

Introduction to Joshua

Context – Historical and Spiritual Setting

Read each passage, make observations, and answer any given questions.

God's Promises

Genesis 12:1-3 – What promises did God make to Abram?

Were the promises given in these verses based upon any actions, beliefs, or efforts of Abram?

Covenants can take several forms. Covenants are often made between kings and vassals (one with great authority and one with far less). Covenants can be contingent upon particular actions and commitments (stipulations). Other covenants can take on an unconditional element where the greater participant commits to a certain set of promises without a necessary response from the lesser. God makes both unconditional and conditional covenants with his people throughout the generations, circumstances, and stages of history. Here, God makes a unilateral, unconditional covenant with Abram. The fulfillment of these promises is based on the character and commitment of God alone – It Will Happen. Thus, these promises set the stage for the rest of the Old Testament.

God's People

Israel was brought to the edge of the Promised Land and, in fear and faithlessness, doubted God and refused to enter. God sent that generation into the wilderness for 40 years to wander and die and raised up the next generation. This new generation is now entering Moab and is approaching the edge of the Promised Land.

Deuteronomy 29:10-13 – Describe the stage being set:

All of Israel is brought before the presence of the Lord. A conditional covenant is about to be introduced.

29:13 – What is God's intention for the covenant?

Why would God remind them of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? What emotions would this inspire? How would it affect their perspective?

God's Covenant

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 – What does God lay before his people?

What would it look like to choose life? How would both the heart and one's actions be involved?

What would it look like for them to choose death? What would be the consequences?

God's Plan

Deuteronomy 31:1-6 – Is victory in question?

What is the significance of God going before them? How should this impact their hearts and attitudes?

We know that God is always with us, so why do we still struggle with fear (sharing the Gospel with that friend, having that hard conversation, telling someone about my sin, reconciling with someone who has deeply wronged me...)?

Can you think of a verse that encourages you and inspires faith in your hard moments? Who could you encourage with this verse? Do you have it memorized?

God's Man

Deuteronomy 31:7-8 - Who witnesses this transfer of leadership?

What is Moses' role in passing the baton?

God has called the people to "be strong and courageous" (31:6); here Joshua is given the same charge. What happens if the leadership loses this heart of courage?

How can you better encourage and support your church leaders?