

Joshua 24 - The Covenant at Shechem

III. The conclusion of Joshua's ministry emphasizing conditions necessary for Israel to stay in the land (Joshua 22:1—24:33)

- (3) Second covenant renewal at Shechem (24:1-33)
 - (A) Joshua gathers the leaders at Shechem (24:1)
 - (B) Historical prologue (24:2-13)
 - (a) Election of the patriarchs (24:2-3)
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 - (c) Covenant memorialized (24:27-28)
- (4) Joshua and Elieazar die and are buried (24:29-33)

Choose!

Joshua chose: after the Red Sea crossing, he stood against the Amalekites. He stood against the golden calf. He stood, with Caleb, against his own people when they were wrong. He was there when Moses chose the wrong thing, and thus didn't enter the Promised Land himself. Joshua knew about choosing.

The entire book is about choices:

- Joshua 1: Chose to enter the land (Cf. 38 years earlier!)
- Joshua 2: Rahab chose the people of God
- Joshua 3: Israel chose to cross the Jordan; left two kinds of memorials
- Joshua 4: Chose the obedience of circumcision
- Joshua 5: The Captain of the Host
- Joshua 7: Achan made a dismal choice at Ai
- Joshua 8: Joshua turns defeat into victory
- Joshua 9: The Gibeonites chose to join the people of God
- Joshua 10: Joshua chooses to honor his commitments to the Gibeonites, leading to the Battle of Beth Horon...

Joshua 24

(A) Joshua gathers the leaders at Shechem (24:1)

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

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.

1 Then Joshua assembled together all of the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He called for the leaders, officials, judges, and tribal officers of Israel. They assembled in formation before God,

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

- Joshua didn't settle for only public admonitions to guide Israel after his death, he arranged a formal covenant renewal ceremony to get a binding commitment from the people of Israel to the written Word of God

— The structure of Joshua's covenant renewal speech was typical of a treaty at that time:

(1) Preamble (v1-2a)

(2) Historical Prologue (v2b-13)

(3) Stipulations for the vassals (Israel), with consequences for disobedience (v14-24)

(4) The writing of the agreement (v25-28)

- "...Shechem" - a place of huge historical significance to Israel...

— Where God first appeared to Abraham once he entered the Land

— Where God promised to give the Land to him

— In response, Abraham built his first altar there (Gen 12:7)

— Jacob buried his idols there, after returning from Paddan-aram

— Jacob made Shechem his home; built an altar there (Gen 33:18-20)

— The Israelites, under Joshua, pledged itself to the Mosaic Covenant after entering the Land (8:30-35); they also built an altar there

(B) Historical prologue (24:2-13)

In v2-13, Joshua reviewed God's great acts on behalf of His people, going all the way back to the call of Abram in Mesopotamia.

(a) Election of the patriarchs (24:2-3)

2 Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says: 'From ancient times your fathers lived **beyond the Euphrates River**, namely, Terah, the father of

Abraham and the father of **Nahor**, and they served other gods.

2 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.

2 and Joshua told all of the people, "This is what the LORD God of Israel has to say: 'Long ago your ancestors lived beyond the Euphrates River, including Terah, father of both Abraham and Nahor, where they served other gods.

2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

- Joshua introduced the passage as the words of Yahweh

- "...beyond the *Euphrates* River" - the other side (east) of the Euphrates River

- "...Nahor" - likely mentioned because Rebekah, Leah and Rachel descended from him

3 Then **I took your father Abraham** from beyond the *Euphrates* River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac.

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.

3 Then I took your ancestor Abraham from the other side of the Euphrates River and led him through the entire land of Canaan. I multiplied his descendants, and gave him his son Isaac.

3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

- "...I took your father Abraham" - the call of Abraham was purely by God's grace; there was nothing in Abraham that resulted in God choosing him for special blessing (Deut 7:1-11; 26:1-11; 32:10)

(b) Redemption from Egypt (24:4-7)

4 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.

4 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.

4 I gave Jacob and Esau to Isaac. And I gave Mount Seir to Esau as his possession, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

4 And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

5 Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagues Egypt by what I did in its midst; and afterward I brought you out.

5 Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagues Egypt by what I did in its midst; and afterward I brought you out.

5 'Later I commissioned Moses and Aaron, and I inflicted plagues on Egypt by what I did among them. Afterwards, I brought all of you out.

5 I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagues Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and afterward I brought you out.

- The Exodus was the second great proof of God's grace to Israel

6 So 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.

6 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.

6 'Then I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, and you came to the Sea, and the Egyptians followed your ancestors with chariots and horsemen to the Reed Sea.

6 And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto 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.

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.

7 But when they cried out to the LORD, he placed darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon the Egyptians, and swallowed them up. Your own eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you lived in the desert for a long time.

7 And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

- The provision of Moses and Aaron, as well as the sending of the plagues, were special "gifts" for His people, to set them free from Egyptian slavery

— Other highlights included the Red Sea crossing and the drowning of Pharaoh's army, as well as Israel's preservation in the wilderness

(c) Wilderness wanderings (24:8)

8 Then I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who lived beyond the Jordan, and they fought with you; but I handed them over to you, and you took possession of their land when I eliminated them before you.

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.

8 'I brought you into the territory of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan River. They fought you, but I gave them into your control, and you took possession of their land. I destroyed them from your presence.

8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you.

- God's third great act was the Israelites' victory over the Amorites east of the Jordan

(d) Transjordan conquest (24:9-10)

9 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, rose up and fought against Israel, and he sent *messengers* and summoned Balaam the son of Beor to curse 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.

9 'Then Zippor's son, King Balak of Moab, showed up and fought against Israel. He sent word to Balaam, summoning Beor's son to put a curse on you.

9 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called 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 saved you from his hand.

10 But I was not willing to listen to Balaam. So he had to bless you, and I delivered you from his hand.

10 But I wasn't willing to listen to Balaam. So he had to bless you, and I delivered you from his control.

10 But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.

- During that time, God frustrated Moab's (King Balak's) hostility toward God's people by turning Balaam's "curse" into a blessing

(e) Israel currently lived in houses that they had not built (24:11-13)

11 You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho; and the citizens of Jericho fought against you, *and* the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Girgashite, the Hivite,

and the Jebusite. Therefore I handed them over to you.

11 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.

11 'Next, you crossed the Jordan River and arrived at Jericho. But the citizens of Jericho fought you, as did the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and the Jebusites, so I gave them into your control.

11 And you went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.

- The fourth divine provision was the crossing of the Jordan River and subsequent victories over the Canaanites

12 Then I sent the hornet before you and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites from you—not by your sword nor your bow.

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.

12 'Then I sent hornets ahead of you to drive out two kings of the Amorites before you without your using either sword or bow.

12 And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

- God probably routed Israel's enemies for her by using various hornet-like attacks (Cf. Ex 23:28; Deut 7:20), plus the terrifying news of Israel's previous conquests

- The "hornet" in 24:12 might be invading armies (Cf. Deut 1:44; Ps 118:12; Is 7:18), just as Gog is the king of the locusts

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.'

13 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.'

13 I gave you a land for which you never worked and cities that you didn't build, but that you have lived in. You're eating from vineyards and olive groves that you didn't plant.'

13 And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat.

(C) Covenant terms (24:14-24)

14 "Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and do away with the gods which your fathers served beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

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.

14 "Now you must fear the LORD and serve him in faithfulness and truth. Throw away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Instead, serve the LORD.

14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

- "Now, therefore" - on the basis of God's great acts for Israel...Joshua appealed to the Israelites to commit themselves to Him anew (Cf. Rom 12:1-2)

— While Israel was not as guilty of idolatry at this point as she was later, it still existed to some degree (Cf. Lev 17:7)

15 But 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 Euphrates 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."

15 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."

15 If you think it's the wrong thing for you to serve the LORD, then choose for yourselves today whom you will serve—the gods whom your ancestors served on the other side of the Euphrates River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose territories you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

- This obviously was not an encouragement to consider the idols as an acceptable option, it was simply a grammatical device to help the Israelites differentiate their choices, and to make the correct alternative more obvious

- As a true leader, Joshua announced his commitment to the Lord, and encouraged the people to follow his example

16 The people answered and said, "Far be it from us that we would abandon the LORD to serve other gods;

16 The people answered and said, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods;

16 In response, the people said, "Far be it from us that we should abandon the LORD to serve other gods,

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid 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 slaves, and did these great signs in our sight and watched over us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed.

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.

17 since the LORD our God is the one who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, from a life of slavery. He did those great things right in front of us, preserving us along the way that we traveled and among all the nations through whose territory we passed.

17 For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18 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."

18 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."

18 The LORD expelled all the people before us, including the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore, we also will serve the LORD, since he is our God."

18 And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.

- The people responded by committing themselves to Yahweh, and join Joshua in serving the Lord

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 wrongdoing or your sins.

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.

19 So Joshua told the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, because he is a God of Holiness. He is a jealous God, and he will forgive neither your transgressions nor your sins.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

- However, Joshua did not want the people to make a superficial decision, so he reminded them of the difficulties involved in following the Lord

— Joshua revealed God's message about their coming self-efforts and compromising attempts to have both God and the world. Moses said the same thing (Deut 31:24-29).

— They would not be able to serve the Lord in their own strength, simply by determining to do so using their willpower (Cf. Ex 19:8)

— They would always have to remember that God was "holy" and "jealous"

- God does not forgive sin when it is willfully committed, or when forgiveness would, as He foresees it, not lead to repentance

- "...He is a jealous God" - God is jealous for holiness, which means He protectively desires fidelity from His people

— Unlike bitter human jealousy that defends cravings and interests, God's is jealous for His people to be pure and faithful to Him because He wants their best (2 Cor 11:2)

20 If you abandon the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and destroy you after He has done good to you."

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."

20 If you abandon the LORD and serve foreign deities, then he will turn and do you harm, consuming you after all the good he has done for you."

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD."

21 The people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD."

21 "No," the people replied to Joshua. "We will serve the LORD."

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

- The people reconfirmed their commitment...

22 So 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."

22 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."

22 Joshua responded, "You are giving testimony against yourselves, that you have chosen to serve the LORD."

They replied, "We are witnesses!"

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

- Joshua reminded them that they were "witnesses against yourselves" in the renewal of this covenant

— Thus, they would condemn themselves, by their own sworn testimony of that day, if they ever forsook the Lord

23 "Now then, do away with the foreign gods which are in your midst, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel."

23 "Now therefore, put away the foreign gods which are in your midst, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel."

23 Joshua said, "Therefore abandon the foreign gods that are among you, and turn your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel."

23 Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.

- Joshua repeats his command to "put away" their idols, physical and mental, and "incline" their hearts to follow Yahweh alone

24 And the people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God and obey His voice."

24 The people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God and we will obey His voice."

24 The people replied, "We will serve the LORD our God and obey his voice."

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

- For the third time, the people committed themselves to follow the Lord faithfully

Unfortunately, as Israel's history clearly shows, they proved unfaithful to the promise to serve and obey the Lord wholeheartedly. They should have learned from their parents' past failures and followed the Lord faithfully. Their fathers had made the same promises when God gave them the Mosaic Law (Ex 24:3,7), but they had proved unfaithful at Mt. Sinai and in the wilderness.

D) Covenant preservation (24:25-28)

(a) Covenant written (24:25-26a)

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a **statute** and an **ordinance** in Shechem.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, making statutes and ordinances in Shechem.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

- This wasn't a new covenant, but a renewal of the Mosaic Covenant, which was originally made at Sinai

— The Israelites had renewed this covenant periodically after God first gave it (Cf. 8:30-35)

- "...statute" - the written commitment of the people to obey the Law (Cf. v26)

- "...ordinance" - the written record of the blessings Israel would enjoy as the result of their obedience

(b) Covenant stored (24:26b)

26 And Joshua wrote these words in **the Book of the Law of God**; and he took a **largestone** and set it up there under the oak that was by the **sanctuary** of the LORD.

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.

26 He wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God, took a large stone, moved it under the shade of the oak tree that was near the sanctuary of the LORD,

26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.

- "...the Book of the law of God" - the document in which Joshua wrote the record of this renewal of the covenant

— He evidently placed it with the previously written covenant

- "...large stone" - a permanent memorial of, and monument to, the renewal of the covenant (Cf. Gen 28:18; Deut 27:2)

— Joshua set up the stone under "an oak" that was the same tree as, or one that represented, the oak under which Abraham had built his altar and worshipped Yahweh
— Jacob had buried his idols under an oak tree in Shechem, perhaps the same one (the oak [terebinth] of Moreh, Gen 12:6-7; 35:2-4)

- "...sanctuary" - this unique place, not the tabernacle that was located at Shiloh

(c) Covenant memorialized (24:27-28)

27 Then Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, because it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us; so it shall be a witness against you, so that you do not deny your God."

27 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, so that you do not deny your God."

27 and then told all of the people, "Look! This stone will testify for us, because it has heard everything that the LORD has spoken to us. So it will stand as a witness against you in the event that you deny your God."

27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

- The stone itself had not *literally* heard all that had taken place that day, but it would remain in the same place from then on, as a silent witness to the proceedings
— Joshua here rhetorically ascribed *human* characteristics to "the stone" (i.e., personification)—in order to reinforce the seriousness of the commitment the Israelites had made to Yahweh

28 Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his inheritance.

28 Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his inheritance.

28 Then Joshua dismissed the people, and each man returned to his territorial inheritance.

28 So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.

This ceremony was very important to the Israelites because the whole nation reaffirmed its commitment to Yahweh as *their God* and to His covenant as *their law*. Israel now prepared to begin another phase of her national existence—but this time without a God-appointed leader, such as Moses and Joshua had been. It was important that Israel remember the *faithfulness* of her God, and that she rededicate herself to exclusive allegiance to Him. Each tribe was to proceed now to exterminate the Canaanites in its own inheritance territory, trusting in Yahweh and obeying His covenant. God would raise up local tribal leaders (called "judges"), as He saw the particular need for these, to provide special leadership in difficult situations. Committed as the Israelites were to their God, at this time, there was no reason they should fail to possess and experience all God had promised them in the years ahead.

(4) Joshua and Elieazar die and are buried (24:29-33; Cf. Judges 2:6-9)

29 Now it came about after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being 110 years old.

29 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.

29 Some time later, Joshua servant of the LORD died at the age of 110 years, and

29 And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

- Joshua died at the same age that Joseph died (110 years, Gen 50:26)

— He evidently died about 1366 BC, although Josephus wrote that he served as Israel's commander for 25 years after Moses' death

— God did not record a single moral blemish on Joshua, just as He did not with Joseph

30 And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance, in Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of Mount Gaash.

30 And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of Mount Gaash.

30 they buried him in his territorial inheritance at Timnath-serah in the mountainous region of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

30 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathserah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.

31 Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known every deed of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

31 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.

31 Israel served the LORD for the entire lifetimes of Joshua and of the officials who outlived Joshua, that is, the ones who had personally known everything that the LORD had done for Israel.

31 And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.

- Israel's success continued as long as the elders, who served Israel and Israel's God, contemporaneously with Joshua, were alive

— This shows the significance of Joshua's influence for God throughout his lifetime

32 Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the plot of land which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father

of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money; and they became the inheritance of Joseph's sons.

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.

32 They also buried the bones of Joseph, which the Israelis brought up from Egypt, in the parcel of ground at Shechem that Jacob had purchased from the descendants of Shechem's father Hamor, for 100 pieces of silver. It became part of the inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

32 And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

- Joseph had counted on God's faithfulness in bringing the Israelites into the Land, and had requested that, when that took place, his descendants would "lay (carry) [his] bones" to rest there

— The burial of his bones may have taken place earlier, when his descendants received Shechem as their inheritance

— This *burial* fulfilled the promise that Joseph's heirs had made to him before he died, that they would bury him in Canaan (Gen 50:25). God was now rewarding Joseph's faith.

33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of his son Phinehas, which was given to him in the hill country of Ephraim.

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.

33 Later, Aaron's son Eleazar also died, and they buried him at Gibeah, which belonged to his son Phinehas, and which had been given to him in the mountainous region of Ephraim.

33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim.

- The death, and life, of Eleazar was much more important than the brief references to him suggest

— He was Israel's high priest, and co-leader with Joshua

- The fact that Phinehas, son of Eleazar, received an inheritance of land, is the beginning of departure from the living and true God

Thus the era of Joshua came to a close. This period of Israel's history was its greatest so far. This generation of Israelites had followed the Lord more faithfully than their fathers,

though not completely faithful. Consequently they experienced God's blessing more greatly than the previous generation, or the many generations that followed theirs, did. After Joshua, the history of Israel goes downhill [until David]. Joshua 24 thus marks the high point of Israel's history, the full realization of her identity as people of God.