

Winning the Battles of Life

An Overview of the Book of Joshua



“43 So the Lord gave to Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they took possession of it and settled there.

44 And the Lord gave them rest on every side, just as he had solemnly promised their ancestors. None of their enemies could stand against them, for the Lord helped them conquer all their enemies. 45 Not a single one of all the good promises the Lord had given to the family of Israel was left unfulfilled; everything he had spoken came true.” Joshua 21:43-45 NLT

- Does life feel like a battle? Do you often face temptation, conflict, struggles, fighting? Do you ever feel “beat up” by life?

The book of Joshua teaches us that God fights for His people. They win the battles of life because of His power.

- ▶ In the book of **Numbers**, Israel rebelled against God, refused to take possession of the Promised Land. They wandered in the wilderness for 40 years until the older generation died off.
- ▶ In the book of **Deuteronomy**, God brings the new generation out of the wilderness and prepares them for the conquest of the land.
- ▶ The book of **JOSHUA** continues the story. The new generation takes possession of the land. However, it would not be easy. It would be a struggle. They would face battles. Yet, God would be working in them and through them to bring about victory.

Life has its battles for us today. Yet, we can win these battles because of God’s power in our life situations. The book of Joshua shows us **what we need to do** to win the battles of life. The book of Joshua has a message that is vital for people living in the 21st century.

Central Lesson

We can win the battles of life by TRUSTING in God’s power and living in OBEDIENCE to His Word.

Key Scripture: Joshua 21:43-45 or 11:23 (a fulfillment of 1:5-9). Other important verses: 1:7-8 (The promise of success); 24:14-15 (choose whom you will serve—God or other things).

Key Chapters: Joshua 1 and 23-24.

Title: The name Joshua comes from the central figure of the book—Joshua. He was born in Egyptian slavery, trained under Moses, was one of two spies (along with Caleb) that believed God and wanted to take the land. Eventually, he was chosen by God to succeed Moses in leading Israel into Canaan.

Author: **JOSHUA** (Joshua 1:1 and 24:26).

Joshua used the first person plural “us” (5:6) as if he was writing what he was witnessing rather than someone writing about Joshua. The events were written soon after their occurrence. For example: Joshua 6:25 states that Rahab was spared by Joshua during the conquest of Jericho because she hid the Israelite spies and “*she lives among the Israelites to this day*” (NLT). Joshua commanded that a

description of the land be written “*on a scroll*” (18:8-9 NIV). The book of Joshua is that scroll because it details the division of the land.

Who wrote Chapter 24:28-33? These verses record Joshua’s **DEATH**. They had to be written by someone else and added to the book. Just as Joshua probably added the last chapter of Deuteronomy recording Moses’ death, the last verses of Joshua were added by someone to give official record of Joshua’s death. Most conservative scholars believe that Phinehas (fin’ e has) the grandson of Aaron and the son of Eleazar the high priest (24:33) added the details about Joshua dying.

Key Word: **POSSESSION** (NLT)—Joshua 1:11, 15; 12:6; 18:3; 19:47; 21:12, 43; 23:5; 24:8

Outline: Bible teacher Warren Wiersbe outlines Joshua in three parts:

- I. **CROSSING the River (Chapters 1-5)**
- II. **CONQUERING the Enemy (Chapters 6-12)**
- III. **CLAIMING the Inheritance (Chapters 13-24)**

Theme: Success in winning the battles of life by trusting in God’s **POWER & FAITHFULNESS** to His promises (1:3-8; 23:6-13).

Out of the eleven books that record Israel’s history, the book of Joshua is the only book that does not record a massive failure by the nation of Israel or its leadership. Achan’s sin in chapter 7 was limited to Achan and his family and was quickly punished. God had promised Israel that He would give them success in their conquest of Canaan. God was faithful to His promise. Israel drove out the heathen nations and occupied the land (which is some of the land that they occupy today).

Major Lessons: Some lessons from the book of Joshua about being successful, prosperous, & winning the battles of life?

- Be **strong** and **COURAGEOUS** (1:6-7, 9, 18; 10:25; 14:11; 23:6).
- **Obey** God and His Word (1:7-8; 22:5; 23:6; 24:24).
- **MEDITATE** on God’s word day and night (1:8). [Meditate means to read, study, ponder, and apply God’s word to your life].
- **Guard** against being **fearful** and **DISCOURAGED** (1:9; 8:1; 10:25).
- **Submit** to Godly leadership & authority (1:16-18).
- **Trust** God to deal with difficult & impossible circumstances (3:13-17; 10:9-15; 13:6; 23:5).
- **CELEBRATE** and **remember** God’s faithfulness (4:1-7).
- **Deal with sin**—especially secret hidden sin. It will rob you of God’s blessing (3:5; 7:1, 11-13, 19-26). [Hidden sin does not harm the offender only, but his family & others around him. cf. 7:4-5].
- **LOVE** God (22:5; 23:11).
- **Guard** against **temptation** and the influences of the world (23:7, 12-13).
- **Fear** the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness (24:14-27, 31).

Central Lesson:

We can win the battles of life by trusting in God’s power and living in obedience to His Word.

- ▶ Accept Christ as your Savior. ▶ As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ▶ Invite someone to next Sunday’s study. ▶ Attend a small group. ▶ Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ▶ Pray for friends that need Jesus.