

JOSHUA

(Joshua 1—24)

For many years Joshua was a faithful assistant of Moses. He was one of the original 12 spies; only he and Caleb urged the Israelites to go into Canaan. He also served as commander of the military forces.

In Joshua 1 the Lord gave a series of commands to Joshua, urging him to be strong, courageous, and to be careful to follow the Law which had been given to Moses.

The story of Joshua is largely a history of military action. God's orders were to drive out the people in Canaan as the land had been promised to God's people. Joshua 2 records spies being sent in to check out the area, especially Jericho. It was there that they were helped by Rahab. Chapter 3 records crossing the Jordan River. Priests led the way, carrying the ark of the covenant. As their feet touched the water the River separated (much like the Red Sea earlier) and the people crossed on dry land. 12 stones were taken from the river bed and stacked up as a memorial of God's deliverance of the people into the land.

Joshua repeatedly urged the people to be faithful to the Lord. All the men were circumcised, since that commandment had not been followed during the 40 years in the wilderness.

Chapter 6 records the fall of Jericho as the people marched around the city once daily and then 7 times the 7th day. Trumpets were blown on the 7th trip. The walls fell and the city was taken. All those living there were killed, except for Rahab and those of her family who were with her. A little later, the city of Ai was captured.

Chapter 9 records the clever deception by the Gibeonites---saving their lives but leading to their enslavement.

Succeeding chapters relate a succession of battles with the Canaanites, along with an explanation of how the conquered lands were divided among the Israelite tribes.

Joshua 23 records the very touching farewell address by Joshua. Take time to read this chapter---summarizing it does not do it justice! In chapter 24 he makes a fervent appeal to the people to be faithful after his death. **BY ALL MEANS** read 24:15! Joshua died at age 110. (Note: 24:32 records the burial of Joseph's bones.)