

The Final Words

Joshua 23-24

Read Joshua 23:1-12.

1. What was the current status of Israel? (v. 1)

2. **THINK:** What point do you think Joshua was trying to make in verse 3?

3. As the tribes moved into their individual land allocations, they would need to continue to clear the land of any remaining enemies. What promise did Joshua assure them of in verse 5?

4. In light of this assurance and their prior experiences with God, how did Joshua want them to proceed? (v. 6a)

Keep – to keep, guard, observe, give heed, beware, be circumspect, take heed.

5. What did Joshua warn would happen if they failed to be active and watchful – taking heed to courageously obey the Lord? (v. 6b-7a)

Turn Aside – depart, depart from the way, avoid.

Go Among – go in association with; abide.

6. How did Joshua quantify “going among” the nations? (v. 12)

7. Joshua specifically cautioned them when it came to foreign gods. In what ways did he admonish them? (v. 7)

8. What should the people of God focus on instead, and what should motivate them to do so? (v. 8-10)

Holdfast – cling, cleave to; figurative of loyalty, affection.

9. **THINK:** As a daughter of the LORD God, what do you think it looks like to be courageous, to keep all that is written in His Word, and to hold fast to Him?

Read Joshua 23:11-13.

10. Knowing the LORD is God and that failing to focus on obedience and cleaving to Him **will** result in turning aside, what instruction does Joshua give them? (v. 11)

Take Careful Heed – to be on one's guard, take heed, take care, beware.

11. **THINK:** Why do you think it takes careful heed to love the LORD?

12. What would be the consequences of not taking heed to love and obey God in times of prosperity and rest? (v. 13)

Snares – source or agent of calamity.
Traps – a noose, a hook (for the nose).
Scourge – flog, whip.

13. **THINK:** What do you think these consequences might look like for you personally? (Consider the giants that remain in your promised land and what the consequences might be if you fail to cooperate with God in driving them out and instead go in and live among them.)

Read Joshua 23:14-16.

God had kept His promises. Not one thing had failed, and all had come to pass. The Children of Israel were living in the land God had promised them. Now, they would need to take careful heed to obey and keep themselves from going in among the small nations that remained.

14. **THINK:** What do you think Joshua wanted them to understand about God from verses 14-16?

The world waits with open arms to pull us in with its progressive ideas (enlightenment of oneness, spiritual experiences, many ways to God, inclusivity, works over belief, questioning over certainty, etc.). This is not the time to casually think that believing in God is enough. We need to be very courageous if we are going to keep and do His will. We need to cleave to Him and take active heed to keep our eyes on Him, especially in seasons of rest.

At this point, Joshua gathered all the tribes together at Shechem to remind them of the covenant they have made with God. Read Joshua 24:1-13.

15. Over and over, Scripture tells us to remember what God has done. Note all the things God did for the people of Israel.

3a _____

3b _____

3c _____

- 4a _____
- 4b _____
- 5a _____
- 5b _____
- 5c _____
- 6a _____
- 7b _____
- 7c _____
- 7d _____
- 8a _____
- 8d _____
- 8f _____
- 10a _____
- 10c _____
- 11c _____
- 12a _____
- 13a _____

16. What was the outcome of all **that** God did for the people of Israel? (v. 13)

17. Record what the Lord has done in your life to bring you to the place where you are now.

No matter what, God is consistent and faithful. He was faithful to the Israelites when they obeyed, faithful when they were complaining in the wilderness, and faithful when the nations were against them. He proved faithful at every turn. Now, they were dwelling

in the land of promise, enjoying the fruits of God's labor on their behalf. Without Him, none of this would have been possible. In light of all this, what was their response?

Read Joshua 24:14-20.

18. What four things did Joshua instruct the people to do in response to the goodness and holiness of God? (v. 14)

Fear – reverence, honor.

Sincerity – what is complete, entirely in accord with truth and fact.

Truth – faithfulness, reliability.

Put Away – cause to (turn aside), depart, remove, take away, depose.

19. **THINK:** With these definitions in mind, what do you think it looks like to live a life marked by these four characteristics?

Joshua had just laid out a compelling argument to fear and serve God. But there are always those who think serving God is not for them. Joshua made it clear that, whether you serve God or not, you are making a choice.

20. What were the choices he presented? (v. 15)

21. Each and every one of us must make a choice. Joshua boldly chose to serve the Lord. Who are you going to serve, and what gods will you have to put away to serve the One True God with sincerity and truth?

22. Note, how the Israelites responded to Joshua's challenge and why they were making their choice. (v. 16-18)

While the choice might be obvious to some, this decision should not be taken lightly. Remember that the Israelites had entered into a covenant relationship with the One True God. A covenant that promised blessings for obedience and loyalty to Him alone, as well as curses for the opposite.

23. **THINK:** How would the gods of Egypt and Canaan react to disobedience or the worship of a competing God?

24. In what way is the LORD different from all other gods? (v. 19c,d)

Holy – separate, apart, sacred, separate from human infirmity, impurity and sin.

Jealous – jealousy that comes when someone gives to another something that rightly belongs to Him. – gotquestions.com

25. **THINK:** Why do you think Joshua used God's descriptions of holy and jealous to warn the Israelites?

Our God is unlike any other god. A decision to follow Him is not to be taken lightly. He is absolutely holy, and this commands the full respect and honor due Him. In addition, this choice is a life-and-death decision. In Matthew 5-7, Jesus lays out in detail what it looks like to be a follower of Christ. At the end of His famous sermon, He paints a vivid picture of two men, one making a decision to follow Christ and the other choosing differently.

26. Briefly summarize each man's choice and the outcome of their choices. (Matthew 7:24-27)

Read Joshua 24:21-28.

27. Joshua had cautioned the people and reminded them of the seriousness of serving their amazing, holy, and jealous God. How did they respond? (v. 21)

28. What reminders did Joshua use to stress the importance of their decision? (v. 22, 25, 26-27)

29. What reminders can you implement in your own life to remind you of the commitment you have made to God?

30. What were the final instructions to the people before they each departed to their own inheritance? (v. 23b)

Incline – to stretch out, to spread out.

31. **THINK:** What do you think it means to incline your heart to the LORD?

Read Joshua 24:29-33.

32. What effect did the life of Joshua have on those who knew Him? (v. 31)

33. What does Joshua 24:32 tell you about God? (Consider Genesis 50:23-25)

34. Summarize the encouragement given for times of struggle as well as times of rest found in Joshua 1:6-9 and Joshua 24:14-15.

A Closer Look at Serving the Lord

Joshua 24:15

The latter part of Joshua 24 emphasizes serving the Lord. As you have studied this week, you learned the nation of Israel was to serve God in sincerity and truth. They were not to have other gods. To serve was a choice. The people responded to Joshua, “The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey.”

35. Read Judges 2:7-10 and summarize these verses.

36. Read Judges 2:11-12 and describe what happened next with the children of Israel.

The people of Israel failed in their promise to serve the Lord. Biblical history teaches us that Israel had an on-again, off-again relationship with the Lord and their service to Him.

Today, we are called to serve the Lord! Let us come to Him to serve in sincerity and commit to **serving** Him for all our days.

37. Read Romans 12:1-2. Now, read it again and again. Ponder what this verse means to you as a child of God and what is being asked of you.

a. Read Matthew 16:24 and John 12:26. How can we be a living sacrifice?

b. Read Hebrews 12:14 and 1 Peter 1:16. How can you live in holiness?

c. Read 2 Corinthians 10:5 and Hebrews 12:1-2. How can you renew your mind?

38. Read Colossians 3:23. How do we serve the Lord?

1 Peter tells us that we each have a gift, and we are to use it.

39. Read the following verses. What are ways we can serve the Lord?

Galatians 5:13

Ephesians 6:18

Hebrews 13:16

40. Read the following verses. What should the attitude of our heart be in serving?

John 15:12-13

Philippians 2:3-4

41. When we serve the Lord, we will be blessed! Read the following verses and record the benefits of living sacrificially and serving the Lord.

Matthew 25:21

Luke 6:38

We have the perfect example of a servant - Jesus Christ.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

- Mark 10:45

Let us commit to knowing Jesus, studying the gospels, and living a life of gratitude for the sacrifice He made for us – *He gave His life as a ransom for US!* – so we follow His example. So that we can...

...be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

- 1 Corinthians 15:58

42. Today, choose to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, who has given His life for you. Write out your commitment to serve Him faithfully.
