

New Beginnings, Joshua, 2026 – #8– “As For Me”

Joshua 24:13-18

Our journey of New Beginnings ends for now. We are skipping a lot – When Time Stopped, Give Me That Mountain, Defeating Giants - a lot of great truths. Maybe we'll revisit Joshua again...

For now, we turn to the closing scene in this amazing epic. It is not just a wonderful moment in history, but a lesson for us.

Much was riding on what happened that day long ago. The truth is, more than we can imagine is at play right here this morning.

We begin with the ending. Something incredible happened and is recorded for us, something they couldn't see in that moment: Vs. 31. **The consequence of Joshua's words and the influence of his life impacted generations!**

Joshua is old.

- Time is short.
- He has called Israel together three times, this being the third and final time.
- An entire nation gathered to hear what would be his final words, as we do millennia later today.

Joshua was not just an old guy who gathered Israel to hear him reminisce. He gathered them to decide.

For reference - We, looking back, have been impacted greatly by those who have gone before us. Much of what we enjoy personally and as a church body is possible because of the faithful lives and legacy of those who like Joshua had served and stood for Jesus.

Let me ask:

- What would we say if today was our last day and God gave us the chance to leave a final word?
- What legacy will we leave?
- What will be the impact of our lives to those who follow?

I. The Past.

As they gathered, and listened, **Joshua reminded them of their history. It was a long and winding road!**

Other than the moment of trusting Jesus and coming alive in Him, *Destiny is not generally built in a moment.* It is built in daily obedience and revealed in defining moments.

A. Joshua reminded them of *their journey of God's grace.*

- Redemption and deliverance from Egypt.
- Miraculous, seemingly impossible victory, time after time.
- Unwavering faithfulness – 40 years +
- Unimaginable blessings: vs. 13 – The Promised Land!

B. They knew *his journey of Grace:* This old legend had earned their respect.

- Joshua served when no one knew Him
- Joshua helped hold Moses' arms up
- Joshua trusted God and spoke up even when the multitude didn't!
- Joshua encouraged and pointed people to God's goodness
- Joshua was a reluctant but willing leader
- Joshua had lived and led in a way that had helped them get to this place.

They had witnessed what could be done as it was lived out before their eyes in Joshua!

II. The Point.

Their past was a journey completed, a journey of grace.

God had led them to the promised land. Life was overall, good. They were, as promised, blessed.

A. Why gather them *NOW?*

It was important for them to realize that they had not arrived. The journey wasn't over this side of heaven, even in Canaan.

Time marches on, and future destinations are determined by present choices. Basically, Joshua was hammering home a perpetual truth:

What has been done before has impacted us, and what we do now, will impact and our and unknown others' tomorrows.

C.S. Lewis –

“Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you... into something a little different than it was before.”

B. Why gather All of them?

Young and old.

All tribes.

Male and female.

Blessing does not eliminate responsibility. It increases it.

It falls on each generation to be the light and life of Jesus in their moment.

History has been impacted, changed, and written by –

- Young and old.
- Men and women, boys and girls.
- Every tribe.
- The known and the unknown

Joshua understood that - in that mixed multitude - were the individuals God would use to bring them forward to a new day of blessing and grace.

As they took their stroll down memory lane, Joshua reminded them –

- It wasn't their greatness that got them here – it was their God!
- The future depended not on their greatness, but on their willingness to trust and live for their Great God!

What Joshua presented them: “Now therefore... choose you this day...”

They had a choice to make, and they would make it one way or the other.

- **One choice was God** and His way which had always been good and gracious, free and full. **God gave them the ability to choose Him.**
- **Then, there was any other way: Any other god.** They had seen where that led.

Joshua made it clear: ***The future was in their hands!***

Someone said, ***“Be careful of the choices you make, because the choices you make, make you.”***

That was true for them. It’s true for us. For ALL of us.

Joshua looked across and multitudes and spoke. As they listened, God worked and whispered, and the future was being written.

III. Joshua’s Personal Proclamation.

Joshua: ***“As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”***

This was more than a quotable moment. This was the exclamation point punctuating a life lived for God.

A Legacy, not built in a moment, but revealed in one.

His proclamation was

- **Personal** – *“me and my house”*
- **Complete** – *There was nothing held back!*

What we refuse to surrender will quietly rule us.

What we hold on to, we lose!

Martin Luther

“I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God’s hands, that I still possess.”

- **Public** – For all Israel, for the whole world - to hear and see
- **Proper-** **His public proclamation matched his life!**

Joshua didn’t share strategy; **he demonstrated for all to hear and see *surrender to His awesome God!***

IV. The Product:

- **The people listened.** When our lives are such that our words have meaning, they usually will.
- **The people followed.** They often will, especially when made aware of the consequence of their choice.
- **The people promised:** “He is our God. We will serve the LORD!”

And - they did as they promised!

Cf. vs 31 – “And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that He had done for Israel.”

Final words reveal what matter most. They strip away the trivial and leave truth. All Israel heard, and had their chance to respond that day. Now is our time.

Joshua stood before a nation and declared his allegiance.

- Not because it was popular.
- Not because it was easy.
- But because it was true.

- He had walked with God privately.
- He had followed God faithfully.
- So, **when the moment came publicly,** he simply spoke what had already been lived.

That day, a generation followed.

What if today is not just another Sunday?

What if this moment is writing tomorrow's history?

- Our children are watching.
- Our world is listening.
- Heaven is witnessing.

Before the sun sets on this day, before another chapter closes...

Can you respond truthfully, totally -

- Not emotionally. Not casually. But with conviction and promise
“As for me... and my house... we will serve the Lord.”