

JOSHUA (1) - INTRODUCTION

Covenant Fellowship Church
Wednesday, February 11, 2026
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Resources:

Joshua: No Falling Words, by Dale Ralph Davis
The Bible Project (<https://bibleproject.com/videos/joshua/>)
Joshua: A 12-Week Study, by Trent Hunter

1. OPENING INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 Our introduction to the man Joshua: Num. 13:8, 14:5–10

1.2 Our introduction to the Land: Gen. 3:24
Gen. 12:1–3

1.3 Our introduction to the book of Joshua: Deut 31:1–8
Deut. 32:44–47

2. OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA (from the ESV Study Bible)

- I. ENTERING the land (1:1–5:15)
- II. TAKING the land (6:1–12:24)
- III. DIVIDING the land (13:1–21:45)
- IV. KEEPING the land (22:1–24:33)

3. CHARACTER OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

3.1 Joshua is one of the “former prophets”:

Joshua
Judges
Samuel
Kings

Then there are the “latter prophets”:

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Ezekiel
12 minor prophets

The “former prophets” are *preached history*. That is, these books do not “foretell” (this is future oriented), but they “forth-tell” (this is past and present oriented). Therefore, to interpret and understand these Bible books, you need to know Bible history—the sequence of persons and events, the importance of events, places, and rituals.

These prophets are “built on” and “based on” the Torah = Pentateuch. That is, they build on creation, redemption, Sinai, wilderness wanderings, and the as yet unfulfilled promises of Seed (Jesus Christ) and Land (the kingdom of God).

This means that all the prophets are built on and based on the covenant that God made with Abraham and his descendants, and which God reaffirmed and “built out” at Sinai with Moses and Israel. We are dealing in Joshua with *covenant history*. That is: with the ongoing, developing relationship between *God and His people*.

(over, please)

3.2 It is important to recognize Joshua in the Psalms:

Josh. 3–4	Miraculous Jordan Crossing	Psalm 114:3, 5
Josh. 6–12	Driving out the Nations	Psalm 44:1–3 Psalm 78:54–55
Josh. 12	The Defeat of Specific Kings	Psalm 135:10–12 Psalm 136:17–22
Josh. 13–21	The Allotment / “Lines” of Inheritance	Psalm 16:6 Psalm 105:44
Josh. 13:1, 15:63	Failure to Complete the Task	Psalm 106:34–36

The Victory of Joshua in the Land (Joshua 1–8)

A Opening focus on the “Book of the Law of Moses” (1:1–18)

- Joshua becomes the leader of Israel
- Joshua commits himself to the law of Moses
- God promises to be with Joshua

B ENCOURAGEMENT from a believing Canaanite: Rahab hides spies (2:1–24)

- **Rahab** ties a scarlet thread in her window and is saved; in time this prostitute (~ Tamar) is brought into the family of Judah (Matt 1:5)
- **Good results from Rahab’s report**—Joshua is encouraged: “Yahweh has given into our hands the whole land; all the people are melting in fear because of us!” (2:24); from Rahab’s report; when we heard our hearts melted (2:11)

C Jordan stands up! Yahweh miraculously enables Israel to cross the Jordan to enter Canaan (3:1–4:24)

- Israel is given marching orders
- The priests lead the procession
- The miracle removes enables Israel to enter the land

CENTER → D ISRAEL WORSHIPS YAHWEH IN THE PROMISED LAND (5:1–15)

C’ Jericho falls down! Yahweh miraculously enables Israel to cross over walls to enter and conquer Jericho (6:1–27)

- Israel is given marching orders
- The priests lead the procession
- The miracle removes enables Israel to enter the land

B’ DISCOURAGEMENT from a faithless Israelite: Achan hides plunder (7:1–8:29)

- **Zerah** is the son of Judah who had a scarlet thread tied on his hand (Gen. 38:28); his offspring (**Achan**) is cut off because of his unbelief.
- **Bad results from Achan’s sin**—Joshua is discouraged: now Yahweh ‘has given us into the hands of the Amorites” (7:7); the Israelites hearts melted (7:5); and now “when the Canaanites and the other people . . . hear,” they will come and defeat Israel” (7:9).

A’ Closing focus on the “Book of the Law of Moses” (8:30–35)

- Joshua leads the people to renew the covenant
- Joshua copies the stone tablets of Moses
- God’s presence will dwell with the people in the land because of Joshua

The Distribution of the Land (Joshua 13–24)

A Introduction (13:1–7)

- Joshua's apports land as he grows old
- Already / Not Yet: This is your land . . . whose inhabitants you must drive out

B Transjordan Tribes (13:8–33) – Land apportioned to Reuben, Gad, Half Tribe of Manasseh

C Levites (14:1–5)

D : Personal Allotment for **CALEB** (14:6–15)

E Two Large Tribes

Judah (15:1–63) – Land apportioned to the tribe of Judah

Joseph (16:1–17:18) – Land apportioned to Ephraim and ½ tribe of M.

F LAND APPORTIONED FROM SHILOH (18:1–10)

E' Smaller Tribes

Judah Tribes: Benjamin (18:11–28) and Simeon (19:1–9)

Joseph Tribes: Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan (19:10–48)

D' : Personal Allotment for **JOSHUA** (19:49–52)

C' Levitical Cities (20:1–21:45)

B' Transjordan Tribes (22:1–34) – Return home and build an altar

A' Conclusion (23:1–24:33)

- Joshua's closing challenge as he is about to die
- Already / Not Yet: This is your land . . . whose inhabitants you must drive out

The Victory of Israel Over the Nations (Joshua 9–12)

A All the kings of Canaan oppose Joshua as one (9:1–2)

- Includes kings west of the Jordan, as far as Lebanon, highlands, Shephelah, etc.
- ‘they gathered together as one to fight against Joshua and Israel’ (v. 2)

B **MERCY** for a believing remnant: Israel makes peace with Gibeon (9:3–27)

- Those who seek mercy are spared

C Defeat of **Southern Coalition**, led by king of Jerusalem (10:1–15)

- Begins: “when King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem heard . . . he sent to . . .” list of kings
- Kings “gather together . . . to fight Israel”
- Yahweh reassures Joshua: “do not be afraid of them; I will give them into their hands”
- Joshua and the entire army with him carry out surprise attack against enemy
- Israel struck the enemy and pursued them as far as _____ and as far as _____

D **RITUAL CEREMONY AT MAKKEDAH, CONQUEST OF KINGS OF SOUTH** (10:16–43)

C Defeat of **Northern Coalition**, led by king of Hazor (11:1–15)

- Begins: “when King Jabin of Hazor heard . . . he sent to . . .” list of kings
- Kings “gather together . . . to fight Israel”
- Yahweh reassures Joshua: “do not be afraid of them; I will give them into their hands”
- Joshua and the entire army with him carry out surprise attack against enemy
- Israel struck the enemy and pursued them as far as _____ and as far as _____

B **NO MERCY** for hardened Canaanites: Israel makes peace with none but Gibeon (11:16–23)

- Those who harden their hearts are judged

A All the kings whom Joshua conquered listed one by one (12:1–24)

- Includes kings west of Jordan, from the valley of Lebanon, the highlands, Shephelah, Hittites
- Each king listed, one by one—31 in total

From *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi*, by David A. Dorsey, p. 91.

CHIASM = a rhetorical / literary device where words/grammar/concepts are repeated in reverse order, for emphasis, or memory, or contrast:

A–B, B–A (A–B–C–D–C–B–A)

I meant (A) what I said (B) and I said (B) what I meant (A).

“Ask not what your country (A) can do for you (B); ask what you (B) can do for your country (A).”