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A Guide to the Systematic Study of the Bible

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The Chapters of Joshua

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Joshua

SECTION OUTLINE ONE (JOSHUA 1-2)

Joshua assumes command of Israel and sends two scouts into the Promised Land.

I. THE MESSENGER (1:1-18)

- A. The Lord's message to Joshua (1:1-9): After the death of Moses, the Lord encourages Joshua in his new role.
 - 1. The Lord's words concerning Israel's borders (1:1-6): He establishes the boundaries of the Promised Land.
 - 2. The Lord's words concerning Israel's book (1:7-9): Israel must read and heed the Book of the Law.
- B. Joshua's message to the people (1:10-18)
 - 1. Joshua's message to the leaders (1:10-11): Joshua tells the leaders to get ready, for in three days they are going to move out.
 - 2. Joshua's message to the 2½ tribes (1:12-18): These tribes were Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.
 - a. Joshua's reminder (1:12-15): Joshua recalls the tribes' promise to assist the 9½ tribes in conquering Canaan before settling on the east side of the Jordan River.
 - b. The tribes' reassurance (1:16-18): They reaffirm their promise to assist the other tribes.

II. THE MISSION (2:1-24): Joshua assigns two spies to a special task.

- A. The spies' trip (2:1-22): They enter Jericho to spy out the city.
 - 1. Rahab's assistance to Israel's spies (2:1-7): The two men take refuge in the home of a prostitute who has come to fear the Lord.
 - a. The spies' danger (2:2-3): The king of Jericho dispatches men to Rahab's house to arrest the spies.
 - b. The spies' deliverance (2:4-7): Rahab deceives the king's men into believing the spies had already left.
 - 2. Rahab's assurance from Israel's spies (2:8-21)
 - a. Rahab's petition (2:8-13): She asks that she and her family be spared when the Israelites capture Jericho.
 - b. The spies' promise (2:14-21): The spies agree to spare Rahab's family.
- B. The spies' testimony (2:22-24): Upon returning to camp, the spies reassure the Israelites that God will indeed deliver Jericho into their hands.

SECTION OUTLINE TWO (JOSHUA 3-5)

Joshua leads Israel across the Jordan after God dries up the river. Memorial stones are set up, all Israelite males are circumcised, and the people observe the first Passover in the Promised Land.

I. THE PREPARATION FOR CROSSING (3:1-6, 8-13)

- A. Joshua's commands to the people (3:1-5, 12):
 - 1. Follow the Ark of the Covenant to the Jordan River (3:3-4).
 - 2. Purify yourselves (3:5).
 - 3. Choose 12 men (one from each tribe) for a special task (3:12).
- B. Joshua's commands to the priests (3:6, 8-11, 13):
 - 1. Carry the Ark to the river (3:6).
 - 2. Stand in the river (3:8).
 - 3. Expect the water to separate (3:13).

II. THE PROMISE OF VICTORY (3:7): God assures Joshua of his presence and his power.

III. THE PASSAGE OF ISRAEL (3:14-17; 4:12-19)

A. How they cross over (3:15-17)

1. The priests stand in the water (3:15).

2. The water separates, allowing the people to cross over (3:16).

B. Where they cross over (3:16): They cross just opposite the city of Jericho.

C. Who first crosses over (4:12-13): The 2½ tribes (Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh) lead the other tribes across the river.

D. When they cross over (4:15-19): On the tenth day of the first month (about late March) of the Hebrew calendar.

IV. THE PILES OF STONES (4:1-11, 20-24): Joshua builds two stone memorials commemorating the Israelites' crossing of the Jordan.

A. First pile (4:1-8, 20-24)

1. God's order (4:1-5): One man from each of the 12 tribes is chosen to take a stone from the riverbed. On the west bank of the Jordan, the men pile the 12 stones.

2. God's objective (4:6-8, 20-24): The stones are to serve as a memorial to later generations that the Lord separated the Jordan River for the Israelites to cross.

B. Second pile (4:9-11): Joshua builds this monument, also of 12 stones, in the middle of the riverbed where the priests stood.

V. THE PLACE OF ENCAMPMENT (4:19): The Israelites' first camp in Canaan is in Gilgal, near Jericho.

VI. THE PROMOTION OF JOSHUA (4:14): God now exalts Joshua in the eyes of Israel, just as he promised.

VII. THE PANIC OF THE HEATHEN (5:1): The Amorites and Canaanites are paralyzed with fear after learning of the Jordan River crossing!

VIII. THE PURIFICATION OF THE PEOPLE (5:2-9): God instructs the circumcision of the entire male population.

IX. THE PASSOVER OF THE LAMB (5:10): Israel observes Passover for the first time in the Promised Land.

X. THE PROVISIONS FROM THE LAND (5:11-12): The manna now ceases to appear, but Israel is able to live off the abundant crops of Canaan.

XI. THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD (5:13-15): Joshua is confronted by the commander of the Lord's army. Many scholars believe this was the pre-incarnate Christ.

SECTION OUTLINE THREE (JOSHUA 6-8)

In this central campaign, Joshua leads Israel to victory at Jericho, but he encounters defeat at Ai before Achan's sin is discovered and removed. After the blessings and curses of the law are read as Moses had commanded (Deut. 27:2-8), the central part of the land is secure.

I. THE TWO CITIES (6:1-8:29): The Israelites attack two cities, Jericho and Ai, during the central campaign.

A. Jericho (6:1-27): This strongly fortified city is the Israelites' first military encounter in Canaan.

1. The commands (6:1-11): The Israelites are given specific instructions for conquering Jericho.

a. Action during the first six days (6:1-4): For six days, the Israelites are to walk around the city once a day, led by seven priests blowing rams' horns.

b. Action during the final day (6:4-11): On the seventh day, the Israelites are to walk around

the city seven times; at a given signal, they are to give a mighty shout. The walls will then collapse!

2. The conquest (6:12-21): The Israelites follow the Lord's commands, and the walls fall down, allowing them to take the city.
 3. The clemency (6:22-25): As previously agreed, Rahab and her entire family are spared.
 4. The curse (6:26-27): Joshua places a curse on anyone attempting to rebuild Jericho. The builder's oldest son will die when the foundation is laid, and his youngest son will die when the gates are set up.
- B. Ai (7:1-8:29)
1. Ai defeats Israel (7:1-26): The Israelites' second military encounter in Canaan is with the people of Ai.
 - a. The sin (7:1): Achan disobeys God's command and takes some of the spoils from Jericho for himself.
 - b. The setback (7:2-5): Israel is totally routed in their attempt to capture Ai.
 - c. The supplication (7:6-9): In great anguish Joshua complains to the Lord concerning Israel's defeat.
 - d. The solution (7:10-15): The Lord responds to Joshua by telling him two things regarding their defeat.
 - (1) The cause (7:10-12): Someone in the camp has both stolen and lied.
 - (2) The cure (7:13-15): The Lord tells Joshua to find the sinner and destroy him.
 - e. The search (7:16-23): The Lord gives Joshua specific instructions for determining who the guilty person is.
 - (1) The method (7:16-17): The Lord points out the tribe to which the guilty person belongs; then he points out the clan, then the family, and finally the person himself.
 - (2) The man (7:18-23): Achan is found to be the guilty person.
 - f. The stoning (7:24-26): Achan and his guilty family members are stoned and their bodies burned.
 2. Israel defeats Ai (8:1-29).
 - a. The encouragement (8:1-2): The Lord now gives Joshua a new plan to defeat Ai. He instructs him to set an ambush behind the city.
 - b. The execution (8:3-29): Joshua carries out the Lord's instructions and captures Ai.
 - (1) He sets an ambush (8:3-9, 12)
 - (2) He stages an attack (8:10-11, 13-14)
 - (3) He pretends to retreat (8:15-17)
 - (4) He signals to the men in ambush (8:18-20)
 - (5) He captures the city (8:21-29)
- II. THE TWO MOUNTAINS (8:30-35): After Joshua conquers Jericho and Ai, he carries out Moses' parting instructions.
- A. The altar (8:30-32): Joshua builds an altar on Mount Ebal and copies the law of God onto the stones.
 - B. The announcement (8:33-35): At the foot of Mount Ebal half of the Israelites read the blessings for keeping the law, and at the foot of Mount Gerizim the other half read the curses for disobeying the law. Then Joshua reads the entire Book of the Law to the people.

SECTION OUTLINE FOUR (JOSHUA 9-12)

Israel is deceived by the Gibeonites. Israel defeats five Amorite kings after the Lord miraculously extends the day of the battle. Then they defeat the rest of the southern cities and move north to defeat the cities there, securing both regions.

I. THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN (9:1-10:43)

- A. The deception (9:1-27): Israel is deceived into making a treaty with the Gibeonites.
 1. The characters (9:1-13): While the Israelites camp at Gilgal, some nearby Gibeonite ambassadors arrive, wearing worn-out clothes and claiming they are from a distant land.
 2. The cause (9:14-15): Because the Israelites do not consult the Lord and do not realize that these people live nearby, they are tricked into signing a peace treaty with the Gibeonites.

3. The consequences (9:16-27): Upon learning the truth, Israel is forced to employ the Gibeonites as woodchoppers and water carriers instead of driving them out as God commanded.
- B. The destruction (10:1-39): God empowers Israel to fight seven successful battles and gain control over all of southern Canaan.
 1. The battle against the enemies of Gibeon (10:1-14)
 - a. The pagans (10:1-5): Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, and four other kings determine to attack the Gibeonites for signing a peace treaty with Israel.
 - b. The plea (10:6-7): The Gibeonites appeal to Joshua for military help.
 - c. The promise (10:8): The Lord reassures Joshua of victory.
 - d. The provision (10:9-14): The Lord gives the Israelites victory by sending a hailstorm upon their enemies. He also miraculously lengthens the day to ensure total victory.
 2. The battle against Makkedah (10:15-28)
 3. The battle against Libnah (10:29-30)
 4. The battle against Lachish (10:31-33)
 5. The battle against Eglon (10:34-35)
 6. The battle against Hebron (10:36-37)
 7. The battle against Debir (10:38-39)
- C. The dimensions (10:40-43): The total extent of Joshua's victories in the southern region is recounted.

II. THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN (11:1-15)

- A. The ringleaders (11:1-5): King Jabin of Hazor joins forces with several other kings in northern Canaan to fight the Israelites.
- B. The reassurance (11:6): The Lord reassures Joshua that he need not worry, for the next day all his enemies will be dead.
- C. The routing (11:7-8): Joshua completely defeats all these kings.
- D. The ravaging (11:9-15): Joshua ravages the enemy cities, killing the people and capturing their goods.

III. THE OVERVIEW OF ALL CAMPAIGNS (11:16-12:24)

- A. The enemy land occupied (11:16-23)
- B. The enemy leaders overcome (12:1-24)

SECTION OUTLINE FIVE (JOSHUA 13-17)

The land is divided among the tribes. The land east of the Jordan is given to Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. The land west of the Jordan is divided among the remaining 9½ tribes.

- I. THE PROMISE (13:1-7): The Lord promises to drive out the people that still remain in Canaan. He tells Joshua to divide up the land among the tribes.
- II. THE PREVIOUS DECISIONS (13:8-33): Some of the tribes were already assigned their inheritance under Moses' leadership, and now they return to their land.
 - A. Reuben (13:15-23): This tribe possesses the land east of the Jordan and just north of Moab.
 - B. Gad (13:24-28): This tribe possesses the land east of the Jordan and just north of Reuben.
 - C. East Manasseh (13:29-31): This half-tribe possesses the land east of the Jordan and just north of Gad.
 - D. Levi (13:14, 32-33): No land is given to them, for the Lord himself is their inheritance.
- III. THE PARTITIONING (14:1-17:18): Joshua divides the land west of the Jordan among the remaining 9 ½ tribes.
 - A. The allotment (14:1-5): Land areas for the tribes are determined by casting lots, supervised by Joshua and the high priest Eleazar.
 - B. The asking (14:6-12): Caleb requests that he be granted a portion of land for his family.
 1. Caleb's reminder (14:6-11)
 - a. His faithfulness to the Lord (14:6-9): Caleb reviews what transpired with the scouts at

Kadesh-barnea.

- b. The Lord's faithfulness to him (14:10-11): At 85 years old, Caleb is still as strong as ever!
2. Caleb's request (14:12-15): Caleb asks Joshua to grant him the hill country occupied by giants so that he might drive them out! Joshua grants him this request.
- C. The area (15:1-17:13): The borders of the areas that belong to Judah, Ephraim, and West Manasseh land are described.
 1. Judah (15:1-63)
 - a. Land given to the people (15:1-12, 20-63)
 - (1) Their territory (15:1-12)
 - (2) Their towns (15:20-63)
 - b. Land given to the person (Caleb) (15:13-19): As promised, Joshua gives Caleb the hill country of Hebron.
 - (1) Caleb the fighter (15:13-15): He succeeds in driving the giants from his land.
 - (2) Caleb the father (15:16-19): As a reward for capturing Debir (or Kiriath-sepher), Caleb gives his daughter Acsah in marriage to her cousin Othniel and gives her some springs of water.
 2. Ephraim (16:5-10)
 - a. Their territory (16:5-8)
 - b. Their towns (16:9-10)
 3. West Manasseh (16:1-4; 17:1-13)
 - a. Their ten parcels (17:1-6): Zelophehad's daughters remind Joshua of the Lord's promise to give them the land once allotted to their father. As a result, the half-tribe of Manasseh consists of 10 parcels of land (one for each of Manasseh's sons and one for each of Zelophehad's daughters) plus the regions of Gilead and Bashan.
 - b. Their territory (17:7-10)
 - c. Their towns (17:11-13)
- D. The appeal (17:14-18):
 1. The protest (17:7-14): The half-tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) complain to Joshua that they need more land due to their large numbers of people.
 2. The proposal (17:15-18): Joshua enlarges their borders and tells them to drive out the Canaanites near them and occupy their land.

SECTION OUTLINE SIX (JOSHUA 18-19)

When the Tabernacle is moved from Gilgal to Shiloh, Joshua notices that seven tribes still have not taken possession of their allotted land. So he sends scouts to map out the land for them.

- I. THE DELAY (18:1-3): After the Israelites set up the Tabernacle at Shiloh, Joshua asks why seven of Israel's tribes seemed reluctant to occupy the land.
- II. THE DISPATCH (18:4-10): Joshua sends scouts to map out the land that is to be taken by these remaining tribes.
- III. THE DIVISION (AGAIN) (18:10-19:51): Lots are cast once again to determine which tribe should claim each section of land.
 - A. Benjamin (18:11-28)
 1. Their territory (8:11-20)
 2. Their towns (18:21-28)
 - B. Simeon (19:1-9)
 1. Their territory (19:1, 9)
 2. Their towns (19:2-8)
 - C. Zebulun (19:10-16)
 1. Their territory (19:10-14)
 2. Their towns (19:15-16)
 - D. Issachar (19:17-23)
 1. Their territory (19:17)
 2. Their towns (19:18-23)

- E. Asher (19:24-31)
 - 1. Their territory (19:24)
 - 2. Their towns (19:25-31)
- F. Naphtali (19:32-39)
 - 1. Their territory (19:32-34)
 - 2. Their towns (19:35-39)
- G. Dan (19:40-48)
 - 1. Their territory (19:40, 47-48)
 - 2. Their towns (19:41-46)
- H. Joshua (19:49-50): The Israelites give Joshua a special piece of land-any town he wants. He chooses Timnath-serah of Ephraim.

SECTION OUTLINE SEVEN (JOSHUA 20-22)

The six cities of refuge are appointed, and the Levites claim their cities. Joshua issues a call to faith to the eastern tribes. The conflict over the altar that the eastern tribes erected is resolved.

I. THE DESIGNATED CITIES (20:1-21:45)

- A. The six cities of refuge (20:1-9)
 - 1. Why they exist (20:1-6): To protect anyone who unintentionally kills another person.
 - 2. Where they exist (20:7-9): There are three cities east of the Jordan River and three west of the river.
- B. The 48 Levitical cities (21:1-45)
 - 1. Where they are (21:1-8): The Levites' towns are distributed among the tribes of Israel by casting lots.
 - a. Thirteen towns are located in the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin (21:4).
 - b. Ten towns are located in the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of eastern Manasseh (21:5).
 - c. Thirteen towns are located in the tribes of Isaachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of western Manasseh (21:6).
 - d. Twelve towns are located in the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun (21:7).
 - 2. Which ones they are (21:9-45): A list of all the Levitical towns is given.

II. THE DIVISIVE ALTAR (22:1-34): Now that the Promised Land has been divided among the tribes, Joshua sends the 2½ eastern tribes back to their land with a challenge.

- A. The contents of Joshua's challenge (22:1-8)
 - 1. His commendation (22:1-3): Joshua praises the 2½ tribes for their obedience to God in helping their fellow Israelites on the west side of the Jordan.
 - 2. His caution (22:4-8): Joshua exhorts the tribes to continue their obedience after they return to the east side of the Jordan.
- B. The confusion following Joshua's challenge (22:9-34)
 - 1. The altar by the 2½ tribes (22:9-10): The eastern tribes erect a large altar just before crossing the Jordan River.
 - 2. The accusation by the 9½ tribes (22:11-20)
 - a. Mobilizing against their brothers (22:11-12): The 9½ tribes wrongly conclude that the altar is a pagan shrine; they muster an army at Shiloh and prepare for war against the eastern tribes!
 - b. Meeting with their brothers (22:13-20): Before any fighting begins, a delegation led by Phinehas, the son of the high priest, meets with the 2½ tribes. They demand to know the reason for the eastern tribes' pagan act and warn them of God's swift and terrible punishment.
 - 3. The answer by the 2½ tribes (22:21-29): The eastern tribes explain to Phinehas that the altar is to serve as a memorial, reminding them and their descendants of the common faith and kinship they share with the other tribes.
 - 4. The acceptance by the 9½ tribes (22:30-34): The explanation of the altar's purpose satisfies the 9½ tribes, thus avoiding a civil war.

SECTION OUTLINE EIGHT (JOSHUA 23-24)

Joshua issues a call to faith, first to the leaders and then to the whole nation. The deaths of Joshua and Eleazar and the burial of Joseph's bones are recorded.

I. JOSHUA'S FAREWELL ADDRESS TO ISRAEL'S LEADERS (23:1-16)

- A. What the Lord has done (23:1-5, 9-10): Joshua reminds Israel's leaders that the Lord has given them victory over their enemies.
- B. What Israel must do (23:6-8, 11-16)
 - 1. Joshua's words of wisdom (23:6-8, 11):
 - a. Obey the Lord (23:6)
 - b. Do not associate with pagans (23:7)
 - c. Be faithful to the Lord (23:8)
 - 2. Joshua's words of warning (23:12-16): Joshua warns the leaders that disobedience will bring disaster.

II. JOSHUA'S FAREWELL ADDRESS TO ALL ISRAEL (24:1-33)

- A. The details (24:1-28)
 - 1. The summary (24:1-24): Joshua again reviews God's faithfulness and goodness toward Israel.
 - a. What the Lord has done (24:1-13)
 - (1) In the days of Abraham (24:1-4)
 - (2) In the days of Moses (24:5-10)
 - (3) In the days of Joshua (24:11-13)
 - b. What Israel must do (24:14-24): Joshua tells Israel that they must obey and serve the Lord, just as he and his family will do.
 - 2. The symbol (24:25-28): Joshua sets up a large stone by the Tabernacle to remind the Israelites of their promise.
- B. The deaths (24:29-31, 33)
 - 1. Joshua (24:29-31)
 - 2. Eleazar (24:33)
- C. The displacement (24:32): Joseph's bones, which have been carried to Canaan from Egypt, are buried at Shechem.