

## **Joshua 23,24**

*1 Now it came about after many days, when the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies on every side, and Joshua was old, advanced in years, 2 that Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and their heads and their judges and their officers, and said to them, "I am old, advanced in years. 3 "And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has been fighting for you. 4 "See, I have apportioned to you these nations which remain as an inheritance for your tribes, with all the nations which I have cut off, from the Jordan even to the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun. 5 "And the LORD your God, He shall thrust them out from before you and drive them from before you; and you shall possess their land, just as the LORD your God promised you.*

Joshua was Moses servant for 40 yrs—lead Israel into promise land, 7 yrs conquering. Now he's 110 yrs old & in promise land 20 yrs & gives final words of encouragement. Leaders wear marks of ministry, stress, *face etched w/ pain of people*, imprint of battle victory & defeat written in far off stare, appear older than their years. Jesus: **'you are not 50 yrs old and you have seen Abraham'** He not even 33.

The people by this time were getting comfortable living w/ the enemy-co-existing among those they were supposed to drive out. Joshua calls the leaders together—knowing as leadership goes so goes the people.

Some in the crowd remember Moses as a teen, then Joshua, now on their own w/ the Lord. No longer a dynamic leaders to follow & look to. ***Is 6 'In the year king Uzziah died I saw the Lord' :14 'Not one thing has failed of the Lord'*** They had failed at times—Ai, Gibeonites but not the Lord. Joshua tells them to accomplish the task of driving out the enemy—the 7 nations living among them. Seven times he exhorts them of the necessity to drive them out, otherwise :12 mixed marriage & false worship will cause God will stop working on their behalf (driving out).

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6 *“Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left, 7 in order that you may not associate with these nations, these which remain among you, or mention the name of their gods, or make anyone swear by them, or serve them, or bow down to them. 8 “But you are to cling to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day. 9 “For the LORD has driven out great and strong nations from before you; and as for you, no man has stood before you to this day. 10 “One of your men puts to flight a thousand, for the LORD your God is He who fights for you, just as He promised you. 11 “So take diligent heed to yourselves to love the LORD your God. 12 “For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, 13 know with certainty that the LORD your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they shall be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you.*

No matter how talented & gifted, how long a Christian, knowing bible cover to cover, a spiritual giant among your peers, you are not beyond the reach of the enemy & a backslide into old life.

Problem w/ longevity is non-activity, loss of vision, keeping the status quo—where zeal is gone, first bloom of love for Lord is lost/left, lethargy sets in—bible seems boring, worship is stale, prayers are cold & dead, Christian life not much different than secular life(tho no excessive sins). Hardly ever talk about Jesus, but before couldn't shut you up. Now talk is about kids, work, sports, news, activities & Jesus is kinda an after thought—indifferent to spiritual things.

Signs of backslide: **First Defeatist** attitude—don't care if co-exist w/ enemy of your faith. No longer determined to drive out :12,13. **Second Paranoia--** compromise becomes uncomfortable—feelings of discontent, oppression, harassment—a looking over your shoulder existence :13. **Third Ashamed** of your condition :16 because you lost all that God had gained for you.

What to do **1**-Re-commit to obedient life & stop straying **:6** **2**-Separate life, fleeing the allurements of false gods of gold, girls, glory **:7** **3**-Devotional life rekindled, appreciate & love the Lord.

*14 "Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed. 15 "And it shall come about that just as all the good words which the LORD your God spoke to you have come upon you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the threats, until He has destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you. 16 "When you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods, and bow down to them, then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from off the good land which He has given you."*

*Ch 24 1 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel and for their heads and their judges and their officers; and they presented themselves before God.*

Joshua recounts their history & all that God had done. It gives courage and confidence for what God can and will do all the time if we let Him. 17 x's personal pronouns of things God accomplished vs :2-13.

*2 And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, namely, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods. 3 'Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. 4 'And to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and to Esau I gave Mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt. 5 'Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt by what I did in its midst; and afterward I brought you out. 6 'And I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and Egypt pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. 7 'But when they cried out to the LORD, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them and covered them; and your own eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness for a long time. 8 'Then I brought you into the land of the Amorites who lived beyond the Jordan, and they fought with you; and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land when I destroyed them before you. 9 'Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel, and he sent and summoned Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. 10 'But I was not willing to listen to Balaam. So he had to bless you, and I*

*delivered you from his hand. 11 'And you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho; and the citizens of Jericho fought against you, and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Girgashite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Thus I gave them into your hand. 12 'Then I sent the hornet before you and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites from before you, but not by your sword or your bow. 13 'And I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them; you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'*

We all have a history w/ God, the ups & downs yet God has always come thru. It's our personal Book of Acts of Holy Spirit in...put your name.

Records trials, tribulations, joys, victories that form Christ-likeness in us.

God revealed Himself to Israel by all the miracles He did showing His love & care & preservation of His people. They experienced God's power to save & give victory--now they are in a place He had promised them to enjoying the fruit of the land & yet the enemy remained.

*14 "Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. 15 "And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." 16 And the people answered and said, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; 17 for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did these great signs in our sight and preserved us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. 18 "And the LORD drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who lived in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God." 19 Then Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression or your sins. 20 "If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you after He has done good to you." 21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD." 22 And Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves the LORD, to serve Him." And they said, "We are witnesses." 23 "Now therefore, put away the foreign gods which are in your midst, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." 24 And the people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God and we will obey His voice."*

Secret of victorious Christian life come by responding to God, not requiring God to respond to us. *Jer 31:3 I have loved you w/ an everlasting love therefore I have drawn you w/ lovingkindness.* I don't make demands on God by reminding Him how faithful I've been or how much I've given to the Lord and to the ministry. **But** it's His goodness, kindness, love--what He has done for me so now I'm willingly give myself to Him.

*Choose :15-- who you will serve*--we must do each day – God has given us a free will – with that free will we are serving something-our flesh or our spirit. Joshua makes his choice and the people respond likewise :18 *We will--no you won't--yes we will--& they don't.* Seems a paradox that Joshua exhorted them what to do & they respond we will & Joshua knowing human nature refutes their claim. We don't know our own weakness when left to ourselves. Apart from Christ we can do nothing but we can do all things in Christ Jesus---all depends on what life you are living Christ in us the hope of glory or my own human potential. *The little engine that could*

So far God has done it all & we are to live in that realization, letting Him do what only He can do in & thru us—'*we are not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought but think soberly*'

It is a great relief knowing it's up to God to get us where He wants us to be. Often when we fail we commit to do better, try harder, be stronger, only to fail again--But I can commit to being w/o strength—*when I am weak then I am strong*—limp, yielded, lump of clay—just fall in arms of Lord--**Daniel Amos** *shotgun angel 'fall in your father's arms'*

Not a lot of effort needed, simply confess to being weak & sinful--believe & leave the rest to God—**Beatitudes** Matt 5 not **do-attitudes**

Waimea Rock-no one does-takes complete submission, trust & commitment it is falling—Gal 5:7 *'you were running well, who hindered you from obeying the truth'* 3:3 *Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*

Greatest discovery about ourselves is *Rom 7:18 In my flesh dwells no good thing* and the other is *I am made complete in Christ Jesus Col 2:10*. With the scripture I come to realize *I'm not as nice as I thought or as kind, or tenderhearted, or caring or compassionated, or loving*. But instead *I'm a lot more cold hearted than I thought, more selfish, more uncaring & cruel*-God says *there is nothing good that dwells in me that is in my flesh Rom 7:18*. It's a wake-up call to stop trying to live the abundant, spirit filled, victorious life by our own efforts, because the abundant life is *illusive* until we fall—fall into the arms of Jesus, a complete submission, trust, commitment His life traded for our life—no holding on or holding back. *Lk 9:62 Jesus said to him: No man putting his hand to the plough, & looking back, is fit for kingdom of God.*

God has already done the work for us thru His son Jesus on the cross *'it is finished'*. Now let Him do His work in us for the abundant, spirit filled, victorious life. Often it comes by a series of crisis that brings abundant, spirit filled, victorious living because they bring about a life of surrender-forced upon us.

*25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. 26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. 27 And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be for a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us; thus it shall be for a witness against you, lest you deny your God." 28 Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his inheritance. 29 And it came about after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being one hundred and ten years old. 30 And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in the hill*

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*country of Ephraim, on the north of Mount Gaash. 31 And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the LORD which He had done for Israel. 32 Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the piece of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of money; and they became the inheritance of Joseph's sons. 33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him at Gibeah of Phinehas his son, which was given him in the hill country of Ephraim.*

Stone-place of witness to remind them of God's faithfulness—CCH Rod,  
plum line – Joshua's death 1383 BC

Joseph carried by Jews from Egypt as he made them promise *'bury me in land promised Ab, Isaac, Jacob Gen 50:25*---Men & Women of God die out & God raises up new men & new women to take their place that the work of God continue on.