

Old Testament Survey

Joshua

General Outline of Joshua

- I. Conquest of the Land - 1:1-12:24
 - A. Joshua's divine commission - 1:1-9
 - B. Preparations to cross the Jordan River; the spies rescued by Rahab - 1:10-2:24
 - C. The crossing of the Jordan - 3:1-4:24
 - D. Circumcision at Gilgal - 5:1-15
 - E. Capture of Jericho - 6:1-27
 - F. Failure at Ai, dealing with Achan - 7:1-8:29
 - G. The altar at Ebal; the solemn reading of the law - 8:30-35
 - H. The alliance with the Gibeonites - 9:1-27
 - I. Conquest of southern Canaan; the battle at Gibeon - 10:1-43
 - J. Conquest of northern Canaan - 11:1-15
 - K. Summary of Joshua's campaigns - 11:16-12:24
- II. Dividing of the Inheritance - 13:1-22:34
 - A. Joshua's instructions concerning the division - 13:1-7
 - B. Assignment to the eastern tribes - 13:8-33
 - C. Assignment to the western tribes - 14:1-19:51
 - D. Appointment of the cities of refuge - 20:1-9
 - E. Appointment of the Levitical cities - 21:1-45
 - F. Eastern tribes dismissed to their homes in Transjordan - 22:1-34
- III. Joshua's Final Charge to Israel - 23:1-24:33

Authorship and Date

Evidences For Joshua's Authorship

1. Eyewitness details point to the author being a personal witness to the events in the book.
2. Canaanite cities are mentioned by their archaic names, for example Baalah for Kirjath-jearin (15:9), Kirjath-sannah for Debir (15:49), and Kirjath-arba for Hebron (15:13). This would not be likely had the book been written much later.
3. References to the Gibeonites being "hewers of wood to this day" (9:27) would not be true if the book was written during the monarchy.
4. According to 18:16 and 28 Jerusalem was uncaptured at the time of the writing of the book.

Evidences For Later Additions

1. Joshua's death is recorded in 24:29-30.
2. The generalization that "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who lived after Joshua" (24:31) indicate that this text was inserted later.
3. Two references in Joshua are also seen in Judges, Othniel's capture of Kirjath-arba (Joshua 15:13-17 and Judges 1:9-13), and the migration of a part of the tribe of Dan to northern Israel (Joshua 19:47 and Judges 18:27-29).

4. These evidences point to the fact the some parts of Joshua were added by later authors, most likely Eleazar and Phineas.

Denial of Joshua's Authorship

1. Wellhausians want to relegate Joshua to the Pentateuch, thus making a Hexateuch. They then assert most of the material came from the **J** and **E** authors with later additions by the Deuteronomic School.

In answer to this, only the Pentateuch was considered canonical by the Samaritans. There is no evidence of the existence of a hexateuch.

The Tell El-Amarna Correspondence

1. The Tell El-Amarna tablets were uncovered at the ancient site of Akhetaton (Tell el-Amarna) which was the new capital of Amenhotep IV (Akhnaton).
2. These tables consist of a series of diplomatic letters describing the invasion of the Hapiru (Habiru) into Palestine. In fact, the king Abdi-Hepa of Jerusalem mentions with alarm these invading marauders.
3. It is hard to determine if the Hapiru were an homogeneous race or merely a band of mercenaries. However, evidence points to the fact that they may indeed be the invading armies of the Israelites.
4. Incidentally, both the Mari and Nuzi tablets mention the Hapiru as well, all dating to the second millennium B.C.

The Long Day of Joshua

Evidences For The Miracle of the Long Day

1. The clearest reading of the Hebrew text supports the idea that the sun actually stood still and did not set for an extra day.
2. Reports are found in Egyptian, Chinese, and Hindu sources that there was a long day at some point in their history.
3. Some astronomers believe that a day is missing from the calendar.

Objections Against the Long Day

1. It is possible to translate the word *dom* to not mean "stand still" but "quite pouring down its heat." The storm that followed the battle lends credence to this idea.
2. Some say that the experience of the day was prolonged.
3. Others say that Joshua's prayer was made in the early morning, and hence there was nothing supernatural at all about the day.

The Extermination of the Canaanites

Objections

1. Many say that the God of the Hebrews was an evil and murdering God as he had entire cities and populations killed. Many liberal scholars reject Joshua on this basis.
2. Others say that the Israelite activity matched the backward and primitive thinking of their ancient religion.

Answers

1. God had the Israelites wipe out these cities because of the insidious nature of their pagan influences on Israel. Had these cities survived they would have polluted Israel.
2. Archaeological discoveries have shown that the Canaanites were the worst of pagans, sacrificing children to their false Gods and totally consumed with sexual immorality and perversion.