

# JOSHUA

## STUDY GUIDE

### HEBREW VS. CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE

There are some differences in how books are categorized and ordered between the Hebrew and Christian texts, beginning with Joshua.

Hebrew Scriptures (Tanak) <i>TaNak – acronym for 3 parts</i>	Protestant Bible
<b>Books of Moses (torah – “law”)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genesis</li> <li>• Exodus</li> <li>• Leviticus</li> <li>• Numbers</li> <li>• Deuteronomy</li> </ul>	<b>Law (Pentateuch – “five books”)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genesis</li> <li>• Exodus</li> <li>• Leviticus</li> <li>• Numbers</li> <li>• Deuteronomy</li> </ul>
<b>Prophets (nevi'im – “prophets”)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Former               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Joshua</li> <li>○ Judges</li> <li>○ Samuel</li> <li>○ Kings</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Latter               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Isaiah</li> <li>○ Jeremiah</li> <li>○ Ezekiel</li> <li>○ The Twelve (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habbakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Historical Books</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joshua</li> <li>• Judges</li> <li>• Ruth</li> <li>• Samuel (1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>• Kings (1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>• Chronicles (1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>• Ezra</li> <li>• Nehemiah</li> <li>• Esther</li> </ul>
	<b>Wisdom or Poetical Books</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job</li> <li>• Psalms</li> <li>• Proverbs</li> <li>• Ecclesiastes</li> <li>• Song of Solomon</li> </ul>
<b>Writings (khetuvim – “writings”)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poetical Books               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Psalms</li> <li>○ Proverbs</li> <li>○ Job</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Five Rolls (Scrolls)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Song of Solomon</li> <li>○ Ruth</li> <li>○ Lamentations</li> <li>○ Ecclesiastes</li> <li>○</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Historical               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Esther</li> <li>○ Daniel</li> <li>○ Ezra-Nehemiah</li> <li>○ Chronicles</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Prophets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Isaiah</li> <li>○ Jeremiah</li> <li>○ Lamentations</li> <li>○ Ezekiel</li> <li>○ Daniel</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Minor               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Twelve (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habbakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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One way to think about the differences is that Jewish understanding considers the Law (Torah) and Prophets (Nevi'im) as a continuous narrative, where the Writings (Khetuvim) contain everything else. Some scholars consider the Writings comparable to all the additional information like what would be included on a modern-day DVD – all the “extras” and commentaries, but this would be an erroneous to view these books in that way. They are God’s Word and offer theological truths! In the same way, the Protestant categorization of Historical Books should not be viewed as history alone. While containing key parts of Israel’s history, they also include important theological truths and must be viewed as God’s Word to us today.

## Now....ON To JOSHUA

### AUTHOR

The book provides no clear sign of who authored it. Pronouns such as “we” and “us” (5:1, 6) indicate an eye-witness to events within the book and Joshua 24:26 “And Joshua recorded these things...” point toward Joshua as an author of large portions. However, other sections such as Joshua’s death (ch. 24), Caleb’s conquest of Hebron (ch. 14), Othniel’s victory (ch. 15), and Danite movement (ch. 19) occur after Joshua’s death and therefore were written by someone else. Scholars believe Joshua wrote most of the book, but a later editor or scribe completed the work to be its final form as we have it today.

### DATE

Reflecting the roughly 25 years of Israel’s history under Joshua’s leadership, the book spans about 1400-1375 B.C. The commonly accepted date for Joshua’s death is around 1375 B.C., therefore the book was completed shortly after that.

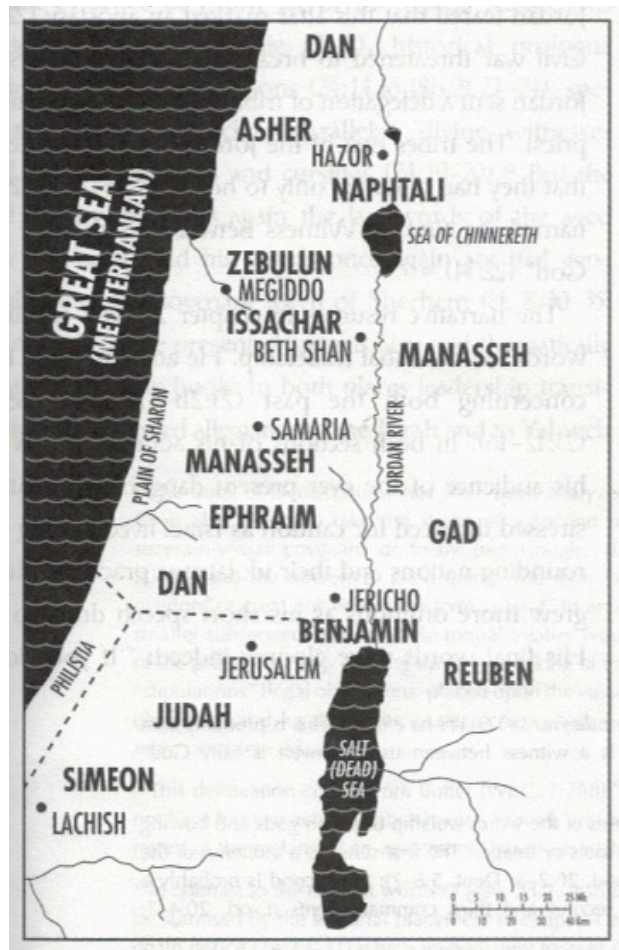
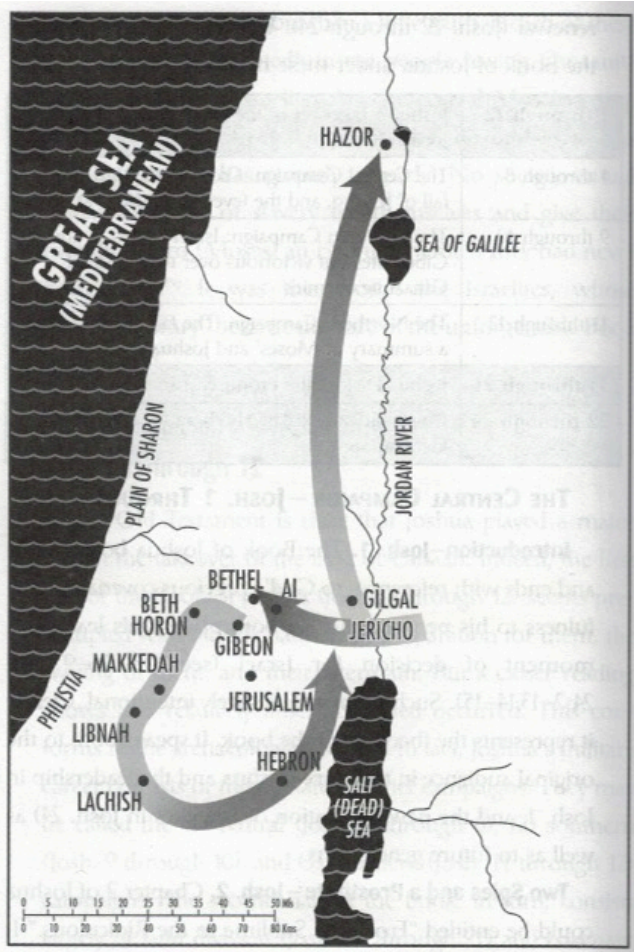
### BASIC INFORMATION

Continuing the history set forth in the first five books of the Bible, Joshua traces the entrance into and settlement of Canaan, the land long promised by God to Abraham.

The basic structure of the book falls into 2 main divisions:

Conquest of the Promised Land (1:1-13:7)	Settlement of the Promised Land (13:8-24:33)
Preparation (1:1-5:15)	East & West of the Jordan (13:8-19:51)
The Campaigns (6:1-13:7)	Covenant Renewal & Reminder (22:1-24:00)

This book is full of many familiar stories, **so take care not to rush through them, but actually READ** them and discern why they are important. Similarly, take time to look up on the maps below the different places mentioned throughout the book. Not all will be on these maps, but hopefully they will help you figure out the different areas and who is living where.



## CANAANITE RELIGION

It might also prove helpful to know a little bit about the religious practices of the Canaanites, especially since they were a constant temptation for Israel. Basically, the religious worship was to gods in control of nature (sun, moon, rain, etc.). There are three main Canaanite gods mentioned in the Bible, though the religion honored hundreds of gods.

- **Baal** – god of sun, storms, & fertility; represented as a bull
- **Asherah/Ashtoreth** – goddess of fertility & war; represented as a limbless tree
- **Molech** – god of prosperity & fertility; represented as a man with a bull’s head & outstretched arms

Worship practices involved temples and poles (Asherah poles) on high places and the priests and people acting out stories of their gods, which often included widespread promiscuity, use of temple prostitutes (male & female), bestiality, child sacrifice, divination and fortune-telling, and self-inflicted injury. In Scripture, Baal and Molech are often affiliated with or equated with each other, though Baal was often used to designate any kind of god or ruler.

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The Israelites were warned numerous times by God & Moses about avoiding Canaanite worship practices, and that warning is reiterated again in Joshua. Unfortunately, Israel did not heed the warning.

### OBSERVATION WORDS

- God, Jesus, Holy Spirit
- Strong, Courageous
- Fear
- Remember/Careful to Obey
- Blessing
- Curse
- Delivered/Gave
- Take note of explanations for things

### SUMMARY QUESTIONS

- What did the Lord teach YOU through what you read?
  
- Where/how is **Jesus** & the **Holy Spirit** represented in the book?
  
- What things do you see Joshua doing that were similar to Moses? Why do you think this is?
  
- What do you observe in Joshua 5:1-12? Where are they? What is happening? What circumstances do you notice? Why is this significant? What can you learn from this for your own life?
  
- What similarities do you see between Josh. 7:19-24 and Acts 5:1-11?
  
- Rocks were often piled for what purpose? How might you go about this today?

- Explain why the Lord instructs Israel to completely destroy Canaanite populations. Why would He require such a thing? How does Deut. 20:10-12 play into the picture?
  
- What do you learn about the relationship between God's hand and human action through this book? How does this relate to your life? To spiritual warfare?
  
- **KEY WORD** – How would you summarize what you've read into one word or very short phrase? Why did you choose that?
  
- **KEY VERSE(S) & CHAPTER** – Like key words, key verse & chapter reflect something that stood out to you from the book. It may be a means of summarizing the book, or it may be something that the Lord taught you through that verse & chapter. So, what are they for you and why?