

BRAVEHEART

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE: JOSHUA

Joshua 1:1-9 (NASV)

I. INTRODUCTION—A HISTORICAL OR A ‘PROPHETIC’ BOOK?

A. JOSHUA—BOTH HISTORY AND PROPHECY

1. HISTORY BOOK—IN CHRISTIAN BIBLE

- a. There are 12 ‘historical books’ in the Christian Bible
- b. Scope—Joshua through Esther
- c. Joshua—links the Pentateuch to the rest of Israel’s history

2. PROPHETIC BOOK—IN HEBREW BIBLE

- a. Joshua—first book of ‘Former Prophets’
- b. Scope—four books of ‘Former Prophets’
 - Joshua
 - Judges
 - Samuel
 - Kings

B. HISTORICAL BOOKS

1. THREE PERIODS

- a. **Theocratic** Period—(3 books)
 - Joshua—Judges—Ruth
- b. **Monarchical** Period—(6 books)
 - I/II Samuel—I/II Kings—I/II Chronicles
- c. **Restoration** Period—(3 books)
 - Ezra—Nehemiah—Esther

2. THEOCRATIC PERIOD

- a. National situation—Israel ruled by God
- b. Chronological Scope
 - Conquest and settlement of Canaan
 - Dates—**1405-1043 BC**

3. MONARCHICAL PERIOD

- a. National situation
 - Nation ruled by human kings
 - Split between two kingdoms—Judah and Israel
- b. Chronological Scope
 - Beginning of monarchy to fall and captivity
 - Dates—**1043-587 BC**

4. RESTORATION PERIOD

- a. National situation—nation under client rulers and priests
- b. Chronological Scope
 - From return of remnant—to rebuilding of Temple and Walls
 - Dates—536 (Cyrus’s decree)—to mid-5th century BC

5. THE OLD TESTAMENT AS HISTORY

- a. 17 books tell the history of Israel—from Abraham to the 5th century

1. **Basic** story-line given in 11 books

- 3 in Torah—Genesis—Exodus—Numbers
- 2 in Theocratic Period—Joshua—Judges
- 4 in Monarchical Period—I/II Samuel—I/II Kings
- 2 in Restoration Period—Ezra—Nehemiah

2. **Supplementary** facts/stories—given in 6 books

- 2 in Torah—Leviticus—Deuteronomy
- 1 in Theocratic era—Ruth
- 2 in Monarchical era—I/II Chronicles
- 1 in Restoration era—Esther

b. **Joshua is unique**

- 1. Only book—without massive failure by people or leadership
- 2. One problem—Achan’s sin (**chapter 7**)—limited to one person—and quickly resolved

C. PROPHETIC BOOKS

1. JOSHUA—A PROPHETIC BOOK IN HEBREW CANON

2. HEBREW CANONICAL ORDER

- a. **Torah**—‘Teaching’
- b. **Nevi'im**—‘Prophets’
 1. **Former Prophets**
 - **Joshua**—Judges—Samuel—Kings
 2. Latter Prophets
 - Isaiah—Jeremiah—Ezekiel
 - Twelve Minor Prophets
- c. **Ketuvim**—‘Writings’
 1. Poetic: Psalms—Proverbs—Job
 2. Five Scrolls: Song of Songs—Ruth—Lamentations—Ecclesiastes—Esther
 3. Other Writings: Daniel—Ezra—Nehemiah

3. WHY PROPHETIC?

- a. ‘Former Prophets’—not *purely* historical
 1. Not detailed accounts of every event
 2. Not designed primarily to give exact chronological accounts
 3. Not a study of cause and effect showing relation of events to one another
- b. Rather—‘Former Prophets’ gave accounts from a prophetic perspective
 1. God’s control of history by deed and word
 2. Acts of prophets or religious leaders—highlighting religious impact
 3. Prophetic themes such as:
 - Divine rescue
 - Covenant obligations and worship
 - Justice in community
 - Divine blessing and punishment
4. Prophetic **and** Historical Nature of Former Prophets
 - a. Unlike ‘Latter Prophets’
 1. Latter Prophets contain more ‘oracles’:
 - Predictive ‘fore-telling’ prophecies
 - Preaching messages—exhorting people to action

2. Latter Prophets **do not give continuous historical** accounts
- b. Former Prophets
 1. ‘Tell forth’ God’s message—prophetically—by recording His acts and deeds
 2. But also **do** give continuous historical account—from Occupation to Exile

II. BACKGROUND

A. COMPOSITION

1. AUTHORSHIP

- a. No *explicit* statement claiming Joshua was author
- b. Textual evidence—that Joshua *was* author
 1. Joshua wrote the ‘covenant at Shechem

24:25-6—*So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God . . .*

- Covenant was based on Joshua’s farewell charge
- Implication—could mean Joshua wrote the whole book

2. There was already a **book** describing the land of Canaan

18:8-9—*Then the men arose and went, and Joshua commanded those who went to describe the land, saying, “Go and walk through the land and describe it, and return to me; then I will cast lots for you here before the Lord in Shiloh.” So the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities in seven divisions in a **book**; and they came to Joshua to the camp at Shiloh.*

3. Joshua already had **written** things for posterity—see **8:30-32**

- a. After conquering Ai
- b. Joshua obeyed God’s directions given by Moses—in **Dt 27:2-8**

- He built an altar of uncut stones on Mount Ebal
- Offered burnt offerings and peace offerings
- Then **wrote** the ‘law of Moses’ on stones—in the presence of the people

4. First person—“**us**”—passage

5:6—*For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, that is, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished because they did not listen to the voice of the Lord, to whom the Lord had sworn that He would not let them see the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give **us**, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

- Some manuscripts also make **5:1** an ‘us’ passage
- c. Some scholars disagree—giving later date of authorship
 1. Dating varies from 13th century (next generation)—to 7th century
 2. Many say—likely during early monarchy—10th century
- d. **Singular** authorship likely
 1. Unity of style and organization
 2. Three parts added *after* Joshua’s death
 - Othniel’s capture of Kirjath Sepher—**15:13-19**—occurred later in **Jdg 1:9-15**
 - Dan’s migration to the north—**19:47**—occurred later in **Jdg 18:27-29**
 - Joshua’s death and burial—**24:29-33**

2. DATE

- a. Four possible dates
 1. Based on three factors
 - a. Dating of Exodus—40 years before *Joshua* begins
 - b. Key texts—for dating Exodus
 1. **I Kings 6:1**
 - ❖ **Solomon’s Temple** was started 480 years after Exodus
 - ❖ Begun in the 4th year of Solomon’s reign
 2. **I Kings 9:10**
 - ❖ It took 20 years to build Solomon’s Temple
 - c. Method of dating **Solomon’s reign**
 1. Secular dating
 - ❖ Solomon’s reign = 970-931 BC
 - ❖ Temple destruction = 587 BC
 2. Rabbinic dating
 - ❖ Destruction of Temple = 422 BC
2. Four possibilities—ranging over 250 years
 - 1406 BC—**earliest** date
 - 1296—**later** date

- 1356 BC—**intermediate** date
- 1210-1160—**latest** date

b. **Earliest** Date—**1406**—based on secular dating of Solomon’s reign

1. Solomon ruled 970-931
2. Temple started 966—fourth year of Solomon’s reign
3. Exodus = 1446 [966 + 480]
 - Under **Thutmose III** (ruled 1470-1425)
 - 6th pharaoh of 18th dynasty
4. Joshua = **1406** [1446 minus 40]

c. **Later** Date—**1296**—using Rabbinic sources

1. Rabbinic sources say Temple stood **410** years—832-422 BC
2. Implied—Temple construction began 852 BC—[20 years earlier]
3. Solomon’s reign began 856—Solomon’s fourth year
4. Exodus = **1336** [856 + 480]
 - a. Under one of two pharaohs—18th dynasty
 - **Akhenaten**—formerly called Amenhotep IV (1351-1334)
 - **Tutankhamun—King Tut**—formerly Tutankhaten (1332-1322)
 - b. Note: Akhenaten—was monotheistic worshiper of Aten [sun god]
5. Joshua = **1296** [1336 minus 40]

d. **Intermediate** Date—**1356**—using Josephus and Rabbinic tradition

1. Josephus said—Temple stood **470** years
 - 60 years longer than Rabbinic tradition
2. Exodus = **1396**—[60 years earlier than Rabbinic tradition—1336]
 - Possibly under—**Thutmose IV** (1401-1391)—8th pharaoh of 18th dynasty
 - Or possibly under—**Amenhotep III** (1391-1353)—9th pharaoh of 18th dynasty
3. Joshua = **1356**—[1396 minus 40]

e. **Latest** Date—**1160-1210**—based on archaeological evidence in Canaan

1. Proposed by William F. Albright
2. Exodus = 1250-1200 BC

- Possibly under **Rameses II** (1303-1213)—3rd pharaoh, 19th dynasty
 - Or possibly under Merneptah (1213-1203)—4th pharaoh, 19th dynasty)
3. Joshua = **1160-1210** (1250.1200 minus 40)
4. Another reason for possible late dating
- a. I Kings 6:1—can be read figuratively
 - 480 could mean 40-year *ideal* generation times 12 (figurative for 12 tribes)
 - b. If generations were *realistic* and shorter—25 years
 - Total years from Exodus to Temple would be 300 years
 - c. Using 966 date for secular dating of Temple—gives late dating of Exodus
 - $966 + 300 = 1266$
 - Under **Amenhotep III** (1391-1353)—9th pharaoh of 18th dynasty
- f. REGARDLESS—the *Book of Joshua*—was written not long after events

1. Rahab was still alive

6:25—*However, Rahab the harlot and her father's household and all she had, Joshua spared; and she has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.*

2. *Joshua* gives detailed information about Israel's military campaigns

3. *Joshua* uses ancient names of Canaanite cities

B. SETTING/LOCATION

1. EAST OF JORDAN RIVER AND CANAAN—**chapters 1-5**

a. Staging and preparation for river crossing—**chapter 1**

1. Springtime—1405?

2. One month—March-April

3. Evidence

- Moses' death—**Dt 34:5-9**—mourning for 30 days
- Crossing Jordan—10 April—**Josh 4:19** [10th day of first month]
- Probably Moses' death was in March

4. Specific Location

- Plains of Moab—east of Jordan River across from Jericho

- Just north of the Dead Sea
- Close to Shittim—an oasis with Acacia trees just to the south
- Northern territory of Reuben—southern part of Gad

5. Spies sent to Jericho—**chapter 2**

b. Crossing Jordan River and setting memorial stones—**chapter 3-4**

c. Encampment at Gilgal—**chapters 4-5**

- East of Jericho
- Spiritual preparation—circumcision of Israel

2. CANAAN—**chapters 6-12**

a. Conquest of Promised Land

b. Duration—7 years

c. Calculation

- Caleb—40 years old at Kadesh-barnea—when sent to spy—**14:7**
- Spy mission—occurred about 2 years into wilderness sojourn
- So—Caleb was 78 at crossing of Jordan
- Caleb—85 years old when land settlements announced—**14:10**
- So—conquest took **seven years**—from Caleb’s 78th to 85th years

d. Dates—April 1406-1399 BC?

e. Three campaigns

- Central Canaan—**chapters 6-8**—strategically cut Canaan in half
- Southern Canaan—**chapters 9-10**
- Northern Canaan—**chapters 11-12**

3. BOTH SIDES—OF JORDAN RIVER—**chapters 13-24**

a. Tribes settled in allocated territories

b. East of Jordan—2 ½ tribes

- (East) Manasseh ½ tribe—north
- Gad—center
- Reuben—south

c. Canaan—9 ½ tribes (listed north-to-south)



C. JOSHUA THE PERSON

1. His Name
 - a. Originally—**Hoshea**—**Nu 13:8**—meaning ‘salvation’
 - b. Moses called him **Joshua**—or Jehoshua
 - Hebrew = The Lord (Yahweh) is Salvation
 - Greek equivalent = Jesus
2. Born in Egypt—as a slave
3. Tribe of Ephraim—so a descendant of Joseph
4. Previous events in his life
 - Defeated Amalekites—with Moses on the hill—**Ex 17**
 - On mountain with Moses forty days—**Ex 24**
 - Guardian of Tent of Meeting—when Moses met with Yahweh—**Ex 33**
 - One of twelve spies—**Nu 13-14**
 - God told Moses to commission him with authority—**Nu 27**
 - God chose him to lead Israel into Canaan—**Dt 1:38** and **3:28**
 - Moses commissioned Joshua as his successor—**Dt 31**
5. Chronology of Leadership
 - Age when Moses died—85—according to Josephus
 - Age at beginning of Exodus = 45
 - Led Israel in conquest of Canaan—7 years—age 85-92
 - Ruled Israel 18 more years—death at 110 (**24:29**)

III. ORGANIZATION

A. FOUR PARTS

1. **Part One**—preparation for crossing
2. **Part Two**—conquest—3 campaigns against more than 30 enemy armies
3. **Part Three**—partitioning and settlement by 12 tribes
4. **Part Four**—conditions for Continued Settlement

B. STRUCTURE

1. ISRAEL PREPARES FOR CONQUEST—Chapters 1-5
 - Joshua Replaces Moses—**1:1-1:18**
 - Military Preparation—**2:1-5:1**
 - Spiritual Preparation—**5:2-12**
 - Appearance of Commander of the Hosts of the Lord—**5:13-15**
2. CONQUEST OF CANAAN—6:1-13:7
 - Conquest of Central Canaan—**chapters 6-8**
 - Conquest of Southern Canaan—**chapters 9-10**
 - Conquest of Northern Canaan—**chapters 11-12**
 - Unconquered Parts—**13:1-7**
3. SETTLEMENT OF CANAAN—**13:8**—through **chapter 24**
 - a. Settlement East of Jordan—**13:8**-to end of **chapter 13**
 - Boundaries of 2 ½ tribes—½ Manasseh, Gad, Reuben
 - b. Settlement West of Jordan—**chapters 14-19**
 1. First Settlement at Gilgal—**chapters 14-17**
 - Boundaries of Judah, Ephraim, and ½ Manasseh
 2. Second Settlement at Shiloh—**chapters 18-19**
 - Boundaries set for remaining tribes
 - Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulon, Isaachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan
 - c. Settlement of Religious Community—**chapters 20-21**
 1. Six cities of refuge—**chapter 20**
 2. Levitical cities—**chapter 21**

4. CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED SETTLEMENT—**chapters 22-24**
 - a. Altar of Witness—**chapter 22**
 - b. Joshua’s Farewell Address—**chapter 23**
 - c. Covenant at Shechem—**chapter 24**
 - Death and burial of Joshua and Eleazar—**24:29-33**

IV. PURPOSES AND THEMES

A. PURPOSES

1. Document Israel’s conquest of Canaan
2. Set tribal boundaries and document settlement of Canaan
3. Show God’s blessings for faithful obedience
4. Call Israel to continued faithfulness to covenant

B. BASIC THEMES

1. Victory and blessing come through faithful obedience to God’s word
2. Victory comes through God—not by military might or numerical superiority
3. Importance of God’s written word

1:8—*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 to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.*

8:32-35—Joshua wrote the law of Moses on the altar stones on Mount Ebal

23:6-16—Joshua’s Farewell Address—firmly obey all that is in the law of Moses

24:26-27—Joshua wrote the people’s covenant to obey God on stone at Shechem

C. THEMATIC STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

1. **“Be Courageous”**—**Chapters 1-5**—Preparation for Conquest
2. **“Be Obedient”**—**Chapters 6-12**—Conquest of Canaan
3. **“Be Fair”**—**Chapters 13-21**—Apportionment and Settlement of Land
4. **“Be Faithful”**—**Chapters 22-24**—Farewell Address and Covenant with God

VII. BIBLICAL TEXT

1 Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ servant, saying, **2** “Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the

sons of Israel. **3** Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. **4** From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory. **5** No man will *be able to stand* before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. **6** Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. **7** 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 to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. **9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

VIII. EXPOSITION

A. MAIN IDEAS OF PASSAGE

1. THREE COMMANDS

- a. **Cross** this Jordan—**v 2**
- b. Be **strong** and **courageous**—three times—**vv 6, 7, 9**
- c. **Do all the law** Moses commanded you—twice—**vv 7, 8**

2. FOUR PROMISES

- a. **I am giving** you this land—I have given you this land—**vv 2, 3**
- b. **No man will stand** against you—**v 5**
- c. You will give people **possession** of it (the land)—**v 6**
- d. You will have **success** and **prosper**—twice—**vv 7, 8**

3. ONE ASSURANCE

- o I will be with you—the Lord goes with you—**vv 5, 9**

B. OUTLINE

1. THREE CYCLES OF—COMMAND-PROMISE-ASSURANCE

- a. **First Cycle**—**verses 1-5**
- b. **Second Cycle**—**verse 6**
- c. **Third Cycle**—**verses 7-9**

2. FIRST CYCLE

a. **Command** = Cross this Jordan

b. **Promises**

1. I am giving the land to you—have given it to you—**vv2, 3**

2. No man will be able to stand before you—**v 5**

c. **Assurances**

1. **Personal**—I will be with you—not fail/forsake you—**v 5**

2. **Historical**

a. Promise to give the land—just as I spoke to Moses—**v 3**

b. Promise to be with you—just as I have been with Moses—**v 5**

c. Promise people will possess the land—which I swore to their fathers—**v6**

3. SECOND CYCLE

a. **Command**—Be strong and courageous—**v 6**

b. **Promise**—you will possess this land—**v 6**

c. **Assurance**—carries over from **verse 5**—I will be with you—not fail/forsake you

4. THIRD CYCLE

a. **Command**—do all the law Moses commanded you—**vv 7, 8**

▪ Be strong and [very] courageous in doing this—**vv 7, 9**

b. **Promise**—you will have success—you will prosper—**vv 7, 8**

c. **Assurance**—the Lord goes with you wherever you go—**v 9**

C. PRINCIPLES

1. IT TAKES COURAGE AND STRENGTH TO FOLLOW GOD

a. **Courage**—literally to do something hard/tasking for God

▪ To overcome fear of unknown—uncertainty—personal inadequacy

b. **Courage**—to keep God’s law and apply His ethic

▪ Moral courage to stand up for right/God—in face of popular opinion/ridicule

c. **Strength**—strong moral fiber—commitment to do what is right/godly

d. **Strength**—it takes industry/work/tirelessness—not to quit—it is hard *work*

- e. **Strength**—to keep rudder on bearing in hard seas—not just having a moral compass, but also the discipline and determination to steer the ship against all resistance

2. IT TAKES FULL **FOCUS**—**COMMITMENT**—**CONCENTRATION** TO FOLLOW GOD

- a. **Focus**—not going to the right/left
 - Not being sidetracked—no detours—no short-cuts!
 - Obviously—not deviating/departing into the paths of sin
- b. **Commitment**—law in our mouths
 - Verbally committing ourselves to what God commands
 - Taking a visible and vocal stand—putting ourselves on record publicly
 - What we say we mean—what we mean we do—like Jesus
- c. **Concentration**—meditating on His word
 - Studying and understanding not just what—but why—and how
 - Going from knowledge/understanding—to godly wisdom
 - Meditating on the word—keeps us from being distracted by detours/temptations

3. OBEY GOD FULLY—NOT JUST IN PART

- a. Be **very** courageous; be careful to do according to **all** the law which Moses commanded
- b. Later—this was Israel’s real problem
 - 1. They took **part** but not **all** the land!
 - 2. They ridded the land of **part** but **not all** the idolatrous inhabitants
 - 3. They got rid of **part** but **not all** the pagan gods
- c. It takes courage and strength to obey God fully—not by half-measure—no compromise

4. WHAT GOD PROMISES—HE HAS ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED

- a. What I am giving them (**v 2b**)—I have given to you (**v 3**)
- b. As Jesus told His disciples

Mk 12:24—*Therefore whatever you pray for, believe that you have received it, and it shall be given to you.*

5. ASSURANCE—FOR COURAGE/STRENGTH—DEPENDS ON TWO THINGS

- a. God’s presence
 - I will be with you—I will not fail you or forsake you—**v 5**
 - The Lord goes with you—wherever you go—**v 9**

b. Historical reassurance

1. In this passage

- Just as I spoke to Moses—**v 3**
- Just as I have been with Moses—**v 5**
- Just as I swore to their fathers—**v 6**

2. Joshua and Caleb had witnessed it all—and could testify of God’s mighty acts

- The Ten Plagues and the Passover
- The parting of the Red Sea—and defeat of Pharaoh’s army
- The defeat of the kings of Sihon and Og
- The day the sun stood still
- The water from the rock
- The miracle of quail
- The giving of the Law on Mount Horeb
- Last men standing—saw God fulfill promise not to let first generation enter

3. We need to rehearse the mighty acts of God to our children

6. IT IS GOD WHO WINS THE VICTORY—NOT WE

- a. **God** gave the land to them—**vv 2-3**
- b. No man could stand against them—because “*I will be with you*”—**v 5**
- c. Courage and strength—lack of dismay/trembling—depend on God’s presence—**v 9**
- d. Braveheart—God grants us by His grace and presence—we don’t manufacture it!

Dt 31:8—*The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear of be dismayed.*