

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 20.4%

Weekly Readings will cover: Joshua 8 through Joshua 14

Sunday: Joshua 8

Monday: Joshua 9

Tuesday: Joshua 10

Wednesday: Joshua 11

Thursday: Joshua 12

Friday: Joshua 13

Saturday: Joshua 14

Current # of email addresses in the group: 599

I hope you each enjoyed the first week of Joshua! We have hit another milestone this week. We are now 20% (1/5<sup>th</sup>) of the way done with our deep dive through the whole Bible! Woot! Great job! Here is our second week of Joshua!

Website archive location for audio files & PDFs:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/san-francisco-bay-area-ca/posts/audio-links-re-three-year-chronological-deep-dive-reading-program-circa-2022-2025-903711>

### **3-YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 36**

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 225 - SUNDAY: August 13<sup>th</sup>

Joshua 8

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan for this day: “God commands Joshua to stretch out his spear toward the city of Ai (verse 18). Not only was this a signal to begin the attack (verse 19), but it was also a symbol of God's presence and help to His people in the battle (compare verses 1, 18)—displayed in the fact that Joshua did not lower his spear until the victory was won (verse 26). This is powerfully reminiscent of Israel's first battle upon leaving Egypt against the Amalekites, where Moses held aloft the rod of God, which was also a symbol of God's participation in the battle (Exodus 17:8-16). Remarkably, Joshua had been the military

commander in that former battle, looking to Moses with the rod. Now here he was with raised spear, standing as the one others were looking to. Of course, it was recognized in both instances that God was the one directing the outcome.

Along with the defeat of Ai, the city of Bethel is also mentioned (verse 17). "Bethel was near Ai to the west (Joshua 7:2), although its exact site is disputed. The inhabitants of Bethel came out of their city to help the men of Ai. Since the Israelite ambush was stationed between Bethel and Ai [Joshua 8:12], they may have felt threatened by the Israelites. Or it may be that Ai was a small outpost for the larger city of Bethel (Joshua 7:3) and an attack on Ai was understood to be an attack on Bethel. The text does not record Bethel's defeat, although its king is listed among those conquered by Joshua (Joshua 12:16). It may be that in the defeat of Ai, Bethel was also defeated and no further reference was needed" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on Joshua 8:17).

Following the Israelites' defeat of Ai, Joshua led them to Shechem, which is between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, near modern-day Nablus. There he carried out the commands of God and Moses to build an altar, erect massive stones engraved with the Book of the Law, review the law, and rehearse the blessings and curses (verses 30-35; compare Deuteronomy 11:29-32; Deuteronomy 27:1-26). Afterward, they apparently returned to Gilgal, where they first camped after crossing the Jordan (compare Joshua 9:6)." [END]

Verse 27 – It's worth repeating that with Jericho, God commanded that all the spoil be dedicated to Him, but here God is abundantly generous with the nation. Often obedience and self-denial are required first to show God our hearts and then the blessings of our obedience are poured out.

Verse 29 – Here we see Joshua follow the law found in Deuteronomy

21:22-23 which states: "'If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance; for he who is hanged *is* accursed of God."

Verse 31 – This is a reference to Deuteronomy 27:5.

### Day 226 - MONDAY: August 14<sup>th</sup>

Joshua 9

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll begin with the UCG reading plan: "Gibeon was a powerful city in the region (Joshua 10:2), possibly due in part to the shrewdness of its people (Joshua 9:4). While their scheme for saving themselves involved deceit, it is amazing to see the extraordinary measures they were willing to take for peace and survival. Their deceit resulted in perpetual servitude for their people (verses 22-27), and perhaps there would have been better ways to escape death by submitting to God or agreeing to peacefully leave the territory. But once the agreement was made, they seem to have held to their part of it. And when Saul later broke the agreement, God Himself punished the Israelites on their behalf (2 Samuel 21:1-14).

This whole situation would have gone differently for Israel if its leaders had done what they should have in the first place. Even though they were initially suspicious of the Gibeonite ambassadors (Joshua 9:7), the Israelites relied on their own intellect to determine whether or not they were being truthful. This was a big mistake. Joshua, the most likely author of this book bearing his name, had evidently learned his lesson by the time he wrote down the words in verse 14: "But they did not ask counsel of the Lord." Indeed, this is the crux of the whole chapter. The omnipotent God was there to provide answers, if Joshua had only sought them as he had been instructed (Numbers 27:21).

We can make the same mistake. Many times, we rush to a major decision without seeking counsel from God. No, we cannot seek His answers in the Urim and Thummim anymore. But there are other means available to us when it comes to discerning God's will. We can pray, with fasting if need be, asking for direct inspiration from Him through His Holy Spirit. We can seek His answers in the laws and principles found in His Word. And we can counsel with other brethren in whom His Spirit dwells, particularly the ministry that He has specially ordained. Indeed, we should avail ourselves of all of these means. For no major decision in our lives should be made without seeking God's will. As Proverbs 3:5-6 states so eloquently, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." [END]

Verse 15 – Notice that even though this treatise was based on lies, God still expected the nation of Israel to honor their word. Later King David would deal with a famine on the land for three years only to learn that it was because King Saul had killed the Gibeonites and broke the covenant they made. This should make all of us give serious consideration before we give our word because God expects our yes to be yes and our no, no (compare Matthew 5:37, James 5:12 & Psalm 15:4).

### Day 227 - TUESDAY: August 15<sup>th</sup>

Joshua 10

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states for this chapter: "Adonizedek, the king of Jerusalem, is not happy with the treaty the Gibeonites made with the Israelites. His name (meaning "Lord of Righteousness") is probably a title (like Pharaoh), perhaps passed down from the days of the Priest-King Melchizedek ("King of Righteousness," Hebrews 7:1-4), who appears to have been king of the same city in the days of Abraham (Genesis 14:18-20). The similarity ends there, as Melchizedek was actually the preincarnate Jesus Christ while Adonizedek, Israel's enemy,

was certainly not a true servant of God. If the Jebusites did have Christ among them in the days of Abraham, they had long since rejected Him and His ways (compare Deuteronomy 7:1-5; Deuteronomy 8:20; Deuteronomy 12:29-31). Adonizedek gets four neighboring kings to join him in an attack against Gibeon. The Gibeonites send messengers to the Israelite encampment at Gilgal, asking them to return to Gibeon and honor the covenant of peace they had made (compare Joshua 9:15-17) by helping them against the Amorite kings. God lets Joshua know that He will give them the victory, and uses a hailstorm to kill more than the Israelites did during this first battle (Joshua 10:11). Desperate for more time to deal with Israel's enemies, Joshua makes his request of God that the sun and moon stop moving.

Some try to use this as proof that the Bible is not inspired, since the author, they argue, implies that the sun and moon actually travel across the sky each day, while we know today that this is only apparent because of the earth's rotation. But it is clear from the context that the author is speaking from the reference point of one standing on the earth. Even if Joshua himself falsely believed in a geocentric universe with a fixed earth, that does not negate the inspiration of the verses here. For the language used is quite valid. Indeed, if the same phenomenon occurred today, many would still use the same terminology to describe it—describing what they perceive even though they understand the truth of the earth's rotation.

It is amazing to consider the enormity of this miracle. Its complexities, which Joshua himself may not have been able to contemplate, are staggering. The rotation of the earth, with a surface velocity of more than 1,000 miles per hour at the equator, had to somehow come to a screeching halt, and start up again later, without inertial forces then creating tremendous geologic and tidal upheaval, destroying the earth's inhabitants. It is difficult to imagine the multiple cataclysmic consequences that would have occurred if God had not performed

many other miracles to accompany the halting of the rotation. As it was, everyone in the world must have been in utter confusion over what was happening. While half the world wondered why the sun wasn't setting, the other half was wondering if they would ever see it again! And indeed, there are obscure myths from several ancient cultures that seem to reflect this very confusion. As amazing as this event was, the account focuses not so much on the magnitude of the miracle, but on the fact that God listened to the voice of one man and fought so grandly for His people (verse 14). Here is proof that "the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:17). Much indeed. Following the initial victory, the Israelites move from one city to another in the southern part of Canaan, destroying the inhabitants and conquering the land—which will eventually be given to Judah, Simeon and Benjamin—before returning to the encampment at Gilgal." [END]

Verse 28 – We see Joshua fully destroys the kings and the people as God commanded. If only all of Israel's leaders would be so faithful and complete in their obedience. We will later see others like King Saul who do not follow God's orders completely and are ultimately rejected by God.

### Day 228 - WEDNESDAY: August 16<sup>th</sup>

Joshua 11

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan for this chapter: "Following the Israelite victory in the south, Jabin, the king of Hazor, north of the Sea of Galilee, forms an even larger alliance and attempts to take on Israel.

It is easy to assume that since God had commanded that Jericho be burned, and Ai too had been burned, that this was to be done to all of the cities of the land. But the instructions in Deuteronomy 20 did not include a command to burn down all of the cities. In fact, God promised

to give the Israelites "large and beautiful cities which you did not build, [and] houses full of all good things, which you did not fill . . ." (Deuteronomy 6:10-11). As the inhabitants were driven out, in many cases the Israelites simply moved into their cities and houses.

In this campaign, only Hazor was burned. And as usual (Jericho excepted), the Israelites kept the spoil as God turned over the wealth of the Canaanites to Israel (verses 13-15). As we saw in Deuteronomy 20:16-18, Joshua "left none breathing" (Joshua 11:11, 14) of the inhabitants of these cities that were near to them. But it is also clear from these passages that letting "nothing that breathes remain alive" (Deuteronomy 20:16), which was done to avoid being taught "their abominations which they have done for their gods" (verse 18), applied only to human beings, not to the livestock, which Israel was permitted to keep as part of the spoils (Joshua 11:14-15).

During the process of conquering the land, the giants that had been such a terror to the Israelites 40 years earlier were killed or driven off (verses 21-22; 15:14). A few remained in the area occupied by the Philistines, the descendants of whom David and his men encountered several hundred years later (1 Samuel 17; 2 Samuel 21:15-22)." [END]

Verse 10 – The John Gill commentary states: "before mentioned, Jos 11:1; but not of all the land of Canaan: Jerom says, it was the metropolis of all the kingdoms of the Philistines; and though they were not now subject to it, and had kings of their own, yet it appears that the king of this place was in great authority, and regard was paid unto him; and this seems to be the reason why Joshua hastened to take this city, slay the king of it, and burn it with fire, because it had been the principal in this war, and might, if not prevented, raise new troubles; wherefore, as a precaution to that, and to deter the rest, he hastened the conquest and destruction of it." [END]

Verse 15 – This faithful obedience is amazing! Would God be able to say this about us?

Day 229 - THURSDAY: August 17<sup>th</sup>

Joshua 12

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan for today's chapter states: "Chapter 12 is a summary of all of the kings defeated by Moses and Joshua in the conquering of the Promised Land. Most of the cities mentioned were described in the original accounts in Numbers 21:21-35 (Joshua 12:1-6), Joshua 6-8 (Joshua 12:9), Joshua 10 (Joshua 12:10-16) and Joshua 11 (Joshua 12:17-24).

The latter portion, on Joshua's conquests, appears to be an itemized list of what we previously read in Joshua 11:16-20. Baal Gad (Joshua 12:7) is in the northern extremity of the land, north of the city that eventually became known as Dan. Mount Halak is in the southern extremity, south of Beersheba. Hormah and Arad (verse 14) are not described in Joshua 10. They are south of the other cities in that chapter. These names do appear in Numbers 21:1-3 as people defeated by the Israelites under Moses. The area is again described in Judges 1:16-17. Geder (Joshua 12:13) and Adullam (verse 15) were not mentioned in Joshua 10 either, but are in the same general area as the others in chapter 10.

Bethel (Joshua 12:16) was a town adjacent to Ai. Its inhabitants unsuccessfully aided Ai against the Israelites (Joshua 8:17), and some defeat of the city may have occurred at that time. But a later destruction is recorded in Judges 1:22-26, complete with spies and a secret entrance into the city.

Tappuah (verse 17) is not mentioned elsewhere as being conquered, but in Joshua 16:8 and Joshua 17:7-8 it is described as a border city between Ephraim and Manasseh. The northern towns listed in Joshua



12:17-24 were probably part Jabin's alliance described in chapter 11, the kings and cities of which were merely summarized in Joshua 11:2-3." [END]

Verse 24 – The John Gill commentary states: “it may seem strange that, in so small a country as Canaan was, there should be so many kings in it, since the length of it from Dan to Beersheba was scarce an hundred sixty miles, as Jerom says; who further observes, that he was ashamed to give the breadth of it, lest it should give occasion to Heathens to blaspheme; for, adds he, from Joppa to our little village Bethlehem (where they then were) were forty six miles, to which succeeded only a vast desert: but it may be observed, that in ancient times, in other countries, there were a great many kings, as here in Britain, and in France, Spain, and Germany, as Bishop Patrick has observed from several writers; and Strabo testifies the same of the cities of Phoenicia or Canaan, that they had each of them separate kings, as Joshua here describes them.” [END]

Day 230 - FRIDAY: August 18<sup>th</sup>

Joshua 13

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is a short UCG reading plan for today’s chapter: “Not all of the land was conquered in the previously described wars. There were still sections, such as the land of the Philistines in what is now known as the Gaza Strip, which the Israelites did not yet possess.

The land was divided among the tribes, but not all of the Canaanites were driven out. More details are given in the book of Judges (see Judges 1). So, too, are some of the reasons for God not driving them out (compare Judges 2; 3:1-6). The Israelites lacked the diligence, zeal and spirit to obey God, and God used the Canaanites to test them. In fact, the entire book of Judges is a chronicle of Israel's failures in this

regard. Many victories (e.g., Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 5:6-10) waited 400 years until the days of David.” [END]

I don't have anything additional to add to this chapter.

Day 231 - SATURDAY: August 19<sup>th</sup>

Joshua 14

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan for this final chapter of our reading week states: “The initial division of the land occurs while the Israelites still have their headquarters at Gilgal (verse 6). Whether Caleb had been given more specific promises than were recorded in Numbers 14:24 and Deuteronomy 1:36 (verses 9, 12), or whether he was now deciding which land he wanted, he now steps forward to claim those promises—Hebron, the burial place of Abraham, and the very land inhabited by the giants who had disturbed the other spies so much (Numbers 13:30-33). Caleb was 40 years old one year after the Exodus (Joshua 14:7). And 45 years have passed since then, making Caleb now 85 years old (verse 10). So, since the time from the Exodus to entering the Promised Land was 40 years, six years have elapsed since the entry into the Promised Land. Even though elderly, Caleb is no more afraid of the Anakim now than he was at age 40.” [END]

Verse 6 – God had promised that Joshua and Caleb would live and see the Promise Land, whereas everyone else 20 years and older had died (compare Numbers 32:12, 14:24 & Deuteronomy 1:36).

Verse 15 – John Gill's commentary states: “According to Jerom, it had its name of Hebron from a son or grandson of Caleb of that name, 1Ch 2:42; and if so, then it is here, and in some other places, so called by anticipation: Kirjatharba may be rendered "the city of the four"; and had its name, as some think, from the four couple buried there, or near it, Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and

Leah; or from four eminent persons, who formerly dwelt there, Aner, Eshcol, Mamre, and Abraham; or rather from four persons that more lately dwelt there, Anak and his three sons, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi; or Arba is the name of some great man, to whom this city belonged, and so was called the city of Arba, which is the sense of our version, as appears by the following supplement:" [END]