

Handout 1: Joshua Lesson 10

Chapters 23-24 are one unit in three parts:

- I. The National Assembly and Joshua's farewell address to the people (Josh 23:1-16)
 - A. Introduction and a review of Yahweh's promises (23:1-8)
 - B. The treatment of pagan neighbors (23:9-13)
 - C. A call for acknowledgment of God's faithfulness and conclusion (23:14-16)
- II. Joshua's address continued and the covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem (24:1-28)
 - A. The National Assembly (24:1)
 - B. The review of Israel's history (24:2-13)
 - C. Exhortations to faithfulness and Israel's responses (24:14-24)
 - D. Completion of the covenant renewal and documentation (24:25-28)
- III. Conclusion: the graves of Israel's heroes in the Promised Land (24:29-33)
 - A. Joshua (24:29-31)
 - B. Joseph (24:32-32)
 - C. Eleazar (24:33)

Differences in Joshua and Moses' relationship with the Israelites:

1. Joshua was a member of the tribe of Ephraim. He was born and raised within the community of Israel (Num 13:8, 16). Moses, although born a Levite, was not raised as an Israelite. Moses was raised and educated as an Egyptian and did not return to his people until he was 80 years old (Ex 2:1-10; 7:7).
2. Joshua did not experience acts of rebellion from the Israelites during the years of his leadership—the people followed him obediently. Moses, on the other hand, had a contentious relationship with the people. Moses' authority and leadership was continually challenged by the Israelites (i.e., Ex 5:21-23; 14:11-12; 16:1-3; 17: 2-4; Num 11:10-15; 14:1-4, 10; 9-45; 16:15; 20:2-5, 10-11; 21:4-5).
3. Joshua never grew angry or discouraged with the people, while Moses' relationship with the people was so contentious that at one time his anger with them caused him to be disobedient to God's command (Num 20:6-13).

Comparisons the inspired writer makes between Moses and Joshua in the Book of Joshua:

1. Joshua is called God's servant in the same way Moses was called God's servant (i.e., Josh 1:1; 24:29).
2. God spoke directly to Joshua in the same way He spoke directly to Moses (Josh 1:1, 3:7; 4:1, 8, 15; 5:2, 9; 6:2; 7:10; 8:1, 18; 10:8; 11:16; 20:1).
3. Both men, in cooperation with God, were instrumental in a water miracle in which the Israelites crossed a parted body of water on dry ground to the opposite side (Ex 14:15-16; Josh 3:7-17).
4. Both men experienced a Divine visitation in which they were told to remove their shoes because they were standing on "holy" ground (Ex 3:2-5; Josh 5:13-15).
5. Both men held out an implement at God's direction at a critical time during a battle (Ex 17:8-16; Josh 8:26).
6. Both men built an altar to the Lord for a covenant ceremony (Ex 24:4; Josh 8:30).
7. Both men erected 12 standing stones at God's command to commemorate a significant event in Israel's history (Ex 24:4; Josh 4:3-9).
8. Both men gave a farewell address at the end of their lives (Dt 31-32; Josh 23-24).

Handout 2: Joshua Lesson 10

Chapter 24 is a continuation of chapter 23 and is divided into parts II and III:

II. Joshua's address continued at the covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem (24:1-28)

- A. Joshua calls a National Assembly (24:1)
- B. The review of Israel's history (24:2-13)
- C. Exhortation to faithfulness and Israel's response (24:14-24)
 - 1. Joshua's call to obedience #1 and Israel's oath #1 (24:14-18)
 - 2. Joshua's call to obedience #2 and Israel's oath #2 (24:19-21)
 - 3. Joshua's call to obedience #3 and Israel's response (24:22)
 - 4. Joshua's final warning and Israel's oath #3 (24:23-24)
- D. Completion of the covenant renewal and documentation (24:25-28)

III. Conclusion: the graves of Israel's heroes in the Promised Land (24:29-33)

- A. Joshua (24:29-31)
- B. Joseph (24:32-32)
- C. Eleazar (24:33)

Chapter 24 has many of the elements of a formal covenant treaty but with some variation (Fr. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, page 148). The five parts of the document of a biblical covenant treaty include:

- 1. The preamble (identification of the Great King)
- 2. Historical prologue (recounting what the Great King has done)
- 3. Ethical stipulations (necessary obligations of the vassal people)
- 4. Sanctions (blessings for loyalty and curses/judgments for disloyalty)
- 5. Succession Arrangements

(Secular Near Eastern covenant treaties also had a 6th section in which each party's pagan gods were named as witnesses to the treaty).

Chapter 24 has a number of covenant treaty elements and a few differences:

- 1. A preamble identifying Yahweh (24:2a).
- 2. A historical prologue recounting what Yahweh has done for the people (24:2b-13).
- 3. A list of ethical stipulations that demonstrate Israel's obedience to Yahweh (24:14, 19, 23).
- 4. Sanctions: judgments for covenant disloyalty (24:20).
- 5. The people in one voice swear obedience to Yahweh 3 times (24:16-18, 21 and 24) and declare themselves witnesses to the covenant with Yahweh (24:22).

The National Assembly's three oaths of allegiance:

- 1. "...We to shall serve Yahweh, for he is our God" (24:16-18).
- 2. "No! Yahweh is the one we mean to serve" (24:21).
- 3. "Yahweh our God is the one whom we shall serve; his voice we shall obey!" (24:24).