

# JOSHUA

## "Faith Filled Leader and Positive Role Model"

### Summary and Background

Joshua was the son of Nun, and was originally known as Osega, but was renamed Joshua (meaning "God saves") by his mentor Moses.

Joshua's remarkable life was filled with excitement, variety, success and honor. He was known for his deep trust in God and as "a man in whom is the spirit" (Numbers 27:18). As a youth he lived through the bitter realities of slavery in Egypt, but he also witnessed the supernatural plagues and the miracle of Israel's escape from the army of the Egyptians when the waters of the sea opened before them. In the Sinai peninsula it was Joshua who led the troops of Israel to victory over the Amalekites (Ex 17:8–13). He alone was allowed to accompany Moses up the holy mountain where the tablets of the law were received (Ex 24:13–14). And it was he who stood watch at the temporary tent of meeting Moses set up before the tabernacle was erected (Ex 33:11).

Joshua was elected to represent his own tribe of Ephraim when the 12 spies were sent into Canaan to look over the land. Only Joshua and Caleb, representing the tribe of Judah, were ready to follow God's will and take immediate possession of the land (Numbers 13:26-14:9, 26-34). The rest of the Israelites of that generation were condemned to die in the desert. Even Moses died short of the goal and was told to turn everything over to Joshua. God promised to guide and strengthen Joshua, just as he had Moses (Duet 31:23; Joshua 1:5).

Joshua was God's chosen servant (Numbers 27:12-23; Duet 1:34-39, 31:1-8, 23, 34:9) to bring Moses' work to completion and establish Israel in the promised land. In the process Joshua led Israel across the flooded Jordan on dry ground (Joshua 3:14-17); prayed and had the sun stand still (stopped) for about a full day (Joshua 10:12-14); and had many significant military victories (throughout book of Joshua).

Joshua was faithful to the special divine appointment of leading Israel to take possession of the promised land—as the leader of God's army, as the administrator of God's division of the land, and as God's spokesman for promoting Israel's covenant faithfulness. In all this he was a striking Old Testament (foreshadowing) of Christ (refer to Heb 4:1,6–8).

*(Above was adapted from and expanded upon based on International Bible Society commentary)*

## **Life Lessons for Us Today**

Joshua had many amazing experiences in his 110 year lifetime. From his life experiences we can draw out some key lessons that we can apply today:

- 1) We should not fear men, but have faith and trust in God (Numbers 13:26 - 14:9).
- 2) The key to being prosperous and successful is to learn and obey (apply) God's Word (Joshua 1:1-9).
- 3) We need "stones" (markers) to help us and those that come behind us (e.g. our children) to remember what God has done for us in the past (Joshua 4:1-9).
- 4) God will honor our faith upon a day (Joshua 4:14).
- 5) We need to decide who we are serving. For Joshua, he made it clear by declaring publicly "But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).
- 6) The mark of a great leader is that people are still positively influenced after the leader is gone (Judges 2:6-7).
- 7) It is wise to be mentoring the next generation (e.g. Moses mentoring Joshua).
- 8) The best leaders are also good followers (e.g. Joshua following Moses' leadership)