



Commentary

Joshua

After Moses dies, the Lord commissions Joshua to cross over the Jordan and lead His people into the Promised Land. Joshua sends two spies into the first city, Jericho, and learns that everyone who lives in the land is panicking because of the them. Miraculously the Jordan River parts and they are able to cross over on dry ground.

After circumcising the men and celebrating Passover, it is time to capture the land. Joshua has an encounter with the Lord where he realizes that God will be the one to fight the battles if the people will follow and obey Him. Not always do the Israelites obey the Lord. Achan defies God's command to give all the plunder to Him by stealing some of it for himself. His severe judgement is a reminder that all sin, whether that of the Canaanites or the Israelites, will be dealt with appropriately. Numerous battles are won, miracles abound and the land is secured.

Joshua divides the land at the Lord's command, specifying boundaries and borders. Finally, before he dies, Joshua appeals to the people, warning them to stay faithful to the Lord and destroy all idols.

God keeps His word. His promise to Abraham in Genesis was fulfilled in the book of Joshua. We can trust Him; we can trust His written word and we can trust that He will complete the work that He has begun in us (Philippians 1:6). God was patient and long-suffering. Along the way, there were many occasions of sin and failure, yet God's plan and promise was ultimately fulfilled.

In this life, we will have many battles. They will not necessarily be physical battles but they will nonetheless be times of intense conflict and struggle. In these times, it is important to remember the lessons from Joshua: God is able to fight our battles for us; we need to trust Him and we need to do what Joshua did: meditate day and night upon the Word of the Lord, don't be afraid, and be strong and courageous.

God takes sin seriously; it comes with a high price tag, as Achan learned. We must fear the Lord and fight against a casual attitude toward sin. It breaks our relationship with God.

We are faced with a choice. We can serve the Lord, as Joshua and his family did, or we can serve gods of our own choosing, as most of the Israelites eventually did. The choice we make is a daily choice. Choosing to serve the Lord means that we are choosing to meditate on His word, obey Him with our choices, and honor Him with our lives.