

JOSHUA

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Preface

Over the years Clifford Pond has made a number of very helpful contributions to the Serving Today radio programme for pastors and church leaders. This particular book covers the material he has dealt with in a series of radio talks giving an overview of the book of Joshua. The book of Joshua is an important part of the Bible because it outlines the history of the people of Israel when they entered the Promised Land after their 40 years wandering in the wilderness.

Clifford's approach is most helpful for those who wish to teach from this part of the Bible. You will gain most from this book if you are able to read the relevant parts of Joshua that each chapter covers first! You will note that in each chapter of this book Clifford has taken large sections of the Biblical text which is something that is often needed when dealing with narrative portions of Scripture. This helps us

to see the overall themes in the book of Joshua easily, which in turn helps us to understand this Old Testament book and also provide us with a helpful basis for more detailed study ourselves. As well as outlining the content, he also draws out the lessons from these sections which are valuable practical aids to preachers in their sermon preparation and for conducting Bible studies. This also helps us to see the relevance of this part of God's Word to current day Christian living. Clifford's many years of pastoral experience come out in these helpful applications.

Needless to say I am very grateful to Clifford Pond for the work he has put in enabling us air the fruit of his studies in the Serving Today radio programme and to produce this booklet. We trust you will not only find this book instructive and edifying but that the Lord will use it to help you to share the teaching of the book of Joshua in your ministry.

Derek French
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Chapter 1: The Beginning Of The Work - Joshua 1:1-2:24

1) Background

This is the book that tells of the entry of the people of Israel into the land of Canaan and of the issues they were involved in as they took possession of the land.

Over 400 years earlier, God had promised this land to Abraham and his descendants. He said in Genesis 13:15:

“All the land that you see, I will give to you and your offspring...”

Before that happened, the nation went down into Egypt where they became slaves and it was very difficult for them to see how God’s promise could be fulfilled. But then God called Moses to lead the people out of Egypt, and he confirmed to him his promise which he described in Exodus 3:8 to give them:

“...a land flowing with milk and honey, the home of the Canaanites...”

Under Moses’ leadership they escaped from Egypt through the Red Sea and into the Sinai desert. They could stay there and then have entered the Promised Land, but because of their unbelief they wandered in the desert for 40 years. Now they have reached a place by the side of the

river Jordan within sight of Canaan, and in this book of Joshua we are going to see how God kept his promise and we will learn the lesson that even after many years, God does not forget his promises, and that is good for us also to remember.

2) A new leader

Moses had been a wonderful leader, and he would be difficult for anyone to follow. In the first 11 verses of Joshua chapter 1 we see how God appointed Joshua to the task of leading the people of Israel into the land God had promised them, and how he encouraged Joshua with wonderful assurances like Joshua 1:5-6:

“As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you, be strong and courageous because you will lead these people to inherit the land...”

For his part, Joshua had to obey God in everything and he immediately told the people to prepare for their journey which would mean crossing the river Jordan.

3) An important instruction

The next thing Joshua did was to speak especially to two and a half of the Israelite tribes. These were the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and a half of the tribe of Manasseh. Why did Joshua do that? To find the answer to that question you

need to look back to Numbers 32, and there you will see that these two and a half tribes wanted to settle down on that side of the river Jordan, because the land there suited their needs. Now, as the other tribes prepared to cross the Jordan, Joshua reminded them of the instructions Moses gave them. In Joshua 1:14 they were told they could settle where they wanted to, but they were to take care that

“...all your fighting men, fully armed, must cross over ahead of your brothers.”

Their response to Joshua in 1:16 was:

“Whatever you have commanded, we will do.”

So Joshua was assured of the full support of all the tribes as they faced the challenges and battles that were ahead of them.

4) Spying out the land

Joshua was a military commander, and he decided to find out what he could about the enemy he would face when he crossed the river Jordan. So In Joshua 2:1 he sent two spies to

“Go, look over the land... and especially Jericho.”

This was because that city would be the first he would encounter. The adventures of the spies are recorded in

chapter 2. There we read how they lodged with a prostitute named Rahab, who lived on the city wall, and how she helped them escape from the men the King of Jericho sent to arrest them. But the great discovery the spies made, was what Rahab told them about what was going on among the people of Jericho. She said in Joshua 2:8:

“I know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you.”

Rahab had come to believe in God and the spies promised that she would be saved when Jericho fell. Hebrews 11:31 tells us that what she did was because of her new found faith in God. Eventually she married an Israelite and in Matthew chapter 1 we see that she became an ancestor of Jesus Christ himself. Is that not remarkable? When the spies returned to Joshua with their report, we read in the last verse of chapter 2 that they said:

“The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands, all the people are melting with fear because of us.”

What an encouragement that would have been to Joshua and the people! But before they face Jericho, there is the whole problem of getting a million or more people across a swollen river which we shall consider in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Crossing The Jordon and Preparing For Conquest - Joshua 3:1 – 5:12

This section of our Bibles gives us the thrilling account of the crossing of the river Jordan by the Children of Israel. One of the most amazing things about this crossing was that there were by this time probably more than a million people to be led over. In fact some scholars make the number as much as two million. And then we are told in Joshua 3:15 that it was at a time when the river was in flood and at its widest. There is no doubt that it was a wonderful miracle and it is not surprising that in Joshua 4:24 we see that it was meant to have a great impact on the nations that occupied the land so that they were afraid of the Israelites.

1) Important preparation

First of all in preparation for the crossing the people were told in Joshua 3:

“Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.”

This meant a ceremonial washing of their clothes and abstinence from sexual intercourse, all of which was a sign of their total commitment to the Lord and their complete trust in him.

2) Important trust

The next thing that happened was that the priests took up the Ark of the Covenant and went ahead of the people. The ark symbolized the presence of God among the people, so they were not to go near it but to keep their eyes focused on it so that they knew when they were to move and into which direction they were to go. They were to trust in the Lord completely and to follow him most carefully.

As soon as the feet of the priests carrying the ark touched the water, it parted (Joshua 3:14-16) just as had happened to the Red Sea 40 years earlier (see Exodus 14). The priests stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan,

“...until the whole nation completed the crossing on dry land.”

3) An important lesson

Before we go on with the story let us pause to see that all this is a wonderful picture of our entry into the Christian life. This too is a miracle – the greatest miracle of all. In Romans 6:3-5, the apostle Paul says that we have been buried with Christ and that we have been raised also with Christ into a completely new life as our baptism as believers clearly demonstrates. Not only so, but just as the whole nation crossed over safely and no-one was lost, so no-one who trusts in Christ will be drowned in the waters

of divine judgment. Jesus said of those who trust in him in John 10:28:

“I give them eternal life and they shall never perish; no-one can snatch them out of my hand.”

4) An important memorial

In Joshua 4:12 we read how twelve stones, representing each of the twelve tribes of Israel, were taken out of the middle of the river Jordan and set up on the bank on the other side as a permanent memorial. This was to be a constant reminder to the people of the power and goodness of God in bringing them to their inheritance, and of the great miracle that had taken place. Not only so, this memorial was to be instructive to the coming generations (see v19-23). This reminds us that we too must always be willing to testify publicly to the wonderful things the Lord has done for us (see Mark 5:19). Let us remember too, that we have the Lord’s Supper as a constant reminder of the way in which God has saved us and the price our Lord paid to rescue us.

5) Important obedience

As we go on to chapter 5, it would seem that none of the men had been circumcised during their wanderings in the Sinai desert after the crossing of the Red Sea. Now the time had come for a renewing of this rite which was the sign of their covenant relationship with God. Furthermore,

they must never forget that they were a nation that had been released from long years of slavery in Egypt. They had been rescued by means of the blood of the Passover lamb. We read about that in Exodus 12. So Joshua 5: 10 tells us that they chose this significant moment also to renew their observance of the feast of the Passover. Then verses 11-12 tell us how they had their first taste of the produce of the land, which was rich and plentiful. They had truly arrived in the ‘land flowing with milk and honey’!

What a delightful picture all this is of the blessings we enjoy when we first come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a refreshing realization of our security in him and of our total indebtedness to him, along with a new joy and peace and hopefulness we had not known before and in abundant measure. But very soon after we are converted, we become aware that the Christian life upon which we have entered is also one of conflict and intense testing. In our next chapter we will follow God’s people into battle and experience both victory and, alas defeat.

Chapter 3: Victory, Disobedience, Defeat And Victory Again - Joshua 5:13-8:35

The people of Israel have now crossed the River Jordan and were beginning to enjoy the good things of the land of Canaan – the land flowing with milk and honey. We have reached the section Joshua 5:13 – 8:35, and here we find

that the people are immediately confronted with the challenge of conquering the city of Jericho. Before we go into that in more detail let's see how true this is to our Christian experience. No sooner have we come to faith in Christ and made our open confession of him, than we are so often faced with a challenge and we soon realize that the life of faith is not only one of rest in Christ, it is at the same time a fight against the world, the flesh and the devil. Even our Lord himself had a similar experience. As soon as he was baptized he was severely tested by Satan, and that is a strategy that Satan frequently uses for which we too must be prepared.

1) An assurance given

As we turn to Joshua 6 we are left in no doubt that the task of capturing Jericho was a formidable one. The gates were shut tight, and we learn from the discoveries of archaeologists that the walls around the city were very wide indeed. Wide enough even as we have seen for Rahab to have a house on it! As Joshua stood considering how he should set about the task, we see from the end of chapter 5 that the Lord chose that moment to remind him that he, the Lord, was in charge of the situation. Joshua was confronted by a man with a drawn sword, whom he soon recognized was none other than the Lord himself. This was no doubt, what is called a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ, who announced himself as the captain of Lord's army. Even before the attack began he assured Joshua in Joshua 6:2:

“See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and fighting men.”

2) Jericho defeated

The instruction, in chapter 6, for the people to march round the city with trumpets blowing, must have seemed puzzling to the Israelites and even laughable to the citizens of Jericho. But the Israelites obeyed and they did this once a day for six days and then on the seventh day, they circled the city seven times. Then at the sound of a loud war cry from all the Israelites the city walls simply collapsed and the defenders were overcome. The only possible explanation for this must be that the Lord did it. Every living thing was destroyed and the valuable loot was devoted to the Lord as he had directed them (6:18-19). At the same time, as the spies had promised, Rahab and her relatives were all rescued alive (v25).

3) Defeat then victory at Ai

Jericho was a complete and wonderful victory, so you can imagine their bitter disappointment when they attacked the next city, the city of Ai and they were utterly routed. Joshua 7 describes how they thought they could take that city easily but were sadly mistaken. Joshua cried out to God to ask why it had happened and the answer was that God was angry because a man named Achan had disobeyed God's instructions and had kept a valuable robe and a sum of money from Jericho for himself. He hid

those things hoping not to be found out. Eventually he was exposed and he and his family were stoned to death as a punishment. What a lesson this is of the seriousness of sin in our lives as believers and the folly of trying to hide anything from God! But the people did not despair because God had not deserted them and in Joshua 8:1 God said to Joshua:

“Do not be discouraged, take the whole army with you and go up and attack Ai, for I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land.”

The rest of chapter 8 describes how Joshua set an ambush and destroyed the city. So once again the people of Israel proved the faithfulness of their God and terrible defeat was followed by wonderful victory.

4) Renewed commitment

Now the interesting thing is this, that Joshua and his people realized that what they had experienced since they entered the land had been full of God’s help and mercy. So we read in Joshua 8:30-35 how they solemnly renewed their promises to God and their commitment to him. They offered sacrifices of thanksgiving and listened as they refreshed their memories in God’s law. Is not this the very reason why we should meet together regularly to worship our God and to hear his word preached and applied to our lives?

Chapter 4: The Gibeonite Incident – Joshua 9:1-13:8

1) Deceived by the Gibeonites

So far we have followed the people of Israel as they crossed the river Jordan and began the process of capturing and occupying the land of Canaan that God had promised them many centuries earlier. We have reached the chapter that begins by telling us that when the Canaanite tribes heard about the victories God had given to Israel at Jericho and then at Ai, they were united in opposition to any further advance. But there was one city, the city of Gibeon who decided that instead of fighting the Israelites the best thing was to try to make peace with them. Joshua 9 goes on to tell how they pretended to come from a long way away. Joshua and his people were deceived and verse 15 says,

“Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.”

2) Keeping our word

Within three days the Israelites discovered that they had been deceived and the people wanted to break their promise. Joshua refused to do that, and said in Joshua 9:21:

“Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water-

carriers for the entire community.”

This is a lesson for us too, because God gave instructions through Moses that we should always be true to the promises we make. He said in Numbers 30:1-2:

“This is what the Lord commands: When a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath to bind himself by a pledge he must not break his word but must do everything he said.”

And in Psalm 15:4 we see that we must keep our promises even if it hurts for us to do so.

3) Protecting the Gibeonites

The next thing we see is that the kings of the Canaanite cities were not very pleased with the Gibeonites for surrendering to Israel, so they attacked Gibeon, who naturally appealed to Joshua for help (10v6). Chapter 10 records how Joshua took the attackers by surprise and routed them. This was remarkable because the Israelites were seriously out-numbered, but they succeeded because God did two things to help them. One was to kill many of the enemy with large hail stones. The other thing was that God helped them in their pursuit of the enemy, by causing the sun to stand still. We must resist the temptation to try to find an explanation for this and simply believe that the God who made everything is perfectly able also to use everything for his purposes.

4) Capturing more of the land

From Joshua 10:16 we read how Joshua relentlessly pursued his enemies and how he killed the five kings who had tried to oppose him. He then went on with the campaign and was able to capture all the main cities in the south of the land. The next thing that happened was that some of the kings in the north of the country decided to try to put an end to the Israelite progress. So once again Joshua was compelled to go on the attack, and Joshua 11:23 tells of the complete conquest of Canaan:

“So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses ... Then the land had rest from war.”

5) Victories listed

Chapter 12 and the beginning of chapter 13 are a kind of pause in the story of the conquest of Canaan. The list of names of towns and cities that had thus far been conquered may seem rather boring to us, but it will be a lot less boring if we remember that it is a summary of all the Lord had done for his people, with a reminder of work yet to be done. We too do well if we sometimes pause and reflect on the Lord's goodness to us, to praise him for that which is past and to trust him for all that is to come.

6) A difficulty explained

Now that we have come to the end of the main part of the

conquest of the land, perhaps this is the time for us to answer those who are troubled by God's demand for the total destruction of the Canaanite tribes. We can understand this concern, but first of all let us remember that they were offered terms of surrender. You can read about that in Deuteronomy 20. Joshua's treatment of the Gibeonites shows his willingness to accept pleas for mercy. But then we must also understand that the corruption of those nations was so awful that only total destruction would prevent them from infecting others. Further, we must remember that God hates all evil because it offends his holy person. Not only so, moral corruption is also terribly harmful to the people involved themselves because so often it leads to self destruction by anarchy and disease. So we see that despite first appearances, God's decree for the wiping out of the Canaanites was not only a demonstration of his justice but also of his mercy.

Chapter 5: The Division Of The Land - Joshua 13:8-19:51

We have reached Joshua 13:8 and the story from here right to the end of chapter 19 is about the allocation of the land among the Israelite tribes. Having gained mastery over the whole land, now each tribe must be responsible for the occupation and development of the area that had been given to them. For us, this is a picture of what should happen when Jesus Christ takes control of our lives. Each part of our life must then be brought into submission to

him and be made useful for his service.

The process of the allocation begins with the areas given to the two and a half tribes who wanted to settle on the east side of the river Jordan. Then in chapters 14 and 15 we have the first allocation on the west side and this was to the tribe of Judah. Within this account we see the special case of Caleb. He and Joshua had been two of the twelve men that Moses sent into Canaan to spy out the land many years earlier. You can read the story in Numbers 13-14 of how the other ten spies went back to Moses telling him and the people about heavily defended cities and giants in the land, saying that it would be impossible for the Israelites to defeat them. Joshua and Caleb did not contradict what the others said about the problems, but they were quite convinced that the Lord was well able to give them the victory. But at that time the voices of the ten prevailed with the people and the consequence was that the nation had to spend forty years wandering about in the desert. Now at the age of 85 Caleb was as strong in his faith as he was then. His confidence in the Lord never wavered and we read here how he received the inheritance God had promised him.

The story in the book of Joshua goes on to tell how courageously he claimed his inheritance and not only so, but in Joshua 15 we see how his nephew Othneil and his daughter Acsah displayed the same kind of faith. We are told in Joshua 14:14 that Caleb

“...followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly.”

What a wonderful example he is for us, and he reminds us that other people can be encouraged when we are strong in faith. This is one of the great benefits of true Christian fellowship.

In Joshua 16 and 17 we have the allocation of the land to the tribes of Joseph's two sons Ehphraim and Manasseh. Here we come upon two examples of the failure of some of the tribes completely to bring the land under their control. We read in Joshua 16:10 that the Ephraimites

‘...did not dislodge the Canaanites living in Gezer’ ...

from one part of their territory. And then at the end of Joshua 17 there is a similar failure on the excuse that the Canaanites were too strong and that the work required to clear some of the land for occupation was too demanding. God had promised the strength for the task and they had every encouragement to bring it to completion. But they faltered because of unbelief and because they did not want to work hard to fulfil God's promise for them. And this is a warning for us too. We have never been promised that Christian service would be easy, and sometimes we are tempted to give way to weariness and even to discouragement. We must not yield to that temptation, but rather strengthen ourselves by constant reminders of the Lord's promised strength.

At the beginning of Joshua 18 we can see how the rest of the land was divided up among the remaining tribes. Having surveyed the land, they sought the Lord's guidance by drawing lots. In the rest of the chapter and all of Joshua 19, we see each of the tribes occupying the area God allotted to them.

We see in Joshua 19:49-51 the last allocation of land was for Joshua himself. Does that not tell us a great deal about the man who led the people of Israel with such success? If he had been a proud man or selfish, or someone who used his position for his own benefit, he would most likely have demanded his part of the inheritance before anyone else. Being a man of God and a true leader he was content to wait until all the rest of the people were satisfied. What a challenging message this is for those of us who are called to be leaders of God's people today! The apostle Peter says in 1 Peter 5:2 that elders must not be

“...greedy for money, but eager to serve...”

Jesus himself told his disciples in Matthew 20:26 that:

“Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant.”

Chapter 6: Special Provisions - Joshua 20:1-22:34

1) Lessons from the Levites.

The Land of Canaan had been conquered by Joshua and his people and it had been divided up among the tribes. But there was one tribe that had no inheritance in Canaan, the tribe of Levi. This was the priestly tribe, and it was responsible for the offering of sacrifices and other elements in the worship of the nation including the instruction of the people in the requirements of God's law. As far back as Deuteronomy 18 Moses had said that this tribe would have no inheritance in the land, but they were to use the offerings and sacrifices to feed themselves and their families. Then in Numbers 35, Moses had said that the Levites must be allocated towns to live in and in Joshua chapter 21 we see these instructions being obeyed. The Levite families were given places in which to live along with some pasture land where they could keep a few animals. Pastors and teachers today should never be seen as priests offering sacrifices to God on behalf of the people like the Levitical priests. But those priests not only offered sacrifices, they also taught the people and spiritually nurtured them. And because of that we are able to draw some lessons from the special treatment given to the Levites and apply them to our ministers today.

First of all, the towns that were given to the Levites were spread throughout the land. They were not to be concentrated in little religious communities. This meant

that their teaching and spiritual influence were available everywhere where the people lived. Likewise it is important that New Testament pastors should not live in isolation from the people but live Godly lives among the people.

Then we see that instead of ploughing fields or tending orchards the Levites were to trust the Lord for their livelihood. This meant that they relied on the people and their offerings. Now when we turn to the teaching of Paul, we find that he uses this example from the Old Testament saying that the needs of Christian ministers should be met by the people to whom they minister. He says in 1 Corinthians 9:14 that:

“...the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should receive their living from the gospel.”

Just as the needs of the priests had to be well provided for, so local churches should be honourable in the provision they make for their pastors.

2) The cities of refuge

We see in chapter 20 that among the cities allocated to the Levites, some were to be what are called 'cities of refuge'. There were to be six in all, and some of them were to be on the west side of the River Jordan. They were to be well scattered so that anyone who needed refuge from accusation of being a murderer could reach one of them

easily and quickly. These cities of refuge are a wonderful picture of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is a refuge for all those who are fearful of God's judgement and just as these cities were accessible, so the Lord is ready to receive immediately those who turn to him. In Deuteronomy 9 instructions were given to keep the roads and bridges to the cities of refuge in good repair. In the same way we are to be as sure as we can that there are no hindrances put in the way of those who having heard the gospel are seeking the Lord. We know that there are many deep truths in Scripture and many difficult questions to be dealt with. But our message to converted people must always be clear and simple, that they should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved from their sins.

Then we see that once the fugitive had reached a city of refuge he was safe until he had been dealt with legally and fairly. He would rest in security and peace. This also points to the gospel we have the privilege to preach. We must make it clear that all those who turn to Jesus Christ and trust in him are safe and secure for time and eternity. In John 10 we read that our Lord himself said that no-one could snatch a believer from his grasp. And the apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:1:

“There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

What a joy it is to preach a gospel like that.

Chapter 7: Final Issues Completed - Joshua 23

1) The eastern tribes go home

You will recall that the two and a half tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh wanted to settle on the east side of the river Jordan, and that they were allowed to do so provided their soldiers went ahead of the other tribes as they fought to capture the land on the east side of the river. They were faithful to their promise to do this and now that the whole country had been subdued we see at the beginning of chapter 22 that Joshua praised them for what they had done and gave them permission to return to their homes. But then the chapter goes on to tell how, as they went, they suddenly realized what a barrier the river would be between them and the other tribes. So they built what is described as *‘an imposing altar’* by the riverside to remind them and their children of the essential unity of the nation. This was entirely misunderstood by the other tribes. They thought that the intention was to set up a new place of worship which would effectively divide the nation. So they threatened to fight them over the issue. There is no doubt that both sides were wrong. The two and a half tribes should have consulted with their brothers before they built the altar, and the others should have waited for an explanation before they threatened military action. In the end, from Joshua 22v21, we see that this is what they did and conflict was avoided and peace and goodwill were preserved. This incident has an important lesson for us in our church life. How often disputes arise because leaders

are not careful to explain what they are doing or proposing to do and then the people jump to wrong conclusions instead of listening carefully for the reasons for what is being done.

2) The end of Joshua's life

In Joshua 23 we find Joshua reaching the end of his life on earth. He called together the leaders of the people to do two important things. One was to remind them of the Lord's goodness and faithfulness to the nation in the past. The other thing was to exhort them to obey the Lord and to keep themselves separate from the worship of idols.

After this, chapter 24 records how Joshua called all the people together to renew their covenant with the Lord. He reminded them that the nation sprang from Abraham whom the Lord had taken out of idolatry. God had led them as a nation, he had saved them from the slavery of Egypt and protected them from their enemies and now he had settled them in a land of their own, as verse 13 says:

"...a land on which you did not toil and cities you did not build; and you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant."

In the light of all this Joshua called them to covenant with the Lord, to serve him only and to dispose of any idols they may have collected through the years. Joshua challenged the people to make up their minds to be true to the Lord

their God who had treated them so patiently for so long. He left them in no doubt as to his own position, he said in Joshua 24:15:

'...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve ... But as for me and my household we will serve the Lord'.

So Joshua set them a good example and they said in v18:

"We too will follow the Lord, because he is our God."

But Joshua was not convinced that they were sincere about this, he knew that they could be very fickle so he tested them in v20:

"If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you."

They replied in v21:

"No we will serve the Lord."

So this pledge was written as a covenant and was buried under an oak tree, to signify that they had made a solemn promise to be faithful to the Lord their God. Then we read in Joshua 24v28:

"Then Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance."

He was about to die and to be buried but he made sure that there was no ceremony and that no memorial could be set up. He did this so that in the days ahead, the minds of the people would be focused on the Lord their God and not on him or any other man, no matter how great he might have been.

So we come to the end of this Old Testament book. Let me ask you, what do you think has been the main lesson we have learned from it? You know, the whole Bible is a revelation of God and what he is like and I suggest that the book of Joshua has been about God's faithfulness to his people. Turn back to the words of Joshua 21:45:

“Not one of all the Lord's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.”

Let us commend this faithful God to one another. He is more than worthy of our total trust.

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