

JOSHUA

LITERARY TYPE: Historical Narrative

AUTHOR: The book is most probably written by Joshua, because of the many detailed eyewitness testimonies and speeches. Joshua either was the author or directed the writings. Joshua was concerned about the written record: recording the law of Moses (8:32), the detailed geographical records (18:8-9) and the words of the covenant (24:25-26).

There is a possibility that other scribes joined together Joshua's speeches and historical accounts that make up the book, after his death.

DATE: Joshua died in about 1390 BC. This was 15 years after the beginning of entering the Promised Land. If Joshua was the author then most of the book would have been written by then.

RECIPIENTS: Recorded for the benefit of all Israelites and specifically for the leaders of Israel to remind them of the consequences of not following God's command to completely conquer the land.

OCCASION: The Israelites were ready to enter the promised land after 400 years of slavery and 40 years in the desert, a land promised to them via Abraham. Joshua had been chosen to lead them to Canaan (Num 27:15-23), after he had remained faithful during the Kadesh-barnea rebellion (Num 13-14).

The book highlights how God keeps His promises in spite of anything that might seem to prevent this. It contains promises that are fulfilled:

- To give the land of Canaan to Israel
- To give victory in specific battles (6:2 and 10:8)

The book reveals the truth that God's promises do not fail - the Israelites just had to obey and step out in faith.

CONTENT SURVEY:

- Part One Mobilization and entering (1:1-5:15)
- Part Two The central campaign (6:1-8:35)
- Part Three Southern campaign (9:1-10:43)
- Part Four Northern campaign (11:1-11:15)
- Part Five Division of the land (11:16-22:34)
- Part Six Joshua final words and death (23:1-24:32)

KEY VERSE:

Joshua 1:6-7

Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.

Sources: Willmington's Bible Handbook and SOTW lectures