

10. The Last Words of Joshua

Quote: "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."

Joshua 24:14

Verse By Verse Bible Marking:

JOSHUA 23:6 - Joshua endeavours to motivate the people with the same words as Yahweh addressed to him after the death of Moses (**Josh 1:7-9**; see also **Deut 31:6-7**).

JOSHUA 23:7 - **"That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you"**

- That would be to go against God's purpose, which is to "take out of the nations a people for His Name" (**Acts 15:14**; **Isa 43:7**). Their separation was to protect them from the evil Gentile influence (see **Psa 1:1**; **Prov 4:19**; **2 Cor 6:14-17**).

"neither make mention of the name of their gods" - "mention" = to mark, so as to be recognised, to be remembered in such a way as to treat as real.

JOSHUA 23:8 - **"cleave"** - used of marriage (see **Gen 2:24**). Teaching that Israel was to have a close relationship with Yahweh based on love. See **Deut 4:3-4**; **10:20**.

JOSHUA 23:11 - **"love the LORD your God"** - Taken from **Deut 6:5**; **19:9**; **30:6,16,20**. This was the key to Israel's future success. Love is to become the motivation for obedience to God's commandments.

JOSHUA 23:12 - **"go back"** - translated "turn back" (RSV, Roth), and "turn aside" (LXX).

"cleave" - the same word as **v8**. They were to choose Yahweh or the world. They could not have both - see **Matt 6:24**; **Rom 6:16**; **2 Cor 6:14-18**; **2 Tim 2:3-4**.

"make marriages with them" - Marriages between believers and unbelievers undermine the separation between the things of God and the world. This was the problem in Noah's day (**Gen 6:1-3**), and in Nehemiah's day (**Neh 13:23-24**). Therefore Yahweh forbade it (**Deut 7:1-6**; **1 Cor 7:39**; **2 Cor 6:14-18**).

JOSHUA 23:13 - **"but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you."** - see Margin (s). Our 'thorns' are the 'cares and riches and pleasures of this life' (**Luke 8:14**) which choke the Word and make us unfruitful.

JOSHUA 24 - All the Tribes summoned to Shechem.

JOSHUA 24:1 - **"Shechem"** - means "the burden bearer". A city of refuge situated in the shadow of Mt Ebal and Mt Gerizim. Joshua gathered the nation to Shechem for his final meeting with them because it was the site at which they had gathered to pronounce the blessings and curses of the Law and to renew their covenant (**Josh 8:30-35**; **Deut 27**).

JOSHUA 24:1-13 - colour the word "I". It emphasises God's loving care and deliverance of Israel, with all that He had done for them.

JOSHUA 24:14-25 - Colour in the word "serve", or "served". It means "to labour, to work for another".

JOSHUA 24:14 - **"fear the LORD and serve him"** - Our service must be coupled with a deep reverence and respect for Yahweh involving a love for His goodness, and a fear to offend Him in any way.

"in sincerity and in truth" - quoted by Jesus Christ at this same spot (**John 4:22-23**).

"in sincerity" - Hebrew "tamiym" means "perfect, complete, whole, entire, sound". Used of the offerings they were to be "without blemish" representing Jesus Christ who was morally without blemish (**John 8:46**). This is what we are to strive for in life. It describes those who are upright and blameless in their attitude before Yahweh, and whose life is dedicated fully towards walking before Him as a complete person in the spirit of the truth. This was Noah (**Gen 6:9**).

"truth" - Hebrew "emeth" means "truth", but also signifies "faithfulness, firmness, stability, trustworthiness" (Gesenius). It speaks of a person who serves Yahweh faithfully according to His Word.

JOSHUA 24:19 - Joshua implies that the people were secretly serving other gods, under which circumstances they could not worship Yahweh acceptably (see **v23**).