

## **Joshua**

### **Lesson #17, Chapter 23**

As the book of Joshua comes to a close, God has given the land rest from war, the tribes have received their inheritances, and Joshua is old and advanced in years. However, before leaving them, Joshua challenges the leaders and nation of Israel to remain obedient to God and His commands.

1. How old was Joshua by this time? For a clue see 24:29.
2. Note again the character of Joshua. By his own admission, he is old and advanced in years, yet he continues to shepherd the flock entrusted to his care. He will not relinquish his responsibilities until he takes his last breath. How is this an encouragement to you to continue ministering on into old age?
3. Verses 1-2 make it abundantly clear that Joshua will not be around much longer. Knowing this, Joshua tries to communicate as clearly as he can his last formal words to the people. List the main topics he covers in Chapter 23.
4. If you had your own Chapter 23 in which to communicate parting thoughts to your family and friends that would aid them in their walk with the Lord, what would you say?
5. Who does Joshua summon to hear his first address (verse 2)?

6. Joshua reminds the nation of what God has done for them. What does he say that God had already done in verses 3-5? What would God continue to do for them in the land as He had promised (verses 3-5)?
  
7. How is remembering what God *has done* and looking forward to what He *will do* the foundation of any believer's life? How is it a motivation for further obedience?
  
8. In verse 6 Joshua urges the nation to "be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses." Explain what it means to *be firm to keep and do God's law*.
  
9. Think about your life and how you obey God's Word each day. What does it take to have a firmness in obeying God's Word? Are you characterized by a resolute spirit to obey God's Word? If not, what do you need to change so you will be steadfast in obedience?
  
10. Since doing all that is written in God's Word may seem a bit overwhelming or vague, please read Romans 12:9-21 and consider how you can obey those few verses in the spirit of Joshua 23:6 by *being very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the Lord, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right and or to the left*. In what ways does Joshua 23:6 change how you put Romans 12:9-21 into practice in your life?
  
11. God had been faithful to Israel, now how are they to be faithful to Him according to verses 6-8?

12. What is the concern in associating with the people of the nations who remain in the Promised Land (verse 7 and Deut. 6:13-15)?
  
13. As Christians, we are to be light and salt to the world, and we are to share Christ with the lost. Should we ever be concerned about associating with unbelievers? Why? What verses support your answer?
  - a. What is the balance in this area, so that we continue to evangelize yet not become like them?
  
14. Joshua 23:8 reads, *But you are to cling to the Lord your God, as you have done to this day.* How are Israel's actions and choices up to this point proof that they were clinging to the Lord?
  
15. What images are evoked with the verb "to cling?" When a person is clinging to God, what does it look like? How can you remind yourself to cling more to the Lord throughout the day?
  
16. Joshua reminds the nation a second time of God's faithfulness to them. How was God faithful (verses 9-10)?

17. Joshua 23:11 reads, *So take diligent heed to yourselves to love the Lord your God.* According to verse 11, what does it mean to take *diligent heed*? Who are we to be diligent toward? For what purpose (verse 11)?
  
18. What are some principles mentioned in verses 2-11 that would help you diligently love the Lord?
  
19. In Joshua 23:12-13 Joshua, gives a very stern warning against clinging to and intermarrying with the heathen nations. What severe consequences will result if the Israelites are disobedient (verse 13; Deut. 7:3-4; Ps. 106:34-43)?
  
20. What is God's standard today for Christians regarding close relationships and marriage *with unbelievers*? See 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 6:15-18; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; James 4:4 to formulate your answer.
  
21. Knowing his own death is imminent, three times in verses 14-16, Joshua discusses God's faithfulness to keep His promises. How are Joshua's words comforting, yet at the same time, a warning to the nation (verses 14-16)?
  
22. Joshua has emphasized three times in verses 14-16, God's faithfulness to the sons of Israel in fulfilling all His promises. God is immutable (unchanging) and can be no less faithful to us today than He was to Joshua and Israel. Likewise, He will fulfill all His promises to us. How are those truths encouraging and strengthening to you today?