

Commander Joshua in the Promised Land - Joshua's Story - Lesson #60

“Epilogue – Part 3 of 3” •Chapter 24:14-33•

•HANDOUT•

► **This lesson:** In the last half of Chapter 24 the Lord's message thru Joshua, has ended. Joshua summarizes by setting forth the truth that Israel has a choice that must be made. He says: “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.”

This challenge will be followed by two deaths and a long awaited burial. This will conclude our Joshua project.

Joshua's Final Challenge to Israel ...

► **Joshua 24:14-15** • "Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

Q: When Joshua gives his final challenge, what foundational concepts does he use?

Q: What should shock us about Joshua's challenge to Israel at this point in time?

Q: When Joshua tells Israel that they must choose, is it possible that the people thought Joshua thought that idolatry was a viable choice and was really no big deal to God?

Q: So, if Joshua's statement could be taken as ambiguous, why would he say it that way?

Q: What was it about the idolatry that so appealed to the Israelites?

THE PEOPLE RESPOND TO JOSHUA'S CHALLENGE ...

► **Joshua 24:16-18** • Then the people answered, "Far be it from us to forsake the LORD to serve other gods! It was the LORD our God himself who brought us and our fathers up out of Egypt, from that land of slavery, and performed those great signs before our eyes. He protected us on our entire journey and among all the nations through which we traveled. And the LORD drove out before us all the nations, including the Amorites, who lived in the land.

We too will serve the LORD, because he is our God."



Q: What was the people's response to Joshua's challenge?

► **Joshua 24:19-20** • Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. 20 If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you."

Q: What is Joshua's surprising response to the people's declaration?

► **Joshua 24:21-24** • But the people said to Joshua, "No! We will serve the LORD." Then Joshua said, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the LORD."
"Yes, we are witnesses," they replied.
"Now then," said Joshua, "throw away the foreign gods that are among you and yield your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel."
And the people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God and obey him."

Q: What does it mean to be a "witness against yourself?"

Q: What were the two actions that Joshua required in order to ratify their oath?

► **Joshua 24:25-28** • On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people, and there at Shechem he drew up for them decrees and laws. And Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God.
Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak near the holy place of the LORD. "See!" he said to all the people. "This stone will be a witness against us. It has heard all the words the LORD has said to us. It will be a witness against you if you are untrue to your God."
Then Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance.

Q: On the same day after the people had committed themselves to following Yahweh, made a covenant for the people. What does "making a covenant for the people" mean?

Q: What was the "Book of the Law of God?" Was it the same as the "Book of the Law of Moses?"

Q: What was the purpose of the stone Joshua set up under the oak tree that was near the “Holy Place of the Lord,” which references the Tabernacle?

The Conclusion of Joshua's Story

► **Joshua 24:29-31** • After these things, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten. And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. Israel served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had experienced everything the LORD had done for Israel.

Q: What title is given to Joshua here, as his epitaph, that was never given to him in life?

Q: From this Epitaph, what is, perhaps, Joshua's greatest legacy?

► With Joshua's death at 110 years of age, his style of leadership came to an end. The book of Joshua began with the words: “After the death of Moses ...” and then described the transfer of leadership to Joshua. The Book of Judges begins similarly: “After the death of Joshua ...” but there is no named successor. In fact the key statement and theme for the book of Judges is: “In those days Israel had no king, and everyone did what was right in their own eyes.”

► **Joshua 24:32** • And Joseph's bones, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem in the tract of land that Jacob bought for a hundred pieces of silver from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. This became the inheritance of Joseph's descendants.

Q: Why is the burial of Joseph made part of the record of Joshua?

► **Genesis 50:22-26** • So Joseph and his brothers and their families continued to live in Egypt. Joseph lived to the age of 110. He lived to see three generations of descendants of his son Ephraim, and he lived to see the birth of the children of Manasseh's son Makir, whom he claimed as his own.

“Soon I will die,” Joseph told his brothers, “but God will surely come to help you and lead you out of this land of Egypt. He will bring you back to the land he solemnly promised to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath, and he said, “When God comes to help you and lead you back, you must take my bones with you.”

So Joseph died at the age of 110. The Egyptians embalmed him, and his body was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

► **Hebrews 11:22** • It was by faith that Joseph, when he was about to die, said confidently that the people of Israel would leave Egypt. He even commanded them to take his bones with them when they left.

Joshua's Story Ends ...

► **Joshua 24:33** • And Eleazar son of Aaron died and was buried at Gibeah, which had been allotted to his son Phinehas in the hill country of Ephraim.

Q: Why would the book of Joshua and the story of Israel's occupation of the Promised Land end with the death of Eleazar, the son of Aaron?

**Thus ends the story of Joshua, son of Nun
who truly was a servant of the Most High God
and a true hero of the faithful.**