**JOSHUA’S FINAL CHARGE**

*Wandering in the Wilderness*

SS Lesson 31

8/10/2025

Joshua 24

**Lesson Review:** We’ve come to our final lesson in our Wilderness series, and we will be looking at the final charge of Joshua. Before we get into the lesson, let’s review what we covered last week when we looked at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ altar. First, the altar teaches us that even \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can be misunderstood. We noted that people often jump to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ before asking questions and trying to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ situations. We also noted that there are often times where situations are not exactly as they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to be. Second, the altar teaches us the importance of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in conflict. We noted that wise believers seek \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rather than thriving on accusations or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We also noted that conflict may be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ through clear communication. Third, the altar teaches us that unity must be actively \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and preserved. We noted that the children of Reuben and Gad were concerned that the Jordan River would cause a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ between their children and the rest of the children of Israel. We also noted that shared \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is the object that should bind the children of God. Lastly, the altar teaches us that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is essential in healthy relationships. We noted that humble and wise believers are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when a misunderstanding is cleared and resolved without unnecessary conflict.

1. **JOSHUA CHARGED THE PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE GOD’S HAND IN THEIR VICTORIES.**
2. **Notice that Joshua reminded them their victories were not by their own strength.** *Joshua 24:12–13 “And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat.”* Joshua pointed out that the land, cities, and harvests they enjoyed were gifts from God, not the result of their own power. It was God who fought for them and gave them the victory. The Lord made the nation of Israel from nothing because of the faith of Abraham. Remembering this would keep them from the pride that leads to disobedience. As Christians, we must remember that every blessing we have is from the Lord and that He deserves the glory for it. Forgetting this truth leads to self-reliance and eventual spiritual decline. For Israel, this reminder meant that their security in the land depended on God’s continued blessing, not their own military or economic strength. They would have to remain humble before Him if they wanted to keep what He had given.
3. **Notice that Joshua reminded them of God’s fighting for them through their history.** *Joshua 24:3 “And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.”* By recounting God’s dealings with Abraham and the patriarchs, Joshua reminded Israel that their story was one of God’s promises kept. Every step from Abraham to their present victory was evidence of God’s faithfulness. This same truth should give us confidence today that the God who has cared for us in the past will not fail us in the present or future. For Israel, remembering this meant they should walk forward in obedience, knowing they owed their very position in the land to God’s covenant mercy. It also meant they could trust God to protect them from future enemies if they continued in faithfulness. History was proof that their success came when they followed the Lord’s lead.
4. **JOSHUA CHARGED THE PEOPLE TO SERVE THE LORD IN SINCERITY AND TRUTH.**
5. **Notice that serving the Lord in sincerity means giving Him your whole heart.** *Colossians 3:23 “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;”* Sincerity in service means that our work for God is not for show or to gain the approval of others, but because we genuinely love Him. Joshua was calling Israel to serve the Lord with an undivided heart, without hypocrisy or double motives. This kind of service springs from a real relationship with God and a deep gratitude for all He has done. It is possible to go through the motions of worship and obedience while our hearts are far from Him, but that is not sincerity. For Israel, serving in sincerity meant faithfully living out the covenant in their homes, fields, and towns; not just when under the watchful eye of a leader like Joshua. It also meant keeping their focus on God during times of peace, when it would have been easy to forget the struggles and victories of the past.
6. **Notice that serving the Lord in truth means living in line with His Word.** *John 4:24 “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”* Truth in service means that our worship, obedience, and daily living are consistent with God’s revealed Word. It is not enough to have zeal if our actions are not guided by the truth of Scripture. Serving in truth keeps us from inventing our own ways to honor God and instead leads us to follow what He has clearly said. For Israel, this meant holding fast to the commands given through Moses and resisting the temptation to adapt their worship to match the practices of the surrounding nations. It also meant passing down the law accurately to future generations, so they would know exactly what God required. Without truth, sincerity quickly drifts into misguided worship.
7. **JOSHUA CHARGED THE PEOPLE TO CHOOSE TO SERVE THE LORD ONLY.**
8. **Notice that Joshua required them to make a decisive choice.** *Joshua 24:15 “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”* Joshua confronted the people with the need to decide where their loyalty would be. They could not remain neutral because a refusal to choose is itself a choice against God. Joshua declared his own firm decision, setting an example of personal leadership. For Israel, this was the moment to commit themselves wholly to the Lord and reject every competing allegiance. Their decision would determine whether they enjoyed God’s continued blessing or fell under His judgment. This was not a choice that could be postponed without consequence; it had to be made that very day.
9. **Notice that Joshua let it be known that he and his family had already made their choice.** *Joshua 24:15b“…but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”* Joshua was not waiting to see what the people would decide; his commitment to the Lord was already settled. He boldly declared that, regardless of the decision of the nation, his household would remain faithful to God. This personal example placed the responsibility back on the people to make their own decision, but it also showed them what steadfast leadership looked like. For Israel, this meant they were being led by a man whose loyalty to God did not depend on public opinion or majority vote. It reminded them that serving the Lord begins at home and that strong leadership often starts with a single family choosing faithfulness. Joshua’s words challenged them to move beyond vague intentions and make a concrete decision just as he had.
10. **JOSHUA CHARGED THE PEOPLE TO SERVE THE LORD WITH SERIOUSNESS.**
11. **Notice that Joshua warned them about the seriousness of serving a holy God.** *Joshua 24:19 – “And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.”* Joshua was not discouraging them from serving the Lord but warning them that such service must be wholehearted. God’s holiness and jealousy mean He will not share His glory with another. Making a shallow commitment would be both dangerous and dishonoring to Him. For Israel, this meant understanding that breaking the covenant would bring severe consequences from the very God who had given them the land. Their service to God could not be casual or careless. It had to match His holiness. They needed to be as serious in their worship as God was in His covenant promises.
12. **Notice that Joshua required their commitment to be witnessed and recorded.** *Joshua 24:25 “So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.”* Joshua made their decision public and permanent by writing it down and setting up a witness. This ensured they would not easily forget their promise. Public declarations of faith help keep us accountable to both God and others. For Israel, the recorded covenant and the physical witness in Shechem would serve as a constant reminder that they had pledged to serve the Lord with all seriousness. That stone would silently testify against them if they turned away from the Lord. It would also stand as a warning to future generations about the weight of the covenant made that day. The Lord desires the same commitment from His children today. We must be soberminded.