop any further progress - reminds us that every victory that the Christian wins in his own personal life is an invitation for a full scale attach by the enemy of our soul.

B. <u>SUBTLETY OF THE ENEMY</u> (4-14)

From an all-out attach on Joshua, the enemy now resorts to subtlety - they arrive pretending to have come a very long way - their intention was to subtly draw Joshua in to a peace treaty with them so that they would not be defeated while Joshua conquered Canaan

i) They came under the character of Ambassadors

ii) The pretended to have completed a long journey -

Therefore they were tired. They took worn out sacks, old cracked wineskins, patched sandals, old clothes, and mouldy bread.

iii) They never told Joshua from which country they were from

v.6 - they only asked for Joshua to make a treaty with them. Joshua suspected that something was wrong - "who are you, where are you from?"

iv) The success of Israel under Moses and Joshua

v) They promise submission

For us today it has not changed. Satan still comes to tempt us and try to make peace treaties with us (e.g. **Eph.4:4**, - wiles of the devil: **11Cor 2:11** - deceives: **11Cor 11:3** - angel of light).

Redpath: He is out to steal our affection, to lower our standards of Christian life and to cause us to

compromise once in a while.

C. <u>THE FALL</u> (14-26)

"How the mighty have fallen..."

i) <u>They sampled</u> (their provisions)

So Joshua and the people took some of the provisions of the Gibeonites, even though they were mouldy (i.e. they sampled what the world had to offer).

ii) They did not ask God's counsel (v.14)

They did not learn from Ai. A neglect of prayer always suggests pride in our own judgement and that is fatal.

Redpath: Listen to me: never, never, never trust your own judgement in anything. When common sense says that a course is right, lift up your heart to

God.

iii) A treaty was made (v.15) - compromise.

D. GOD'S GRACE OVERRULES (15 – end)

"That day He made ... woodcutters ... to this day". Reminds us that God overrules our mistakes. He turned what could have been a curse into a blessing. The Gibeonites were made into hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of God. They had to cut wood for the altar fires and draw water for cleansing ritual of the Temple - the very thing for which the Israelites failed and suffered, turned out for their blessing.

X1. WINNING THROUGH (Chapter 10)

Disobedience and prayerlessness always means inevitable defeat while obedience, constant watchfulness and utter reliance on the Lord will ensure victory

A. THE CONFEDERACY WHICH WAS GATHERED AGAINST ISRAEL.

Previously Israel had dealt with specific cities (e.g. Jericho and Ai) Now there are five kings uniting to fight and the traitor city (Gibeon) was the object of their attack, mainly because of their defection to Joshua. They therefore took up positions (v.5), the Gibeonites cry to Joshua to come and help (v.6).

B. JOSHUA'S HERIOC FAITH

i) A day of vigour

As soon as Joshua received the message, he saw his responsibility. So before the sun went down, orders were passed for men to get ready for a midnight march—they marched approximately 35 km. during the night (v.9)

Redpath:

In the light of God's plan that His people should always be on the offensive, never on the defensive, too often we retreat, run away or hide from the devil, instead of launching a full scale offensive in the name of Jesus.

ii) A day of fellowship (v.8-)

The battle raged but Joshua was assured of the Lord's blessing, presence and victory. At dawn the battle began in great earnest, towards afternoon the enemy was in retreat (**v.10**). For 20 km. they fled, climbing a steep ascent to the high ridge of Beth Horon from where the road drops over 300 meters in 5 km (**v.11**). Suddenly a storm with hailstones. The enemy was defeated and Joshua needed one thing - light (the day needed to be prolonged!). He asked for the impossible - the sun to stand still!

iii) A Day of triumphant outlook.

Weary, vanquished, the kings sheltered in the caves of Makkedah,, but Joshua never stopped to dispatch with them - he was eager to complete what he had started (v.16). They destroyed the enemy completely (v.20), and he comes back to the cave to deal with the kings (v.21-24). They were brought before him, and after humiliating them, they were killed.

C. THE EXTRAORDINARY INTERVENTION OF GOD.

- i) With the storm (v11) at the right time.
- ii) Prolonging the day (v.13) about a full day the universe stopped because God listened to the prayers of one man.

D. THE LESSON FOR OUR LIFE

- i) Know your enemy
- ii) Be strong (v.25)
- iii) Trust God (kneel to conquer)
- **P.S.** (v.29 to end) the southern cities also conquered.

XII. THE FRUIT OF VICTORY (Chapter 11)

Strange paradox as it may seem to some, nevertheless it is true that the land of blessing is also a land of warfare. Till now, three campaigns by Joshua.

- i) Central Canaan (defeat of Jericho and Ai (Ch.1-9)
- ii) South (defeat of Gibeon and Beth Horon) (Chapter 10)
- iii) North (Chapter 11) we see that Satan's attacks are always carefully planned., He knows when and where to strike and how to.

A. TREMENDOUS OPPOSITION (v.1-5)

Aroused at last to action because of what had happened at Gibeon, Jabin summonses all tribes of the country - those to the North, beneath the shadow of Lebanon, those down the Valley of Eshdralon to Carmel, those along the shores of the Mediterranean, the Jebusites in the hill country and the Hivites in the Land of Mizpah. Josephus says they had approximately 300,000 foot soldiers, 100,000 horses and 20,000 chariots. They all jointed forces and camped at the Waters of Merom to fight Israel (v.5)

Spurgeon:

It is absolutely needful, before you can experience the blessings of the Covenant of Grace to the full, that you should contend with the iniquities which are both within you and around you. No doubt many new Christians think that when they are converted the warfare is over, No! The battle has only begun. You have not come to the winning post, you have only come to the starting point. You have now entered into a land in which you are going to fight, wrestle and pray until you get victory.

B. <u>ENCOURAGEMENT GOD GAVE JOSHUA</u>

Josephus tells us that the Israelites were terrified as they faced the 300,000-foot soldiers, 100,000 horses and 20,000 chariots, etc. They were filled with fear, awe and inadequacy - in (v.6) the Lord appears to Joshua in his weakness, with three promises

- i) His presence
- ii) His power to overcome
- iii) Victory

C. THE DEFENSIVE (v.7)

Now there was no time for procrastination at the camp in Gilgal. As soon as they heard of God's encouragement, Joshua sets out with his army on a 5-day route march - to embark on the greatest battle of his life. The spiritual lesson - we too, must go on the defensive.

Spurgeon: We must drive them out, every sin has to be slaughtered - not one is to be tolerated - drive the sword into their hearts.

D. HIS SUCCESS.

There was total victory even though forces appeared to be so strong and almost impossible to overcome. Yet Joshua did not only rely on God but he himself was severe - "he hamstrung their horses, burned their chariots utterly destroyed them" - not sparing anything that breathed (9-15)

E. JOSHUA'S OBEDIENCE

Victory was ultimately achieved through Joshua's obedience.

- i) Complete subjection to God's will (v.9)
- ii) His confidence in the power of God, not himself for victory over such a powerful enemy.
- iii) Joshua's care would keep things away from the people, which may later tempt them.

F. THE FRUIT OF VICTORY (v.23)

All the particular forces were overcome, and the result was "rest" In Chapter 12:1-24 is a list of all the defeated kings.

XIII. POSSESSING YOUR POSSESSIONS (Chapter 13)

Redpath: The land of blessing is often a land of intensive warfare

We have to learn to conquer and then we will learn to possess.

A. IN THE REALM OF KNOWLEDGE

A.W. Pink;

It is blessed to see here (v.1) that despite his increasing bodily weakness, the Lord did not dessert him in his old age, but honoured him with a special visit and a most gracious communication. Joshua is approximately 90 years old but there still was an important part of his work to be done. It wasn't enough for him to have asserted Israel's supremacy over the Canaanites unless he takes measures to follow up his victories by settling the people in their land.

F.B. Meyer:

The work of destruction must be followed by the work of construction. The warrior must give place to the administrator and statesman. So God speaks to him - gave him certain instructions.

(v. 1) "You are old" - large areas of land are still to be taken over ("much land to be possessed" (A.V. (v.2-5). - this included the region of Philistia, inhabited by some of the strongest foes of Israel also the rich pasture land of the south as well as the luxuriant plains of Phoenicia.

Yet God also humbles Joshua by reminding him that he was very old - to make Joshua see his own inadequacy for the task. Yet he was greatly encouraged to see that God still wanted to use him.

A.W. Pink: While the Lord took knowledge of the enfeebled frame

of his servant, yet he did not for that reason encourage him to be slack. On the contrary, he assigned him

a new, though much lighter task.

Application for us:

i) In the realm of knowledge

a) Of the Bible

- A. Redpath: Why is it that we are so ignorant? We know so little of the Book. How many pages of your Bible are unpossessed, unexplored, never been marked or underlined.
- **of Jesus** (Col.2:6) we need to grow in godliness in our own lives.

ii) Of Christian attainment

- a) Surrender only comes if we surrender to Him.
- b) <u>Consecration</u> <u>F.B. Meyer:</u> in some cases, it is the business of life, the workshop, which is not possessed by Christ and it is kept altogether and constantly outside the range of His influence.
- c) **Appropriation**

iii) The fullness of the Holy Spirit

Let us not be content simply to know our failures and deficiencies - let us ask our heavenly Joshua to settle us in this good land so that there may be no valley or mountain or tract of territory unpossessed.

a) Live the Christian life

- F.B. Meyer: There is a power, an overflowing love and assurance and exuberant joy, a freedom, which is not enjoyed by all Christians.
- **Service** New goals all the time never be content always be striving for what lies ahead.

XIV. THE SATISFIED LIFE. (Chapter 13:8-33)

So often today, we see dissatisfied Christians - with gifts the Lord has given them

They either become jealous or develop an inferiority complex, or else are dissatisfied with their health, possessions, etc. The results are: loneliness, disillusionment, hopes are shattered and they end up doing no good to anybody. How then, do I have a satisfied life?

Background.

Joshua has had victory after victory. Now the command is given to divide the land up. Chapter 13 is divided into four sections (v.8-14 - East of the Jordan; 15-23 - the tribe of Ruben; 24-28 the tribe of Gad; 29-31 - the tribe of Manasseh. It is God who determines the precise area where each tribe should live, and how each tribe was responsible for applying the principles they had learnt - they were not to argue or be bitter, but to accept gratefully what God had given them. An exception was the tribe of Levi (v.33) (Deut.10:8-9) - stressed NOT the land but the LORD - He was their inheritance.

- i) Their great honour They got no land but a greater honour:
 - a) God called them to a life of <u>worship</u> the Lord was their inheritance, they possessed Him, all His resources, power and blessings. They were always to come to Him.
 - **b)** Were called to a life of <u>work</u> to stand before the Lord and minister to Him. Their work was in the sanctuary, almost like an intercessor.

Dr. Jowett:

All vital praying makes a drain upon a man's vitality. True intercession is a sacrifice, a bleeding sacrifice, a filling up of the sufferings of Christ.

- c) Calling to the life of <u>witness</u> were to "bless His Name" Their reward for the above was the Lord (no land). Therefore there could be no frustration, resentment or dissatisfaction.
 - A. Redpath:

 God wants you for Himself, for the greatest service in the world, to go into the sanctuary for people and to go into the city of God
- Their History What let them to this unique position?

 See (Gen.34:25-31). Simeon and Levi were involved in a murder and severely rebuked by their father Jacob, Instead of blessing at his death, he cursed them (Gen. 49:5-7). So the early life of their tribe was shameful they had brought disgrace upon themselves. However, God always restores the repentant He took the tribe of Levi and made them into priests i.e. God never allows past history, however unpleasant, or sinful, to prevent Him from allotting to us a unique place in His service. The turning point in (Ex. 32:26) Moses returns from the mountain to find the people given to idolatry he said, "Who is on the Lord's side?" The Levites said "We are"

iii) <u>Their Hope</u> - "As He promised them" - based on the Lord's Word. <u>STUDY 15</u>

XV. <u>CALEB</u> (Chapter 14)

This chapter contains the wonderful story of how a man of 85 interrupted the dividing up of the land to claim what God had promised him 45 years before (Caleb) - one of the great Bible characters. We seldom read of him, but he enriches our lives - he is bright, brave, strong and godly, The faith which is ours when we are young may be undermined in old age - in fact, the vision of the Lord should grow clearer as we grow older.

A. THE PRIME CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS LIFE (v.8-9)

i) He wholly followed the Lord.

At 40 years (Numbers 13:13-14, Josh.14:7-9), the account of the spies sent out to spy out the Promised Land - a six week tour (Num.13:28- the report of the majority was negative) Joshua and Caleb were positive (we've got God.) For all the following years (45), Caleb never faltered in faith. These were years of incessant toil, ceaseless conflict, unfulfilled hopes (murmurings of the people) - but Caleb followed God with all his heart.

F.B,Meyer: Always strong and true, pure and noble, like a rock in a changeful sea, a man in whose nature weaker men could hide and who must have been a tower of strength to that new and young generation which grew up to fill the vacant places in the van of Israel.

What kept his faith so strong?

- a) The consciousness that, come what may, God delighted in him the outgoings of God's nature towards him were full of love joy and the peace of God that passed all understanding was his position.
- b) The thought of Hebron (v.9)

B. THE MARVELOUS RESULTS.

i) Leads to strength (10-11)

At 85 years, he is still able to go into battle with the young men because he wholly followed the Lord.

ii) Gives fellowship

Hebron was given to him (:friendship/fellowship/love - Caleb always enjoyed these things - he had a rich walk with God - gives victory.

iii) Gives victory

Of all the Israelites that received their inheritance in the Promised Land, only Caleb succeeded in perfectly expelling the native occupiers of the country. The Anachim were there when he came (strong and powerful), but Caleb expelled them (faith in God)

F.B.Meyer:

Our failures in expelling the giants of our heart, or in dealing with inbred corruption and the assaults of Satan are almost entirely due to some failure in consecration - we have not wholly followed the Lord

- iv) Enables us to give blessings to others (Caleb encouraged young men)
- v) From this position we then claim our inheritance (v.12) yet with the inheritance came the Anakim

Blaikie:

In the same way for us, there are other Anakims among us e.g. greed, selfishness, love of ease. We can possess the higher land, through wholly following the Lord.

XVI. <u>LIVING TO CAPACITY</u> (Chapter 17:4 -)

Here is recorded the experience of the children of Joseph, particularly of their complaints.

A. <u>CAUSES OF THEIR COMPLAINTS</u> (v.14)

In **Chapter 15-16** is a record of different allotments of the Lord to the tribes - of Judah, of Ephraim and Manasseh - as the land was divided up, the tribe of Joseph complained (v.14):

Reasons:

i) They were a great people

They said they had not received a portion that was worthy of their greatness. They boasted that past blessing justified a greater reward. They suggested they were much too big for the little bit of land they had been given - they wanted more space, more room to grow and develop.

ii) The Canaanites were strongly entrenched

They said that even in the small portion allotted to them the Canaanites were strongly entrenched, with iron chariots - these presented an insurmountable obstacle.

iii) They had important associations

The people of Joseph had crossed the Jordan River (shared in the conquest). They were Joseph's own tribe, from the "sons of Joseph"

Today we have the same - many Christians are dissatisfied with their lot in life - not enough scope for their gifts. They want to do BIG things, not small things.

A.Redpath:

As God speaks, do you not see that the real trouble in your life may be <u>not</u> that you have not enough scope for your gifts, but that you are not living to capacity where you are. The Lord will keep you where you are until you are occupied and live to capacity where you are.

B. A CALL TO PERSONAL CONQUEST (15-17)

Joshua deals with the complaints e.g. the view they had of themselves "If you are so great..." He also tells them what to do - "Go up to the hill country into a forest and cut down the trees, then clear the land" (v.17) If the Canaanites were there do not worry, you <u>can</u> drive them out i.e. God's call is to relentless, personal and ceaseless effort. The problem all the trees had blocked their vision, marred their progress and blocked their victory.

C. <u>CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR CONQUEST</u> (18-)

If you want more of the Lord, cut down the dead things, get rid of the things that are robbing you of victory, and grace will be poured into your life.

Robert Murray McCheyne:

Jesus, let my heart and mind enlarge together, like brother and sister, depending one upon the other. Let the capacity of my heart and the understanding of my mind increase as the years go by.

XVII. <u>PERILS TO AVOID</u> (Chapter 18 – 22)

They had been fighting for 7 years, the Jordan had been crossed, Jericho had been routed and the land allotted to the different tribes. Now the most important part confronts them - because their crossing of the river into the land of blessing and their victory over the evil one will prove utterly useless unless they learn to <u>LIVE</u> in the land. Joshua warns them against three perils, which will stop them living victorious lives:

i) Inertia (18:1-3)

- **v.3** How long will you be slack to go in and possess the land? They refused to take their inheritance the problem of laziness, sluggishness they were disinclined to move and act. The result was that many had still not claimed their land, in spite of the tremendous blessing.
- a) <u>Benjamin</u> (Deut 33:12) They were promised "beloved of the Lord will dwell in safety between the shoulders of God"
- b) <u>Issachar</u> They would receive the deep treasures of the ocean, the jewels of the sand <u>if</u> they took their inheritance as their possession.
- c) <u>Asher</u> They would inherit a land full of wine presses and their feet would move in oil <u>if</u> they took possession of the land
- **Napthali** They would be full of blessing from God and utterly satisfied.

LESSON: The trouble with so many is that they are scared of self-denial - because of their love of ease and comfort, or because of their attachment to the world, many Christians do not possess what they should. They do not know their Bibles (are lazy) - they lack discipline!

ii) Incompatibility (4-10)

(i.e. The inability to get on well with people. Read the story re the two and a half tribes - Reuben, Gad and Manasseh - Seven years previously they did not want to go .East of the Jordan, Joshua agreed on one condition, that they should help the other tribes get established first, then go back to their own land (Ch.18-21). Chapter 22:24) - they erected stones for an altar (not for a sacrifice, but as a memorial) - to remind their relatives that they did help. When other tribes heard about this, they jumped to false conclusions (assumed that they were erecting another altar for worship - idols) i.e. that they did not want to be part of us! They therefore go to war, attack - tragic - before this, they sent out a committee and asked why they were doing this. They denied wanting to be separate, but that they only wanted to build a memorial. It was all a misunderstanding, and it was all sorted out.

iii) Ignorance (Deut.19)

Established six cities of refuge (three on either side of the Jordan) - easy access for refuge, for those who had unintentionally killed someone.

XVIII. PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW. (Chapter 23:1-16)

Twenty years have now passed since the Israelites entered into Canaan. Notice the intensity of the campaigns against Jericho, Ai. Gibeon and Heron, and the responsibility of leadership that took their toll on Joshua

A.W. Pink:

Suffering for the Lord, bearing responsibility in His service, pastoring the saints of God, supporting the testimony of God before the world, patiently enduring, have all taken their toll on his physical health and appearance. As he looks at his people, he sees the great danger of compromise (v.2) - he summonses all Israel to give his farewell message.

Redpath:

Best of all is to listen to the ripe experience of a man who has been through the conflicts of everyday life and is soon to retire from the scene, I would give anything to sit at the feet of such a man.

A. <u>DANGER OF APOSTACY</u> (v.3-9)

Joshua's great concern seemed to be that the seven tribes still shared the land of Canaan. On seven occasions in this chapter their names are mentioned. (v.9 -) reminds them of God's power and goodness in driving out great nations, but the danger they now face is one of compromise, apostasy and backsliding (cf. Acts 20:28-31)

B. RESULTS OF APOSTACY (10-16

- There will always be defeat v.13 "The Lord God will no longer drive out any nations before them" (cf. v.3) their experience of God's goodness.
- **There will be discomfort** "there will be snares and traps for you... until you perish...." Failure to press on to a full accomplishment of the purposes of God, tolerance and compromise with the enemy, a willingness to allow them to share the land, will result in discomfort.
- iii) Disgrace (v.16)

C. THE SAFEGUARDS OF APOSTACY

- i) They must be obedient (v.6) the secret of going on with God
- ii) Separation (v.7-8)

Redpath: People need to stop playing at Christianity and really get down to the battle against sin and Satan.

Joshua exhorts them negatively to separation, and positively to "cleave" to the Lord.

iii) <u>Devotion</u> (v.11) - Failure to obey, to be separated, can always be traced back to failure to devotion.

XIX THE CHALLENGE TO SERVICE (Chapter 24)

Joshua continues with his farewell message - come together at Shechem, the ancient City on the floor of the valley and near to its entrance were the mountains. Mount Ebal and Mount Gerazim. The contour of land was a natural amphitheatre - here Abraham built the first altar to the Lord, where Jacob purchased a field and settled for a while, and where Joshua came after the victory at Ai.

A. HE REVIEWS JOSHUA'S HISTORY (2-13)

- i) Divine call (v.2-3)
 - a) **Abraham** (v.2-3)
 - **b) Isaac** (**v.4**)
 - c) Moses (v.5)
- ii) <u>Divine preservation</u> (5-7)

I sentI brought I destroyedetc

iii) Divine establishment (8-12)

In the land, in spite of tremendous opposition.

iv) Divine hope (v.13) - I gave you the land ..."

B. JOSHUAS EXHORTATION (v.14-19)

i) Fear the Lord

Pink: Nothing moves the heart and therefore the will like recollections of the grace of God in hours of need, like the guidance of the Lord in difficulties, the power of God in victories, and the patience of God in periods of weakness and temptation.

ii) Serve the Lord - total commitment to serve.

iii) Put away idols (v.15)

The challenge is to <u>choose</u> who you are going to serve.

C. JOSHUAS WARNING (v.19-20)

He warns them that if they forsook the Lord and served strange gods, they would be punished.

- i) He is holy
- ii) He is jealous
- iii) He is just

D. JOSHUAS DEATH (v.28-33)

The work for which Joshua was so well-trained and equipped, the service which he tried to do in faithfulness to God, had now come to an end - a man totally yielded to God. Having accomplished all, he went home to glory.