

## **Dr. David Howard, Joshua - Ruth, Session 21, Joshua 23-24 – Joshua's Two Farewells Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 21, Joshua 23-24 – Joshua's Two Farewells, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

This lecture excerpt from Dr. David Howard's series on Joshua and Ruth focuses on Joshua 23-24, analyzing Joshua's two farewell addresses to the Israelites. **The first speech**, more informal and pastoral, warns against assimilation with neighboring nations and urges continued faithfulness to God. **The second speech**, a structured covenant renewal ceremony, reviews Israel's history and challenges them to choose between serving God or other deities. **The lecture notes inconsistencies** between Israel's public profession of faith and evidence suggesting continued pagan worship. Finally, the lecture concludes with the deaths of Joshua, the reburial of Joseph's bones, and the death of Eleazar, highlighting the transition to the era of the Judges.

**2. 24 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 21 – Double click icon to  
play in Windows media player or go to the  
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link  
there (Old Testament → Historical Books → Joshua-Ruth).**



**Howard\_Josh\_Ruth  
\_Session21.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 21, Joshua 23-24 – Joshua's Two Farewells

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Howard\_Josh\_Ruth\_EN\_Session21\_Josh23\_24.pdf":

#### **Briefing Document: Joshua's Two Farewell Speeches (Joshua 23-24)**

**Source:** Dr. David Howard's teaching on Joshua 23-24, Session 21 of a study on Joshua through Ruth.

**Overview:** This document analyzes Dr. Howard's lecture on the final two chapters of Joshua, focusing on the two farewell speeches Joshua delivers. These speeches serve as a summation of the book's major themes, warnings, and the covenantal relationship between God and Israel. Dr. Howard identifies key differences between the two farewells and offers insights on their meaning within the broader narrative of the Old Testament.

#### **Key Themes & Ideas:**

##### **1. Two Separate Farewell Speeches:**

- Dr. Howard argues that Joshua's speeches in chapters 23 and 24 represent two distinct events, not two versions of one speech.
- **Joshua 23:** More informal, pastoral, and personal, resembling farewells of Jacob (Genesis 49), Moses (Deuteronomy 32-33), and David (2 Samuel 23).
- Addressed primarily to the leaders of the people (elders, heads, judges, officers).
- Delivered at Shiloh, where the Israelites were gathered.
- **Joshua 24:** Highly structured, centered around a covenant renewal ceremony.
- Addressed to the entire nation of Israel.
- Delivered at Shechem.
- Dr. Howard notes that some scholars have suggested this chapter has a covenant treaty form, but Howard disagrees, saying it's a narrative that incorporates a covenant.

## 1. Joshua 23: Exhortations and Warnings:

- **Summary:** Joshua sums up major themes, urging steadfast love for the Lord, obedience to the law, and separation from pagan practices. He promises God's continued support in the unfinished task of driving out enemies.
- **Exhortation:** "...be steadfast in loving the Lord, obeying the law, and keeping themselves uncontaminated by the religious practices of their neighbors."
- **Emphasis on God's Promises:** Joshua recalls God being Israel's warrior and fighting for them, restating "one man of you puts to flight a thousand" because the Lord is fighting for them.
- **Sober Warnings:** Failure to drive out nations would result in the remaining inhabitants being "thorns in the flesh," potentially leading to losing the land. "There are going to be whips in your sides and thorns in your flesh, a snare and a trap..."
- **Land Ownership:** God's ownership of the land is emphasized, not Israel's or any other group.
- **Connection to Deuteronomy:** Joshua echoes the words of Moses from Deuteronomy, particularly chapters 1-11, which was "very pastoral" with Moses speaking as "a beloved pastor of the last 40 years".
- **Love and Service to God:** Echoing Deuteronomy 10:12-14, Joshua urges the people to "love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, keep his commandments, to cling to him, to serve him with all your heart." Dr. Howard also emphasized that the law was for their good.
- **Clinging to God:** Dr. Howard uses a story about a monkey stealing his pen to illustrate the meaning of "clinging" to God - *dabaq* - which is also used to describe the marital union.
- **Unfinished Task:** The continued presence of Canaanites shows that the conquest was not fully complete, a "ticking time bomb," setting the stage for the Book of Judges.

## 1. Joshua 24: Covenant Renewal and Challenge:

- **Review of God's Actions:** The speech begins with a review of God's history with Israel, from Abraham to the conquest of Canaan, highlighting His faithfulness. This includes God's work from calling Abraham out of Mesopotamia, bringing Israel

out of Egypt and the Red Sea, leading them through the wilderness and defeating the Amorites, sending the hornet before them to drive out the kings of the Amorites, and finally giving them a land and cities they had not built or planted. This is a reiteration of the promises from Deuteronomy 6:10-11.

- **Covenant Affirmations:** The central section of the speech presents a choice for the people: to serve the Lord or the gods of their ancestors and the land they inhabited.
- **Shocking Revelation:** Joshua confronts the reality that the Israelites had served other gods from Mesopotamia and Egypt, calling on them to put those gods away - an implicit acknowledgment of their current behavior and a key point in this book's theme of faithfulness.
- **Personal Commitment:** Joshua declares, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (24:15).
- **Wake Up Call:** Despite their affirmation to follow the Lord, Joshua warns that they may not be able to because God is jealous and holy and will not forgive transgressions (24:19). This is interpreted not as an absolute statement of their inability to follow the Lord, but more as a warning to be careful and get rid of their idols. Dr. Howard stated that one commentator has called this the most shocking statement in the Old Testament.
- **Covenant Ceremony:** A covenant is made at Shechem, with statutes and rules put in place. This is written down in the book of the law of God.
- **Witness Stone:** Joshua sets up a large stone as a witness against them, highlighting their commitment and warning against unfaithfulness. This recalls the ideas from Deuteronomy 17 regarding the king's devotion to God's word.

#### 1. The End of the Book: Death Notices and Final Thoughts:

- **Joshua's Death:** Joshua, called "the servant of the Lord" for the first time, dies at 110 years old.
- **Greek Addition:** The Greek translation adds details about Joshua's flint knives (used for circumcision), which he takes to his hometown and is buried with. These recall the story of Moses and Zipporah and the importance of circumcision.

- **People's Service Under Joshua:** It states that the people served the Lord under Joshua and the elders, but there is an unstated implication that their faithfulness did not last long beyond that time as no successor was named. This lack of a named successor is a flaw in Joshua's leadership and a contributing factor to the problems seen in the Book of Judges.
- **Joseph's Bones:** The burial of Joseph's bones at Shechem fulfills an oath made generations earlier, highlighting promise-keeping and obedience.
- **Death of Eleazar:** The death of Eleazar, son of Aaron, marks the end of another generation, being buried in his ancestral territory.

### 1. Overall Summary

- The book of Joshua ends with God's faithfulness, a godly leader, and the fulfillment of many promises, but there are ominous signs of problems to come.
- The themes of faithfulness, land ownership, obedience, and God's loving nature are reiterated throughout these chapters. The "shocking revelation" of Israel serving other gods despite all God had done and warnings about the consequences for those not fully committed are key points to take from this book.
- Dr. Howard emphasizes the importance of returning to the book of Joshua to study these lessons.

### Key Quotes:

- **On the nature of Joshua's speeches:** "The first one is much more informal and pastoral...Whereas the second chapter, chapter 24, is very well structured, and in the core of that is a covenant ceremony."
- **On the warning in chapter 23:** "If they did not drive out the nations, they would be thorns in the flesh, so to speak."
- **Joshua's personal commitment:** "But as for me in my house, we will serve the Lord."
- **On Joshua's warning to the people:** "You will not be able to serve the Lord because he is a holy God, he is a jealous God, and he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins."
- **On the faithfulness of the people:** "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the Lord did for Israel."

- **On the ending of the book:** “we see God's faithfulness, we see God's promises being fulfilled, we see Israel finally settled in the land, and fulfillment of all the movement of the Pentateuch here. We see warnings looking ahead, we see ominous signs that things are not all as good as we hope...”

#### **Implications:**

- The final chapters of Joshua serve as a bridge to the book of Judges. The unresolved issues of idolatry and incomplete conquest contribute to the cycles of sin and deliverance seen in Judges.
- The emphasis on covenant, faithfulness, and the need for exclusive devotion to the Lord provides important lessons applicable throughout the Old and New Testaments.
- The analysis challenges oversimplified notions of an "angry Old Testament God" by emphasizing God's love and faithfulness to his people.

This briefing document should provide a solid understanding of the complex issues raised in Joshua 23-24 and Dr. Howard's interpretation of those chapters.

## 4. Study Guide: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 21, Joshua 23-24 – Joshua's Two Farewells

### Joshua's Two Farewells: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What are the primary differences between Joshua's two farewell speeches in Joshua 23 and 24?
2. Where does Joshua deliver his first farewell speech, and what is its tone?
3. What key themes does Joshua reiterate in his first farewell speech in Joshua 23?
4. How does Deuteronomy 10:12-20 relate to Joshua's exhortations in chapter 23?
5. What is the significance of the word "dabaq" in the context of Joshua 23 and the Old Testament?
6. Where does Joshua deliver his second farewell speech, and what is the main focus of the first part of this speech (verses 1-13)?
7. According to Joshua 24:14-15, what challenge does Joshua present to the people regarding the gods they serve?
8. Why does Joshua state in 24:19 that the people "will not be able to serve the Lord?"
9. How does Joshua establish a covenant with the people in chapter 24?
10. What are the three death notices included at the end of the book, and what significance do they hold?

#### Answer Key

1. Joshua's first farewell speech (chapter 23) is informal and pastoral, delivered to the leaders of the people at Shiloh, while the second (chapter 24) is structured, more formal, and delivered to the entire nation at Shechem and contains a covenant renewal ceremony.
2. Joshua's first farewell speech is delivered at Shiloh, and its tone is more personal, pastoral, and reminiscent of the farewell addresses of other Old Testament figures like Jacob, Moses, and David.

3. In his first speech, Joshua emphasizes the importance of loving the Lord, obeying the law, remaining uncontaminated by other religious practices, and the promises that God had made. He also warns them of the consequences of failing to be faithful.
4. Deuteronomy 10:12-20, particularly the call to love, serve, and cling to God, mirrors the exhortations made by Joshua in chapter 23, demonstrating a continuity of themes and expectations for God's people. The passage in Deuteronomy emphasizes that God is both transcendent and loving.
5. The word "dabaq" which means "to cling" or "to hold fast" in the Old Testament, often refers to the marital union and, in this context, symbolizes the necessary devotion and unity between the people and the Lord.
6. Joshua delivers his second farewell speech at Shechem. The first part of the speech reviews God's past actions on behalf of Israel, from Abraham's calling to their settlement in the promised land, and also highlights their history of serving other gods.
7. Joshua challenges the people to choose whom they will serve: either the gods of their ancestors from beyond the river, the gods of Egypt, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land they live.
8. Joshua states this because he knows that the people have not truly abandoned the foreign gods and are therefore in a state of disobedience. His statement is a wake-up call meant to urge them to take their commitment seriously.
9. Joshua establishes a covenant by getting the people to affirm their commitment to serve the Lord, writing the words in the book of the law, and setting up a large stone as a witness to the covenant at Shechem.
10. The three death notices at the end of the book detail the deaths of Joshua, Joseph, and Eliezer. They represent a concluding point in Joshua's leadership, show the importance of God's promises, and recognize the passing of the old order.



## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions in an essay format.

1. Analyze the ways in which Joshua's two farewell speeches in chapters 23 and 24 serve as a summary of the major themes of the book of Joshua. How do these speeches tie in with the events and teachings throughout the book?
2. Compare and contrast the themes and purposes of Joshua's farewell speeches with those of Moses as presented in the book of Deuteronomy. How are these two leaders' final addresses similar, and how do they differ in focus and emphasis?
3. Discuss the significance of the covenant renewal ceremony in Joshua 24. How does this ceremony reflect the broader covenantal themes throughout the Pentateuch and the Old Testament?
4. Explore the tension between the faithfulness of God and the unfaithfulness of the Israelites as presented in Joshua 23-24. How does this tension contribute to our understanding of the Old Testament narrative of God's dealings with Israel?
5. Evaluate the ending of the book of Joshua in light of its earlier promises and challenges. How does the book conclude in terms of God's faithfulness and the success, or lack thereof, of the Israelites in following his commandments?

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Shiloh:** A city in ancient Israel that served as a religious center and where the tabernacle was housed for a time.
- **Shechem:** A city in ancient Canaan, the site of covenant renewals and significant religious events.
- **Covenant:** A formal agreement or treaty, in the biblical context, usually between God and his people, often involving promises and obligations.
- **Dabaq:** A Hebrew word meaning “to cling” or “to hold fast,” often used to describe the relationship between God and his people.
- **Ger:** A Hebrew term referring to a sojourner, foreigner, or resident alien who has embraced the faith of Israel.
- **Covenant Treaty Form:** A pattern of treaties common in the ancient Near East that includes elements such as a preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, blessings and curses, and witnesses, that many scholars believe are reflected in biblical covenant passages.
- **Terabinth:** A type of large tree, often used as a landmark or meeting place in ancient times.
- **Former Prophets:** A division of the Hebrew Bible, comprising the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel (1 & 2), and Kings (1 & 2), which provide a historical record of Israel’s life in the promised land.

## 5. FAQs on Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 21, Joshua 23-24 – Joshua's Two Farewells, [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### FAQ on Joshua Chapters 23-24

- **What are the main differences between Joshua's two farewell speeches in chapters 23 and 24?**
- Joshua's two farewell addresses, found in chapters 23 and 24, differ significantly in their nature and audience. Chapter 23 presents a more informal, pastoral speech, likely delivered at Shiloh to the leaders of Israel. It's less structured, focusing on exhorting the leaders to remain faithful to the Lord, love Him, and obey His law, and warns against the consequences of not driving out the remaining nations. Chapter 24, on the other hand, is a more formal, well-structured address to the entire nation, delivered at Shechem, and culminates in a covenant renewal ceremony, emphasizing the need to put away foreign gods and choose to serve the Lord.
- **What are the key themes that Joshua emphasizes in his first farewell speech (chapter 23)?**
- In his first farewell speech, Joshua emphasizes several key themes. He urges the leaders to be steadfast in loving the Lord, obeying His law, and avoiding contamination from the religious practices of their neighboring nations. He reminds them that God has been faithful to His promises and that they should trust that He will continue to be with them in the tasks still ahead. Joshua warns that if they do not remain faithful to the Lord and drive out the remaining nations, these nations will become a source of trouble for them. He reaffirms God's ownership of the land, reminding them that He is the one who has given it to them and that their faithfulness is essential to keep it.

- **How does Joshua's second farewell speech (chapter 24) recall and build upon events from earlier in the biblical narrative?**
- Joshua's second farewell speech in chapter 24 serves as a powerful summary of the history of Israel from Abraham to the present. It begins with Terah's idolatry, the call of Abraham, and God's guidance through the Exodus, through their wilderness wanderings, to their conquest of the land of Canaan. This review emphasizes God's initiative and consistent faithfulness, highlighting that the land and its success are gifts from God. It echoes the promises given in Deuteronomy about how God would bless them and gives the context of the covenant renewal. By reviewing the past, Joshua establishes a foundation for his exhortation to the people to choose whom they will serve—the gods of their ancestors, the gods of the Amorites in whose land they dwell, or the Lord.
- **What was the significance of the covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem in Joshua 24?**
- The covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem in Joshua 24 is a pivotal event in the narrative. It represents a recommitment by the people of Israel to God, a reaffirmation of their allegiance, after experiencing God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promise to give them the land. Joshua challenges them to renounce foreign gods they had served in Mesopotamia and Egypt. The people publicly affirm their commitment to the Lord, although Joshua expresses skepticism about the sincerity of their commitment. In this covenant, Joshua reinforces that the law is essential and reminds the people that they must hold God's law as central to their way of life. The ceremony is a formal and solemn event where Joshua, as a leader, calls the people to be witnesses to their commitments.

- **What is the significance of Joshua's challenge to the people in Joshua 24:15, and how do the people respond?**
- In Joshua 24:15, Joshua presents the people with a critical choice: to serve the gods of their ancestors, the gods of the Amorites, or the Lord. This challenge reveals a startling truth: despite experiencing God's miraculous deliverance and guidance, the Israelites had still not fully abandoned the idolatrous practices that existed at their roots. Joshua does not demand that they make a certain choice, but uses his family as an example, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." While the people initially respond positively, affirming their commitment to serve the Lord, Joshua expresses doubt in their ability to do so fully, citing God's holiness and jealousy (verse 19). In this, it serves as both an acknowledgement of their past as well as a prophetic warning about the struggle to maintain faithfulness in the future.
- **How does the text reveal a tension between Israel's faithfulness and continued struggle with idolatry in Joshua 24?**
- Throughout Joshua 24, a tension emerges between Israel's public declarations of faithfulness and their continued struggle with idolatry. While they affirm their desire to serve the Lord, Joshua points out that they had been serving other gods from their time in Mesopotamia and Egypt. This tension is highlighted when Joshua challenges them to put away foreign gods. The fact that Joshua feels the need to emphasize this suggests that idolatrous practices are still present. This tension implies that genuine faithfulness to God required more than mere outward commitment, it demanded internal, heart-level transformation.
- **How does the conclusion of Joshua, including the death notices and burial details, contribute to the themes of the book?**
- The conclusion of Joshua is significant because of the three death notices that follow Joshua's speech. The death of Joshua, described as "servant of the Lord", marks the end of an era, emphasizing his faithfulness and leadership and leaving open questions about the nation's future. The burial of Joseph's bones in Shechem highlights the fulfillment of a promise made hundreds of years earlier, connecting the book of Joshua to the broader narrative of Genesis. The final notice is the death and burial of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, marking the passing of the first generation that had been appointed to the priesthood. These death notices serve as a bridge into the next era, the period of the Judges, and remind the reader of the importance of keeping promises and staying faithful to the Lord.

- **What are some of the key takeaways or lessons from the Book of Joshua, particularly chapters 23 and 24, according to Dr. Howard?**

Dr. Howard suggests several key takeaways from Joshua, particularly chapters 23 and 24. He emphasizes the importance of faithfulness to God and obedience to his commands, pointing out that God's promises are conditional on Israel's fidelity. He underscores that the land belongs to God, not to the Israelites, and that their relationship with God must be based on love and wholehearted commitment. Dr. Howard also highlights the danger of idolatry and the need for genuine internal change, not just outward compliance, and the importance of learning from their history. He notes that while the book ends with a sense of fulfillment, it also hints at future challenges if the people fail to maintain their devotion to God.