

Joshua

Author

Joshua 24:26 suggests Joshua wrote the Book of Joshua. The last five verses of the Book of Joshua were not written by him. Also Joshua 19:47-48 is an editorial addition relating to events after Joshua's death (see Judges 18:1-31). Gleason Archer suggests Phinehas, the third high priest or Eleazar wrote these five verses.¹

Style

The Book of Joshua is an historical book. But we must remember Hebrew Biblical books are different from modern Western historical writings in that the Biblical historical books are totally inspired by God but the latter are mixtures of fact, opinion and theory.

Joshua's name

The name "Joshua" means "The Lord has delivered" or "The Lord has saved". It is significant that Joshua's name was changed from its former Hoshea (Numbers 13:16 and Deuteronomy 32:44) which meant "he has delivered" or "he has saved".

Joshua's name is the equivalent of the name Jesus. Note that they both brought God's people into God's rest. Joshua 1:13-15, 14:15 and 21:44 refers to the natural rest of peaceful living which God granted His Old Covenant people in the Promised Land of Canaan on the condition they had faith in Him and the fruit of faith – obedience to Him.

Jesus gives New Covenant believers rest in the sense of the eternal security and peace which flows from a right relationship to God through Jesus Christ and from His ability to carry our burdens and problems (see Matthew 11:28-30 and Hebrews 3:7-4:10). This rest relates to now and after we go to heaven.

God's grace and gifts, faith and obedience to the Law

Joshua 1:1-6 records that the Lord promised to give the Land of Canaan and victory over the Canaanites as a free gift of God's grace and kindness: *"After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: 'Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them – the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will*

¹ Gleason Archer, "A Survey of Old Testament Introduction", Third Edition, Moody Press, Chicago, 1994, page 287.

be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.”

Note in verse 2 above, God says *“the land which I am giving to them”* and in verse 3 He refers to *“every place...I have given you, as I said to Moses”*. God was here referring to His earlier promises of grace in Deuteronomy 21:7 and 21:3. Deuteronomy 21:7 records: *“Then they shall answer and say, ‘Our hands have not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen it.’”*

In Joshua 1:6, God told Joshua of *“the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.”* Here God is referring to Him promising Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to the Promised Land of Canaan to their descendants (see Genesis 13:14-18, 17:18, 28:1-4, 28:13 and 35:10-12). These promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob under the Abrahamic Covenant were based totally on God’s unmerited grace and kindness (see Galatians 3:16-19).

The Israelites – the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – did not have to merit the possession of the Promised land of Canaan by perfect obedience to the Law of Moses. We see this in the fact that all the Israelites who entered and conquered the Promised Land under Joshua did not perfectly obey the Law of Moses. They were all sinners who needed God’s undeserved grace and mercy.

Even though God promised the Land of Canaan and all its prosperity to the Israelites as a *free gift* of His *unmerited grace* and *mercy*, He still required them to possess these gifts through *trusting faith* and *resulting obedience* to His commands and instructions. Hebrews 11:30 refers to the faith in God of the Israelites under Joshua’s leadership.

In Joshua 1:7-8, God told Joshua that he would have success and prosperity in what God had called him to do only to the degree he obeyed the Law of Moses: *“Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”*

The only human being who could perfectly and sinlessly obey the Law of Moses was Jesus Christ. So Joshua 1:7-8 does not refer to Joshua sinlessly disobeying the Law of Moses. Part of God’s commands in the Law of Moses involved acknowledging their sin and obtaining forgiveness for any sin they committed (see). So part of what God meant by His Words in Joshua 1:7-8 was for Joshua to acknowledge any sin he committed and to obtain God’s forgiveness for these.

Success and prosperity in the context of Joshua 1:7-8 refers to achieving God’s glorious purposes in our lives but not our own purposes if they are contrary to His.

Joshua’s great obedience to the Mosaic Law and God’s guidance

Joshua 11:15 records how extremely obedient Joshua was to God’s commands, rules and instructions in the Mosaic Law: *“As the Lord had commanded Moses His servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the Lord had commanded Moses.”*

Joshua’s great obedience to God’s commands and laws was a *fruit* or *result* of his great faith in God. This connection between having faith in God and obeying Him is seen in

Deuteronomy 9:23: “ *Likewise, when the Lord sent you from Kadesh Barnea, saying, ‘Go up and possess the land which I have given you,’ then you rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God, and you did not believe Him nor obey His voice.*” Joshua’s great faith is evidenced in Numbers 14:6-9.

Joshua is one of the finest examples in the history of a person who tried to obey daily whatever guidance God gave him. He set a wonderfully high standard for us to follow in:

1. his willingness to *seek to know God’s will* for each day of his life. He found this in Moses’ writings, by the lots kept in the possession of the High Priests (see Joshua 21:1-4, Leviticus 16:8, Numbers 34:13-17, 1 Samuel 14: 36-42 and 1 Chronicles 24:2-5) and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
2. his *willingness to obey* the details of God’s perfect plans.
3. his *reliance* and *dependence* on God and His strength and wisdom. This was partly expressed earlier in Numbers 14:1-9, note verses 6-9. Joshua saw how powerful the Canaanites were but he kept his mind on God’s promises and *not on his fears*.
4. his *uncompromising attitude with sin*. Joshua did not care if most people rebelled against trusting and obeying God. For example, he followed God, even though 10 of the other 12 spies refused to trust and obey Him.

Joshua’s major mistake

The Book of Joshua shows that even godly spiritual people can fall into the trap of allowing their human feelings and the so-called good reasoning and common sense of their human minds to lead them into disobedience to God.

Joshua and the people of Israel in Joshua 9:1-27 are an example of believers not bothering to seek the will of God. Instead, they followed the reasonings of their God-given human minds and followed what their God-given eyes and ears told them about the Gibeonites.

The Gibeonites belonged to a wicked idolatrous religion and were a group of the Canaanites, whom God told the Israelites to kill in Deuteronomy 20:16-18. To save their own lives, they dressed themselves and their donkeys in a way that would trick the God-given human minds of the Israelites. These Gibeonites dressed themselves in a way that made it appear to the Israelites’ eyes and minds that they didn’t come from Canaan. The Israelites didn’t seek God’s guidance about this matter. Joshua 9:14 says: “***Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the Lord.***”

This was the *only time* that Joshua didn’t seek God’s will in the Book of Joshua and trouble resulted. This is a tremendous lesson. Many churchgoers repeat this mistake of not seeking direction from God countless times.

As a result of following their human minds’ reasonings instead of the guidance of God, the Israelites couldn’t destroy the demon-worshipping Gibeonites. This was tragic. The Gibeonites then lived as slaves amongst the Israelites and helped to lead many godly Israelites into evil religious practices in years later.

Joshua read every word of the Scriptures to all God's people

Joshua valued God's written Word extremely highly. Joshua 8:34-35 records after the Israelites had suffered a dreadful defeat, Joshua read every single word from the Scriptures to the people of Israel: ***“And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them.”***

Note this verse says that even the children were instructed to listen to the reading of all of God's written. Joshua knew the answers for the people of Israel were in God's Word.

Tragically many Christians these days do not attend Bible studies and rarely personally read the Bible. Instead they just read Christian books and listen to teaching and music tapes by other Christians. As a result, they are immature believers who are easily swayed by every wind of false doctrine (see Hebrews 5:12-14 and Ephesians 4:13-14). Also they are easy targets for Satan's temptations. Remember as Jesus told Satan in Matthew 4:4: ***“...It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”***

Meditating on God's Word

In Joshua 1:8, God commanded Joshua to meditate on His written Word day and night and to speak constantly in agreement with it: ***“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”***

Psalms 1:1-2 says similar things: ***“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.”*** The original Hebrew word “hagah” used for ***“meditate”*** in Psalm 1:1-2 and Joshua 1:8 means “utter, mutter, meditate”² or “meditate, muse”.³ To utter means to speak. To mutter means to speak lowly in a voice which can barely be heard. To muse means to ponder, reflect upon, to consider or think over using your imagination. Think how these meanings apply to your meditation on God's written Word.

Psalms 119:27 speaks of a combination of our asking God to reveal the meanings of the precepts of His written Word and our meditating on His Word's wonders: ***“Make me understand the way of Your precepts; so shall I meditate on Your wondrous works.”***

Hebrews 5:12-14 teaches: ***“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”*** Here we see if we absorb deeply the solid teaching of God's written Word, and we constantly use it in

² Harris, Archer and Waltke, page 205.

³ Brown, Driver and Briggs, page 211.

our daily practical living, we will have trained ourselves to distinguish good from evil in most circumstances.

The reasons for the killing of all pagans in Canaan

The Bible records many examples of and teachings about the fact that God is extremely merciful, kind and patient with very wicked people. Read 2 Kings 14:24-27, Psalm 10:1-11, 73:1-16, Jeremiah 12:1-2, Jonah 1:1-4:11, Habakkuk 1:2-4 and 1:12-17.

But the Book of Joshua also records that the wickedness of various nations can become so entrenched and widespread that God has to punish these nations. Leviticus 20:1-26 reveals that the Canaanites used to offer human sacrifices to the pagan god Molech (verses 2-5), consult mediums and spiritualists (verse 6), cursed their mothers and fathers (verse 9), committed adultery (verse 10) and committed incest (verses 11-17 and 19-21). Leviticus 18:1-30 records the Canaanites committed incest (verses 6-18), homosexuality (verse 22), had sex with animals (verse 23) and sacrificed humans to Molech (verse 21).

Leviticus 18:24-25 records that because of the above sins, God was punishing them: *“Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.”*

Deuteronomy 18:9-12 speaks similarly: *“When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.”*

Therefore when we read in Deuteronomy 7:1-5 and 20:16-18 that God commanded Joshua and his army to destroy all the Canaanites, we know it was because the latter were so deeply involved with human sacrifice, having sex with animals, contacting demons through spiritualism, witchcraft and so on. Deuteronomy 7:1-5 commanded: *“When the Lord your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, and when the Lord your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; so the anger of the Lord will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire.”*

Deuteronomy 20:16-18: *“But of the cities of these peoples which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the Lord your God has commanded you, lest they teach you to*

do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the Lord your God.”

These two passages show that another reason God wanted all the pagan peoples in Canaan totally destroyed was if they were permitted to live among the Israelites they may have taught the Israelites to practice human sacrifice, have sex with animals, practice incest and homosexuality, contact demons and so on. Numbers 33:55 teaches similarly. Joshua 6:21, 8:22-24, 10:30-40 and 11:1-25 records how Joshua and his soldiers destroyed the Canaanites.

Many aspects of the Mosaic Law are symbols of Jesus' death (see Hebrews 10:1-4). But it is wrong to say that everything in the Old Testament symbolises something for New Covenant believers. For example, the killing of pagans in Canaan by Joshua's army does not mean New Covenant believers are meant to kill all pagans in their countries. This is one of the differences between the Mosaic and New Covenants.

The division of the land of Canaan among the Israelites

The Book of Joshua also records the division of the land of Canaan among the nine tribes of Israel plus half of the tribe of Manasseh (see Joshua Chapters 13-21). Previously, the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh had been permitted to possess land on the other side of the Jordan River (see Numbers Chapter 32).

Joshua 21:43-45 records how God fulfilled all of His promises into giving the Land of Canaan as a free gift of His grace to the Israelites: ***“So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. The Lord gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.”***

These promises were true even though not all of the Canaanites were destroyed during Joshua's lifetime.

In Joshua Chapter 23, Joshua told the Israelites in his farewell address that there were still Canaanites living in the land whom God has promised in His grace to enable the Israelites to conquer.

But note Joshua warned the Israelites if the Israelites did not continue to love God and obey the Mosaic Law but instead began to make covenants and marriages with the pagan Canaanites, the Israelites would end being punished by God just like the Canaanites were.

The Book of Joshua's emphasis on the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants

The Book of Joshua also has a heavy emphasis on the importance of the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants. Joshua 1:6, 5:6 and 21:43-44 refer to God's promises in the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants to the fathers about giving the Land of Canaan to the Israelites.

Joshua 5:1-11 records the Israelites were circumcised and celebrated the Passover after they first entered the Land of Canaan. Being circumcised was the outward sign of being under the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants (see Genesis 17:10-14 and Leviticus 12:3).

In Joshua 8:30-35 Joshua and the people of Israel renewed the covenant commitments to God.

The Abrahamic Covenant promises were unconditional and conditional

It is true that the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant about God providing the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with the Land of Canaan are *unconditional*. God *guaranteed* that He would give Canaan to Abraham's descendants regardless of their faith and obedience or lack of these. For example, read Genesis 12:7, 15:18 and 17:8. these verses are not conditional promises which say God would only give Abraham's descendants the land of Canaan if they had faith in Him and obeyed Him.

But note that in the Mosaic Covenant, God revealed that it was only the specific generation of those descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who had faith in Him and obedience to the commands and statutes of the Mosaic Law, who would be those who received the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant promises. These Mosaic Law commands and statutes included those related to obtaining forgiveness for their sins.

The conditional nature of which generations of Abraham's descendants would receive the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant promises is seen in the fact that:

1. the generation of Israelites under Moses' leadership did not enter and possess the promised Land of Canaan because of their unbelief and lack of obedience to God (see Numbers 16:1-45). Hebrews 3:16-19 and 4:6 records: *“For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief...Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience.”* Joshua 5:4-6 states: *“And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people who were born in the wilderness on the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people who were men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the Lord – to whom the Lord swore that He would not show them the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.”* Deuteronomy 1:34-35 records God's Words to Moses about that generation of Israelites: *“And the Lord heard the sound of your words, and was angry, and took an oath, saying, ‘Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to give to your fathers.’”* Note God permitted Caleb and Joshua to enter and possess the Promised Land of Canaan because of their faith and obedience.
2. the generation who entered and possessed the Promised and under Joshua's leadership were people of faith and resulting obedience (see Hebrews 11:30 and Joshua 1:16-18).

3. frequently whenever particular generations of Israelites turned from their faith and resulting obedience to God, He willingly permitted surrounding pagan groups to conquer parts or all of the Land of Canaan (see Judges 1:11-16:31, 1 Kings 11:1-25, 2 Kings 17:1-18:41 and 24:1-25:30).

Conditioned on and but merited by faith and obedience

One of the main messages of the Book of Joshua is God's undeserved grace and power enabling His people to overcome the world and take possession of the inheritance He has promised them, providing they:

- have strong trusting faith in Him.
- have their hearts set on obeying His commandments, laws and instructions.
- and turn from any disobedience to His will into which they may fall.

Read Joshua Chapter 23.

The crossing of the Jordan River, the conquest of Jericho and the many other victories of the Israelites over the pagan Canaanites, recorded in the Book of Joshua are examples which illustrate God's grace and power operating in the lives of those who trust Him and as a result are obeying Him.

Joshua 7:1-26 records that when just one of the Israelites disobeyed God's Word, the Israelite army suffered its first defeat as a result.

This does not mean that the Israelites under Joshua earned or merited God's power and help by their faith and/or obedience. The only way they could have fully merited God's power is if they had all perfectly obeyed God every moment of every day of their lives like Jesus did.

A similar principle relates to local churches under the New Covenant. In 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, Paul teaches that sin which is not turned from acts as a very bad influence on a whole local church: *"Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."*

Joshua 7:10-8:29 reveals that once sin is repented of, God is willing to restore His gracious power and help.

Faith, resulting obedience and miracles in Joshua

In Joshua 3:7-17, Joshua trusted God to stop the Jordan River from flowing so that the people of Israel could cross over on dry earth. The nation of Israel had been wandering in the desert for 40 years and was now ready to possess the Promised Land of Canaan.

Note that Joshua didn't decide himself to try to believe God for this miracle. First, Joshua listened to God. God told Joshua that it was His will briefly to stop the Jordan River from flowing. This Word of the Lord is seen in Joshua 3:7-13. Whenever the Bible says, "The Lord said", this is a Word of the Lord to a person or a number of people.

Note also that Joshua didn't doubt that this Word of the Lord would come true. Instead, he was *certain* that the miracle would happen. This was a great test of faith for Joshua, because, as verse 14 says, the Jordan River was in flood at the time. To the natural human mind, it would have been easier to exercise faith if the Jordan River had a low level of water in it. But since the high, very fast-flowing waters of the Jordan River were clearly visible to the eyes of Joshua, his human tendency would have been to doubt this Word of the Lord.

However, Joshua chose to ignore the bad circumstances his eyes saw- a flooded dangerous river. Because what he was trusting God to do was God's will, he was certain it would come to pass.

Joshua didn't pray "If it be Thy will" prayers in this matter. Check the Bible! Neither did he say, "Lord, I *hope* that this miracle will happen", or, "Lord, I believe that *possibly* this miracle will happen". We can see that Joshua didn't do these things because in Joshua 3:9-13, he is recorded as telling the people of Israel that the miracle would *surely* happen. Joshua said in verse 13: "***And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap.***"

Joshua and the priests, as well as believing God to perform the miracle, *obeyed exactly* the instructions that God gave them as recorded in Joshua 3:7-8. Joshua did not try to copy the things that Moses did when trusting the Lord for miracles. Just because God told Moses to strike the surface of the Nile River with a stick while trusting Him for the miracle of the water turning into blood, this did not encourage Joshua to strike the Jordan River while trusting God to make the river stop flowing. There is nothing miracle-producing about striking the surface of a river with a stick, unless God the Holy Spirit tells us to do this in relation to a specific miracle He desires to perform.

As a result of the Israelites trust in the Word of the Lord, and obedience to His minutest instructions, the Holy Spirit stopped the flow of the high, fast-flowing flood waters just long enough for the thousands of Israelites to cross over. The faith of Joshua and the Israelites is a good example for us (see Joshua 3:7-17).

The Holy Spirit knocks a city's walls over

The next example which shows how Joshua trusted God for miracles is seen at the city of Jericho. This is recorded in Joshua Chapter 6. Here, we see that the nation of Israel, after miraculously crossing the dangerous Jordan River, then camped outside the city of Jericho. Jericho had an army and many evil inhabitants. It was defended by a powerful wall surrounding it. The nation of Israel had no natural means of knocking the wall over, such as battering rams.

If we were Joshua, how would we face this military problem? Joshua knew the answer. He waited on God until God revealed what miracle He desired to perform.

God told Joshua that *if* he, seven priests and the army of Israel marched around the city of Jericho once a day for six days and then on the seventh day, marched around the city seven times while the priests blew their trumpets and the soldiers shouted as the seven priests played a long note on their trumpets, then He would miraculously cause the walls of Jericho to fall down. They obeyed and the walls fell down (see Joshua 6:2-21).

The miracle of Jericho's walls falling down did not occur because soldiers and priests walked around the walls a number of times shouting and playing trumpets at a particular time. A number of us today could walk around the walls of any city and no such miracle would happen, unless the Holy Spirit had given us a Word of the Lord telling us that He wanted us to do this.

This miracle of Jericho's walls falling down only happened for Joshua because:

- God spoke to Joshua telling him *what* to trust Him for in this circumstance.
- This Word of the Lord gave Joshua the God-imparted ability to exercise faith for this specific miracle.
- Joshua put this God-given faith into practice in his thoughts, words and actions. Hebrews 11:30 says: ***“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.”***

Miracles at Ai

Other miracles that God did in Joshua's life occurred in the same way. For example, in Joshua 8:1-2, it says that God gave him guidance about how to defeat the pagan, idol-worshipping people of Ai. Joshua's actions recorded in Joshua 8:3-29, and his words recorded in Joshua 8:7-8, show that he did not doubt for one minute that this miracle would occur. As a result, the miracle did occur.

Joshua exercised faith for these miracles in the way that God told him, and not as his commonsense or human reasoning would have decided.

There is much to learn from Joshua's life as recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

Joshua trusted God to make the sun stand still

Joshua 10:12-14 records that Joshua spoke to God about the sun standing still and God performed this awesome miracle: ***“The Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: ‘Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.’ So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the Lord heeded the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel.”***

No human has the right to command the Sun to stand still unless God inspires him/her to trust God to perform this miracle. Faith comes from hearing a specific Word of the Lord which reveals God's will. Romans 10:17 states: ***“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”***

To try to force God to perform a specific miracle which He has not revealed is His will, is *fleshly presumption* and *not Holy Spirit-inspired faith*.⁴

⁴ Refer to my book “Praying With Powerful Faith” for more details.

Keeping memoirs or reminders of God's actions

God is not against His people keeping *memoirs* or *reminders* of great things He has done. For example, God commanded Joshua to set up 12 memorial stones in the Jordan River and to take out another 12 stones from the river as a *sign* to later Israelites of how God had miraculously opened the Jordan River for the people to cross (see Joshua 4:1-24). Also God commanded the Israelites to put Aaron's rod in the Tabernacle as a sign to the people of Israel (see Numbers 17:10).

But God is against His people venerating or adoring or offering incense to people or natural objects which have been associated in the past with manifestations of His miracle-working power. Religious people usually begin to venerate or adore relics like the bronze serpent (see 2 Kings 18:4) out of a *false fear of being punished by God* if they do not do this or because of a *desire to earn or merit some blessing or miracle* through such veneration. Therefore, such veneration is usually based on *selfish* motives and a lack of understanding of God's love, grace and mercy.