

The Book of Joshua is a gripping account of military conquest and the successor to the leadership of Moses. While the first five chapters detail the logistical and spiritual preparations for entering the Promised Land, the remainder of the book explores the grit of battle and the ultimate occupation of the territory.

Entering the Land (Chapters 1–5)

For forty years, God miraculously sustained the Israelites with manna and quail. However, once Joshua led the nation across the Jordan River, the manna ceased; they were no longer wanderers, but inhabitants.

Before the conquest could begin, a spiritual "reset" was required at Gilgal. The generation born in the wilderness had failed to observe the rite of circumcision ordained for Abraham's descendants. By honoring this covenant, they transitioned from a displaced people to a consecrated nation.

The Miracle at the Jordan

The crossing of the Jordan was a miracle of faith comparable to the Red Sea. Notably, the waters did not recede until the priests stepped into the flow. This reinforces a biblical pattern: the step of obedience must precede the revelation of power.

To memorialize this, Joshua erected two monuments of twelve stones—one in the riverbed and one on the bank.

- The Bethabara Connection: 1,500 years later, John the Baptist preached at Bethabara ("The House of Passage"), likely the exact site of Joshua's crossing. When John told the Pharisees that God could "raise up children for Abraham from these stones," he may have been pointing directly to Joshua's ancient monuments.

The Commander of the Lord's Host

Before the walls of Jericho fell, Joshua encountered a warrior with a drawn sword. When challenged, the figure identified himself as the "*Commander of the Lord's Army*." Unlike angels—who refuse worship—this figure commanded Joshua to remove his sandals, for he stood on holy ground. Most scholars identify this as a **Christophany** (a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ). It serves as a reminder that the Battle of Jericho was not won by Joshua's tactics, but by the Lord's presence.

The Campaign for Canaan (Chapters 6–12)

Jericho and the Cost of Disobedience

Jericho (Bet Yerah, or "House of the Moon God") was the Amorite stronghold. The battle plan was unconventional: marching silently around the city for six days, followed by seven circuits, trumpet blasts, and a shout on the seventh.

The subsequent defeat at the smaller town of Ai serves as a cautionary tale. The Israelites grew overconfident, but the real issue was "sin in the camp." A man named Achan had stolen forbidden

loot from Jericho. This proves that Israel's success was never a matter of military might, but of spiritual alignment. Once the sin was purged, Ai fell easily.

The Longest Day: Celestial Anomalies

During the battle against the Amorite coalition led by Adonai-Zedek, two supernatural events occurred:

1. A lethal hailstorm (or meteor shower) that killed more enemies than the sword.
2. The Sun Standing Still: Joshua commanded the sun and moon to halt, lengthening the day to allow for a total rout of the enemy.

Scientific Perspective: While some view this as poetic, others point to the global recalibration of ancient calendars around 701 B.C. Theories regarding "near-pass" resonant orbits of the planet Mars suggest that gravitational interactions could have caused polar shifts or rotational changes, accounting for "long days" or "long nights" recorded in various cultures (such as China).

Typology: Joshua and the New Testament

The parallels between Joshua and the New Testament are striking:

- Ephesians: Both books deal with possessing an inheritance—Joshua in the earthly realm, Ephesians in the "heavenly places."
- Revelation: Both involve a seven-year campaign, two witnesses, seven trumpets, and a confederation of kings led by a figure in Jerusalem who eventually hide in caves to escape judgment.
- The Name: The name *Joshua* (Yehoshua) is the Hebrew origin of the name *Jesus*. Both are commanders leading their people to dispossess usurpers.

The Cities of Refuge: A Shadow of Christ

Because the Levites inherited God Himself (i.e, the special calling to serve God) rather than land, they were given 48 cities, six of which were Cities of Refuge. These cities protected those guilty of manslaughter from the "Avenger of Blood." The fugitive was safe as long as they remained within the city walls and until the death of the High Priest.

This is a profound "type" of Christ:

- The Plea: On the cross, Jesus cried, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,*" effectively allowing us to plead "manslaughter" rather than premeditated murder.
- The Security: Jesus is our City of Refuge. As long as we "abide in Him," we are safe from judgment.
- The Release: Because our High Priest has died, we are legally set free from the debt of our past.