

CLASS NOTES -- JOSHUA

INTRODUCTION

The name "Jesus" is the Greek of the OT name "Joshua." As a matter of fact, in the KJV, the word "Jesus" is used in Hebrews 4:8 when it is referring to the Old Testament Joshua.

Israel had been redeemed by the Passover lamb in Egypt -- completely apart from the Law, for the Law had not yet been given. From Exodus twenty through the end of Deuteronomy they were under the administration of Moses, who gave them the Law and stands as its symbol in Scripture. But Moses and the Law could not bring them into rest from their wanderings and the warfare they experienced. It was Joshua who gave them that kind of rest (see Joshua 11:23; 14:15; 21:44; 23:1).

Today there is a rest which even Joshua could not bring about -- a spiritual rest which only Jesus (our "Joshua") can provide. "For if Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His [His work of redemption]" (Heb. 4:8 - 10).

Under Moses this redeemed people knew in great detail what was demanded of them -- but could not do it. They struggled, complained that they were not experiencing the blessings promised them, went around in circles -- and a whole generation died in the wilderness. Under Joshua the new generation entered the land flowing with milk and honey. They settled into homes, found rest, and proclaimed, "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord [our] God spake concerning [us]; all are come to pass unto [us], and not one thing hath failed thereof" (Josh. 23:14).

Paul tells us that he was "alive" once "without the Law" (Rom. 7:9). The Law didn't have one thing to do with his conversion and, at first, he was "alive" -- delighted with the wonderful life he had received by grace from his Savior. But when he faced the problem of how to live this life, his background and training led him back to Moses. He was soon frustrated and in despair. He was going around in circles spiritually, and was experiencing the "death" of Rom. 7:24 -- that living death of longing to do the will of God without the ability to accomplish it (Rom. 7:15 - 23). He was redeemed, but experiencing a sojourn in a spiritual wilderness. When he finally found **rest**, and began to fully enjoy the blessings God had promised to believers, it was not through Moses, but in **Jesus**, the heavenly "Joshua" (Rom. 7:24, 25-a; 8:3, 4).

While the book of Joshua does not set forth God's program for this Age of Grace nor even, in a strict sense, typify it, it does provide abundant illustrations of truths we must understand and apply day by day. Of course Israel under Joshua was still under the Law (Josh. 1:8), which we are not (Rom. 6:15), but it is interesting how little reference there is to the Law in Joshua. It is **Joshua**, not **Moses** and the **Law** given through him, that takes center stage.

Israel as a nation has not even yet entered into her rest. When she does it will not be through Moses and the Law, but through the grace of our heavenly Joshua -- Jesus, our Lord. Their great mistake in the days following the death and resurrection of Christ, the Lamb of God, was that they were trying to find righteousness, and the rest it brings, through Moses rather than through faith in Christ Jesus (Rom. 9:31 -- 10:4). But when He comes back to them, after they have become a redeemed people by faith (Ezek. 20:42 - 44; Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:26), they will

at long last find their home in the promised land, and enjoy all the blessings promised through the prophets. They, too, will declare that nothing of all He promised has failed, and will -- finally -- **be at REST**.

Some of the spiritual blessings we in the Body of Christ enjoy today are blessings Israel is still awaiting. They were granted to us, not because they were covenanted to us (for they were not), but just because God in His grace chose to give them to us. It is in this sense that we "have been made partakers of their [Israel's] spiritual things" (Rom. 15:27) and are "ministers of the New Testament" (Israel's New Covenant -- 2 Cor. 3:6).

So -- enjoy this great book to the full. Do not read Paul back into the Old Testament Scriptures. Do not expect to find truths that are peculiar to the Age of Grace here, or impose doctrines peculiar to Israel and her program on us today. But, as brother J. C. O'Hare once told me in a personal conversation on this point, "Enjoy your Old Testament -- Paul did, and so do I. Whatever is not contrary to Paul's teaching, take it and run!"

NOTES

1:1. See Num. 13:16 where Moses changed Oshea's name to "Joshua." "Oshea" (Strong's # 1954) means "deliverer." "Joshua" (Strong's # 3091) means "Jehovah saved."

This message from the Lord was not received immediately after the death of Moses, for they mourned his death for thirty days (Deut. 34:8).

1:3. Compare 14:9. God had already given the land, but they must claim it for their own to **enjoy** it. Cp. Eph. 1:4 for a similar truth, concerning spiritual blessings, under grace.

1:8. Here is the recipe for success under the Law. Compare Col. 3:16, 17 under grace.

1:9. Compare 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 1:7, 8; 4:16, 17; etc.

1:14, 15. See 1 Cor. 4:8. They were not to be like the Corinthians, later, who had settled down to enjoy their blessings while others were still carrying on the battle.

1:16, 17. They had not yet learned their lesson. They had replied the same way to Moses in Ex. 19:8 and were not able to keep their promise even long enough to get the written Law in their hands. Their history under Moses had not been very impressive! Their subsequent history under Joshua fell short of the perfection the Law required (James 2:10), in spite of their words here in v. 17. They failed to learn the main lesson the Law was intended to teach (Rom. 3:19, 20; 8:7, 8).

2:1. Joshua did not send the spies to see if the land was "good or bad" or whether it could be taken or not (as Moses evidently did in Num. 13:18 - 20), but to see how they should order the attack. With this in view, they gave the heartening report of v. 24.

2:9 - 11. How baseless the fear of the Israelites had been at Kadesh Barnea (Num. 13:31). Here, more than thirty-eight years later, the Canaanites were still shaking in their boots -- as they had been for nearly forty years! See Ex. 15:14 - 16.

2:14. Rahab married Salmon, an Israelite (Matt. 1:5), and became an ancestor of Boaz and David (Ruth 4:21, 22) and, later, of Christ (Matt. 1:5, 16). See Heb. 11:31.

Notice the men said, "**When** the Lord hath given us the land" -- not "**IF**."

2:18. The scarlet thread surely symbolized the blood and its place in redemption. There is a scarlet thread of redemption, which runs all the way through the word of God!

2:19. The family members could lose this physical salvation if they went out of the house. We do not face the same danger spiritually, however. Just as when the family of Noah went into the ark and God shut them in (Gen. 7:16), so when we are in Christ we do not have the option of leaving our place of safety. It is the Holy Spirit who places us there (1 Cor. 12:13) and our Lord's faithfulness and ministry which keeps us (Phil. 1:6; Heb. 7:25; etc.). (Though the OT believer was secure also, he did not have that truth as clearly revealed to him)

3:4. Two thousand cubits is about one kilometer, or five eighths of a mile. A miracle was to take place at the Jordan picturing the finished work of Christ on the Cross, and no **man** (aside from the necessary priests to carry the Ark) was to even be **near** -- so the miracle would very obviously relate to the Ark **alone**. See Heb. 1:3 -- "By Himself" He purged our sins.

3:13. When we urge a person to make a start in some new task we often say, "You may as well get your feet wet." This expression evidently came from this incident. They could have come up to the Jordan, looked at it, and contemplated the barrier before them all day -- and the Jordan would have continued to flow by. It was when, believing God would undertake for them, they stepped by faith into the water that God removed the problem.

3:17. Evidently those carrying the Ark were the first to enter Jordan and the last to leave it. See 4:10, 11, 16 - 18. The rest of the people had to keep their distance from the Ark until it was in the midst of the Jordan (picturing Christ going down into death). **Then** they must have been able to draw near, for they passed by it as they crossed. So it is Christ's death which makes it possible for us to draw near to a holy God (Heb. 4:16).

4:10. The Ark of the Covenant, with its Mercy Seat, speaks of Christ. Going down into the Jordan represents His death and coming up out of it His resurrection. Everything is "finished" while the Ark is in place in the Jordan. When all is complete it comes out on the other side. So Christ was raised from the dead "**because of** our justification" (Rom. 4:25 -- NASB), on the basis of a finished redemption. See John 19:28, 30.

4:18. The Ark coming out of the Jordan speaks of Christ's resurrection! Notice that Israel was baptized unto Joshua in the Jordan as they had been baptized unto Moses in the sea (1 Cor. 10:1, 2). They were not baptized unto Joshua by going through Jordan **like** he did, years later -- they went through Jordan **with** him, while the Ark was still in the midst of the river. So when we are baptized into Jesus Christ -- into His death -- (Rom. 6:3, 4) we are seen by God as having gone through death **while He was in the tomb**. Paul's testimony is, "**I have been crucified WITH Christ**" (not **like** Him). See Gal. 2:20. While Israel's experience here is not prophetic of our situation today, it is a very apt illustration of it. (**See Appendix number one.**)

We must bear in mind that the death of Christ is the basis for our redemption (as was the Passover for Israel) and for our sanctification (as the Ark going down into the Jordan was the basis for Israel's entrance into Canaan). In the Passover the emphasis is on Christ dying for Israel, while in the crossing of Jordan it is on their **identification with Him** in that death. The first brought redemption; the second was the basis for sanctification. The first delivered them from Pharaoh (picturing Satan) and from Egypt (portraying the world); the second brought deliverance from the wilderness wanderings, which at least suggests the walk in the flesh.

5:1. The Amorites now saw with their own eyes a re-enactment of what they had only heard about forty years before. What remaining courage they had was totally shattered as they realized their defense was already a "lost cause." The victories in the land were virtually won at the crossing of Jordan. So Christ triumphed over principalities and powers in the Cross. Compare Col 2:15.

5:5. Since they had been commanded by the Lord to circumcise their sons (Gen. 17:10, 11, 13, 14; Ex. 12:44, 48; Lev. 12:3), this failure to do so -- over a forty year span -- was direct and important disobedience. The note on Joshua 5:2 in the 1917 edition of the Scofield Bible states, "'The reproach of Egypt' was that, during the later years of the Egyptian bondage, this separating sign had been neglected (cf. Ex. 4:24 - 26), and this neglect had continued during the wilderness wanderings." However Josh. 5:5 tells us plainly "all the people that came out were circumcised." It was only "the people that were born in the wilderness by the way, **after they came out of Egypt'**" who were not circumcised. Ex. 4:24 - 26 has to do with only the son of Moses.

5:9. Their circumcision was identified with the crossing of Jordan. It was immediately after coming up out of the Jordan that they were circumcised. The very place where the memorial of the crossing stood (4:20) was **named** for the circumcising (5:9 -- "Gilgal" means "rolling"). Compare Col. 2:11, 12 where the circumcision "without hands" is linked to, and **based upon**, our baptism through "the operation of **God** who raised Him [Christ] from the dead." See Appendix # 1.

5:10, 11. Since they had left Egypt on the first Passover, they were in the wilderness **exactly** forty years -- to the day! While God did not shorten the time of chastening, He did not allow it to continue even a day longer than He had stipulated.

5:11, 12. "**Old** corn of the land" -- that is, it had been grown and, probably, harvested by the Canaanites -- but was eaten by the Israelites. The "corn" stands as a figure for all the foods and fruits the land had to offer. They could have been eating the fruit of the land (which they had tasted at Kadesh Barnea) for the past 38 years if they had not turned back from entering the land.

Later (in the land) when they departed from the Lord, **their enemies** ate the corn that **Israel** had harvested. Isaiah promised that in the Kingdom, when "thy people shall be **all** righteous" and they "inherit the land forever" (Isa. 60:21), this will never happen to them again (Isa. 62:8, 9; 65:21 - 23).

5:13. Compare Ex. 4:24 where the Lord had a sword in His hand (evidently -- for He

"sought to kill him." Compare Num. 22:23; 1 Chron. 21:16) intended for Moses (or the son of Moses?). The death was avoided through the circumcising of Moses' son. Here, right after the circumcising of Israel the sword is against their **enemies**. Notice that the answer to the question of Joshua is neither, "For you," nor "for your enemies" but, in effect, "for the **Lord**." The sword of the Lord may be used either way depending on one's relationship to Him.

6:1. This verse is parenthetical. The chapter break is unfortunate, for the action goes directly from 5:15 to 6:2.

6:2. Notice Joshua's increasing consciousness of just who has confronted him. He is seen as a "man" in 5:13, and "Lord" (Jehovah) in 6:2. This is evidently one of the Old Testament Christophanies.

6:10 - 16. What a shattering experience this must have been for the people in Jericho! They were frightened to begin with. Now, for a whole week, the silent host daily marches around the city to the wail of trumpets, and then leaves without any indication of what they plan to do. By the seventh day, and the seventh time around the city that day, their nerves must have been ready to snap. Then the sudden shout, the earthquake, walls collapsing -- they would be a bunch of "basket cases" psychologically before they ever saw a sword raised!

6:17. Here is grace in a time of judgment -- based on the obedience of faith (Heb. 11:31).

6:23, 25. God honored the faith of Rahab and spared her and her family as the spies had promised. Notice the prominence given to Rahab in this chapter (vs. 17, 23, 25).

7:3. They are not acting by faith but by presumption. They do not ask the Lord what to do or how many men to send. They are self confident on the basis of experience, but fail to realize that their past victory was due entirely to God's intervention in their behalf, when they were acting in obedience to His command -- by faith. Compare 8:1, 11.

7:3 - 9. Following a great victory there often is a time of defeat. Notice: Acting in the flesh (v. 3); Defeat in battle (vs. 4, 5); Lack of courage (v. 5); Despair (v. 6); and Unbelief (vs. 7, 8).

7:7. At least Joshua didn't say, "Would to God we had stayed in **Egypt**"! Still, this sounds like the latest revision of the "Back to Egypt" dirge -- and it is Joshua who is singing it! Thus the rebuke of v. 10.

7:10, 11. Prayer is no substitute for action when sin needs to be dealt with. Compare "what doest thou here, Elijah?" in 1 Kings 19:9.

7:21. "Thou shalt not covet" -- he had not only broken the command concerning spoils given in 6:18, 19, he had broken one of the Ten Commandments. If Achan had just waited, he could have helped subdue Ai, and **could have had the spoil** (see 8:2). Lot coveted the well watered plain, and lost it. Abraham, who was willing to trust God and await His time, will (in

resurrection) have the whole land.

7:24. Before weeping too copiously for Achan and his family (and judging God), remember that 36 innocent men had given their lives because of Achan's sin. He may have been thinking to "provide for his family" with the riches he took, but instead he brought the wrath of God on himself and on his family as well. Remember that when the earth opened up for Korah, Dathan and Abiram, their families evidently shared their fate (Num. 16:27 - 33). Notice how the sin of Judas brought disaster on his family. Judas is in view in Psa. 109 where it says, "When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office [see Acts 1:20]. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds; and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places" (Psa. 109:5 - 10). Though the iniquity of the fathers may be visited upon the children for many generations, as to **consequences**, each will answer to God for himself alone, as to **punishment**. Parents have a great responsibility!

"Achor" means "trouble" -- see Isa. 65:10; Hosea 2:15.

8:2. See note at 7:21. Many of our sins consist of taking for ourselves, and in our own time and way, what God intends for us to have in His time and way -- if we will but wait on Him.

8:12. These 5,000 are in addition to the 30,000 he had sent out the night before (v. 3). The 5,000 were to station themselves behind the city (v. 4) while the others were to be on the west side of it.

8:17. It is the people of Ai who are over confident now.

8:29. Compare 10:26, 27. See Deut. 21:22, 23; John 19:31; and Gal. 3:13.

8:31. See Ex. 20:25.

9:1, 2. Like the Israelites, when there is a victory in our lives or ministry we can expect an all-out attack to challenge it.

9:3 - 6 & following. If Satan senses that a straightforward attack will not avail, he resorts to deceit. If he cannot defeat us, he will try to join us.

9:7. The men of Israel should have inquired of the Lord. They weighed the "evidence" (9:4, 5, 12 - 14-a) and trusted their own conclusions. They listened to the testimony of men rather than the word of God. They were walking by **sight**, not by **faith** -- and they were deceived. see vs. 14, 15. They paid dearly for this mistake. Compare 2 Sam. 21:1 - 9.

9:9. The prophecy in Ex. 15:14, 15 is here literally fulfilled. Even when the Israelites were trembling with fear at Kadesh Barnea, the inhabitants of the land were trembling for fear of **them**. Even many years later the people of Canaan still remembered what God did at the Exodus and feared Israel's God (1 Sam. 4:8).

9:19 - 21. See 2 Sam. 21:1 - 9.

9:24. The deception practiced by the Gibeonites is not commended in the word of God, but when they **believed** what they heard, and **acted** on it, it brought about their salvation from certain death. They were far wiser than those today who hear of the coming judgment and, unlike the Gibeonites, also are offered salvation from it -- yet do not believe nor act upon what they hear! See Matt. 5:25.

10:2. Yet in spite of the greatness and might of their city, the Gibeonites did not trust in that, but put their trust in the integrity of Israel to keep a covenant. Even though the covenant was entered into through misrepresentation, they must have believed that the worshippers of such a righteous God would abide by the principle of Psa. 15:1, 4, "O Lord, who may abide in Thy tent? Who may dwell on Thy holy hill? ... He [that] swears to his own hurt, and does not change" (NASB).

10:4. The other kings looked upon the Gibeonites as traitors. They may have envied them their security. So will "friends" sometimes turn against the one who finds peace with God. But our heavenly Joshua will come to our rescue.

10:11. This had to be a miraculous hail storm. Not only were the hailstones large, but they slew only the enemies of Israel, though Israel was out in the open also, engaging the enemy troops in battle (v. 10).

10:12. Joshua **publicly** made this (humanly speaking) "ridiculous" request **before** it happened. He was not just taking advantage of a **natural** phenomenon that **by chance** occurred at the right time. He trusted God not to let him down and make him look the fool.

10:12 - 14. This monumental miracle required that the earth stop rotating on its axis and then begin rotating again! How great is our God! For a similar, but less dramatic, miracle see 2 Kings 20:11 and context.

One legend of the American Indians (which I read in one of our readers when I was in Grammar School) explains the short tail and split lip of the rabbit. For some romantic reason, as the story goes, a snare was made from the long hair of an Indian maiden and used to catch the sun. The sun, caught in the snare, did not rise as usual, but remained on the horizon. The rabbit volunteered to set the sun free. He cut his lip on the hair as he gnawed it in two. The net gave way and the rabbit turned to flee from the sun's heat, but his tail was burned to a stub before the sun rose into the sky. This legend seems to be the Indian's explanation for the long day of Joshua -- as seen in America.

10:23 - 26. After slaying the kings and defeating the armies they had in the field, Joshua went against their cities and the men who had become their new kings. Lachish -- vs. 31, 32; Eglon -- vs. 34, 35; Hebron -- vs. 36, 37.

11:4. This expression, a form of that used in Gen. 13:16, is not to be taken literally. It is a figure of speech used often of very large, but measurable, numbers. See Judges 7:12; 1 Sam. 13:5; 2 Sam. 17:11; 1 Kings 4:20, 29; Psa. 78:27; 139:17, 18; Isa. 10:22; 48:19; Jer. 33:22; Hosea 1:10; Hab. 1:9; Heb. 11:12; Rev. 20:8.

11:6. This does not mean that all their armies were to be slain on one day (see v. 18), but that when Joshua faced them on the morrow he faced a host of doomed men -- men who, in the mind and purposes of God, were already as good as dead.

11:20. The cup of iniquity of these nations was now full (compare Gen. 15:16) and only judgment would suffice. Theirs was not a sore to be bandaged, but a cancer to be fully rooted out and destroyed for the sake of the whole human race. The "operation" was committed to Israel. See 24:8 where God takes the ultimate responsibility for destroying the Amorites.

11:22. As a result of failure to completely destroy the inhabitants of Gath, one of the Anakim (who descended from the survivors) later challenged the whole nation of Israel -- and sought to kill David, the God anointed king, who pictures Christ. 1 Sam.17:4.

11:23. The "rest" of Heb. 4:8 was not rest from war -- for Joshua gave them that kind of rest.

12:10. Joshua defeated the king of Jerusalem and his forces -- but Judah was not able to drive his people from their stronghold in the city itself until the days of David. See note at 15:63.

13:1. This is true of me also. I am now 80 (in 1998) and sorry I did not give myself more completely to the Lord during the years of my physical strength! Psa. 71:18 is my prayer; Phil. 1:6 my assurance; Phil. 2:13 God's method!

13:14. Comparing this with v. 33 -- the offerings by fire to the Lord are equated to the **LORD Himself**. This is interesting in view of the fact that the offerings are typical of **Christ**. See 18:7.

13:22. See Num. 31:8. Balaam "loved the wages of unrighteousness," to be paid by Balak (2 Peter 2:15) -- but eventually reaped "the wages of sin ... death," to be paid by God (Rom. 6:23). Compare Jude 11; Rev. 2:14.

14:4. One reason the Levites were not included as one of the tribes in partitioning the land is that (with two tribes for Joseph) there would then be thirteen tribes. The particular tribes listed vary in different contexts, but there are always twelve of them, and only twelve. This is important in considering Acts chapters one and two. At such a vital time there had to be representatives for each of the twelve tribes (compare Judges 21:3) -- therefore their choice of Matthias was legitimate and binding. See Class Notes on Acts chapter one.

14:9. See note at 1:3.

14:10. This verse dates this chapter -- it is seven years after they entered the land. Compare v. 7. (From the Exodus to Kadesh Barnea = 2 years; from Kadesh Barnea to Josh. 5:11 = 38 years; from Josh. 5:11 to Josh. 14:10 = 7 years)

14:12. The Israelites had heard about the Anakim from the ten spies. At that time

Caleb had said, "We shall surely overcome" (Num. 13:30). Now, at age eighty-five, we see he had not been "just talking." See 15:14.

15:16, 17. It was illegal for first cousins to marry. Considering this, and the age of Caleb, it was probably his **granddaughter** who was given to his **grandnephew**.

15:63. Notice the words "unto this day." This indicates that the books of Joshua and Judges (Judges 1:21) were written before David drove the Jebusites out in 2 Sam. 5:6. See note at 12:10.

17:13. See Judges 1:28.

18:6. The method of dividing the land is similar to the one my mother used in dividing the left-over batter in the cake pan between my sister and me. One of us drew the dividing line and the other one picked out which "half" he wanted. You can be sure that line was exactly in the middle!

18:7. See note at 13:14.

18:28. Jerusalem is in the region occupied by the tribe of Benjamin. This is one reason the tribe of Benjamin stayed with Judah when the kingdom was divided.

19:1 - 9. The tribe of Simeon was not given an area of their own, but was only given cities within Judah's boundaries (v. 9). From Gen. 42:24 it appears that Simeon had been the leader in the plot against Joseph, and from Gen. 34:25 and 49:7 he was involved, with Levi, in the disgraceful slaughter of Hamor's people. For these sins his tribe was divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel (Gen. 49:7). It seems strange that Simeon, being within the heritage of Judah, went with the northern kingdom when the division came.

19:15. There were two Bethlehems. This one was in Zebulun -- not in Judah. The expression in Ruth and Judges, "Bethlehem-Judah," was necessary to make this distinction.

20:1 - 6. See Num. 35:9 - 28. The protection was **not** for the **willful murderer**, but for those who killed another "unintentionally, without premeditation" (v. 3 - NASB).

20:6. Evidently after the High Priest died the slayer no longer could enjoy the safety of the City of Refuge. However he should not be slain even in his own city. This constituted a sort of "statute of limitations." It is interesting, however, that the special protection ceased when the High Priest died. With us, our "City of Refuge" (Christ Himself) never ceases to protect us, for our High Priest will never die! Heb. 7:25.

20:7, 8. All of the Cities of Refuge were Levitical cities. See 21:13, 21, 27, 32, 36, 38.

21:13. It is interesting that David began his reign in a City of Refuge -- Hebron.

21:27. Is "Golan" the area known today as "Golan Heights"? I think so.

21:45. What a testimony this is of God's faithfulness to His word! See 23:14, 15. There we see that God is faithful whether to bless or to chasten. Compare 1 Sam. 10:9 and context.

22:21 - 29, 30. Their motive had been misunderstood, but a soft answer turned away the wrath of their brethren (Prov. 15:1).

23:10. Samson slew a thousand men in Judges 15:15.

24:10. Balaam had not been concerned to know God's will and do it. He had tried to bend God to his own will and use God for his own purposes. Are we not guilty of this from time to time also? Balaam was guilty of talking when he should have been listening. Num. 23:8.

24:12. According to Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's commentary the "hornet" was "A particular species of wasp which swarms in warm countries, and sometimes assumes the character of a plague, or, as many think, a figurative expression for uncontrolled terror."

The New Bible commentary says, "Swarms of stinging insects would materially assist the Israelite soldiers in their attacks on the enemy, or the phrase may be metaphorical for some invading power such as bands of Egyptians, whose badge was a species of hornet." See Ex. 23:27, 28.

24:15. Their ancestors -- before Abraham, and on the other side of the "flood" (the Euphrates River) -- "served other gods" (v. 2). Joshua was asking, "Are you going to go back to the gods of your ancestors before Abraham, or worship the gods of the Amorites who are under the wrath of God for their idolatry? As for me, I reject them both and will worship the true God, the God of Abraham." It seems that, even today, the ancient or the new often attracts more attention than the true!

24:19. Joshua is not saying there is no forgiveness under the Law. He is telling them that a holy God cannot overlook or ignore sin. Praise the Lord, God has not ignored our sin -- He has dealt with it fully at the Cross! Joshua is challenging them to serve the **LORD**. But he points out that if they decide to do so, knowing God is holy and a jealous God (v. 19), they will experience His wrath if they turn back (v. 20). They take the challenge (vs. 24, 25), which is written down, and a reminder set up (vs. 26, 27). They did serve Him to the best of their ability in that generation (v. 31). See Judges 2:10 - 13 for what happened in the following generation.

24:29. Joshua died 32 years after Israel entered Canaan. Joshua was 40 at Kadesh Barnea, thus he was 78 when he led Israel across Jordan. See note at 14:10.

24:29 - 33. Thus ends the saga of the Egyptian experience. Joseph was used to lead them into Egypt -- now he is back in the land. The first generation of leaders (Moses and Aaron), who brought them out of Egypt, has died. The second generation of leaders (Joshua and Eleazar), who brought them into the land, has also passed from the scene. Now follows the great, and often tragic, history of what the nation did in this land that was given to them so

graciously and gloriously.

It took only a short time to get Israel out of Egypt, but forty or more years to get Egypt out of Israel -- as a matter of fact this was never totally accomplished.

Sadly, though (positionally, in God's sight) we are delivered from bondage to sin the moment we are saved (Rom. 7:6), we too often spend wasted years serving sin voluntarily (under the guise, sometimes, of doing good works -- Rom. 6:12 - 14; Heb. 9:14). We spend far too much time in Romans 7:14 - 24 before we taste to the full the pure air of freedom in Christ set forth in Romans eight.

The years of wandering in the desert were marked by numerous miracles -- including miraculous guidance by the cloud and pillar of fire, daily manna, and water from the rock, all of which ceased when they entered the land. But those years were also marked by some very frightening, severe, and miraculous judgments. God's best place for them was not in the desert, though there He graciously worked many miracles. His best for them was in the land where they exchanged the manna for the "old corn of the land," and the miracles for His loving providential care (with occasional miracles when He saw fit to grant them). Much of the cry today for the outwardly miraculous is but a desire to be back in the wilderness. Our cry should **not** be, "**Back** to Pentecost and early Acts," but "**On** through Romans to Ephesians."

--- William P Heath

< My Documents\Class Notes\Old Testament\Joshua-1 > on Microsoft Word

(< Amipro\docs\clasnot\oltestmt\joshuaa.sam >)