

Introduction to Yehoshua: The Book and the Man

1. Talmud, Nedarim 22b

אמר רב אדא ברבי חנינא: אלמלא חטאו ישראל לא ניתן להם אלא חמשה חומשי תורה וספר יהושע בלבד, שערכה של ארץ ישראל הוא
Rav Ada b'Rabbi Chanina said: Had Israel not sinned, they would have been given only the five chumashim, as well as the book of Yehoshua for it speaks of the value of the land of Israel.

2. Yehoshua the Man

C.V. Shemot 17:9-14; Shemot 24:13; Shemot 33:11; Bamidbar 13:16; Bamidbar 27; Devarim 31

Scholar Shemot 33:11; Bamidbar 11:28; Devarim 34:10

Prophet Yehoshua 20:1-2; Bamidbar 27:18; Yehoshua 24:29

King Divrei haYamim I 7:26-27; Yehoshua 1:18

Military Shemot 17; Bamidbar 27

Trail-blazer Bamidbar 14; Shemot 32:17; Bamidbar 11:27

Sensitivity Yehoshua 7:19; Yehoshua 17:14-18

Governing Yehoshua 21:1; Yehoshua 22:14

3. The local population

- Canaanim, Semites, Nephilim, Chori, Migratory groups
- Sinful and immoral – Bereishit 15:16; Vayikra 18:3; Vayikra 18:25-26; Devarim 9:5

Chapter 1 – Passing the baton

Themes

- Initiation of Yehoshua as leader
- Yehoshua's message to the nation, and to Reuven/Gad
- The leader is not the key to success; Gd and the nation are the key

Chapters 2-5 – First steps

Chapter 2 – The Spies in Yericho

- What does this tell us about Yehoshua?
- What does this tell us about Canaan?
- What does this tell us about Rachav?

Chapters 3-4 – Crossing the Yarden

- The nature of miracles
- The elevation of Yehoshua
- The importance of witnesses for posterity, creating Jewish tradition
- Additional, hinted miracles
- Twelve stones – Bereishit Rabbah 68:11 (Yaakov); Shemot 24:4 (Sinai); Shemot 28:21 (Choshen); Yehoshua 8:31 (Mizbeiach); Melachim I 18:31 (Eliyahu's mizbeiach)

Chapter 5 – Completing the arc of leaving Egypt

- No longer Egyptians, no longer children of the wilderness
- The split message of the malach

Chapters 6-12 – War

Chapter 6 – War with Yericho

- Tactical assault; Religious moment; Creation's Sevens
- The end of Canaan's fortresses
- Rejection of benefit from Yericho
- Never rebuild it!

Chapter 7 – Ai and Achan

- The challenge for Yehoshua: Relying on Gd, Acting on his own
- A first setback
- An end to arrogance
- The new realities of life in Israel

Chapter 8 – War with Ai II / Blessings and Curses

- The messages of the new war – Military strategy; Repairing damage
- The goal of conquering Ai
- When was the covenant of the blessings and curses?

Chapter 9 – The Fraud of Givon

- The surrounding nations' fear
- The challenge of political life: when do you consult G-d?
- A disconnect between nations and leaders
- The Jews' unhappiness

Chapter 10 – The war of the South, defending Givon

- The attack on Givon by their neighbours
- The Jewish decision to honour the pact; the nation supports Yehoshua
- The return of miracles and clear Divine support

Chapter 11 – Wars of the North

- Northern kings attack en masse
- The new element: horses and chariots
- Gd is with Yehoshua
- The influence of neighbours

Chapter 12 – Summary of the Conquests

- Listing Moshe's conquests
- The role of the poem of the kings

Perakim 13-21 Distribution of land

Chapter 13 – Distribution of the eastern side of the Yarden

- The importance of the distribution
- Distribute the west, then conquer it
- Listing the eastern distribution
- Splitting Menasheh

Chapters 14-15 – Yehudah's land

- How the lottery works
- Yehudah goes first
- The completion of Kalev's arc
- Conquest and division of Chevron
- Southern boundaries of Israel
- Does Yehudah possess part of Yerushalayim?