

CHANGING WANDERERS INTO WORSHIPERS

From the Exodus to the Promised Land

Grace and Truth Worth Remembering

Joshua 24:1–28

SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES

STUDY



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Dreams realized. Desires satisfied. Hope turned to touch. We all enjoy that moment at the end of the journey where we can say, “We made it!”

But complacency, even carelessness, often follows that sense of arrival. Success tempts us to take our hand off the wheel and coast when we transition from one season to the next.

That’s why Joshua addressed the Israelites near the end of their conquest and why we today would do well to study his exhortation. God wants us all to transition well. So, we’ll join Chuck Swindoll as we enter the last passage of our series, Joshua 24, when the Israelites transition from tent-pitching wanderers to land-owning worshipers.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Doorposts covered with lamb’s blood. Walls of water. Bushels of quail. Snakebites. Crumbling stone walls. “How far we have come!” The Israelites surely celebrated as they reflected on their journey.

Today, we will enter into the time when the Israelites could say, “We made it!” In Joshua 23:1, we read, “The years passed, and the LORD had given the people of Israel rest from all their enemies.” Despite the gulf of millennia separating us from Joshua’s day, we can still feel the Israelites’ relief.

Yet, there’s no time for spiritual laxity!

As Joshua’s time of leadership came to an end after the Israelites defeated their enemies, he urged the Israelites to stay faithful in their devotion to the Lord.

If the enemy is defeated, and if the Israelites are able to move into all this abundance, why would that be difficult? Because then the warfare becomes invisible. —Chuck Swindoll

Quotable

People who understand the grace of God live their lives not in pride but in humility.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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In his final speech, Joshua led the Israelites in a covenant renewal. Before we step into the ancient world amidst the victorious tribes to hear their godly leader, record a thoughtful prayer below asking our Lord’s aid as you study His Word.



Observation

Begin observation with a slow reading of *Joshua 24:1–28*. Do so in two translations. Take notes below as you read each one. While Chuck likes to use various translations, the New Living Translation and the New American Standard Bible sit at the top of his list.

Translation Used:	Translation Used:

Who was speaking in Joshua 24:2–13?

Did you notice all the first-person pronouns in 24:2–13? How many can you count? Also, read aloud the passage to feel the emphasis.



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Did you see the “So” at the beginning of Joshua 24:14? How does 24:14–15 logically follow 24:2–13?

Who began speaking in 24:16?

What was the call to the Israelites in 24:14–15?

How many times did the Israelites respond to Joshua in 24:16–24? How did they answer each time?

We don't break with idols slowly. We break with idols in a moment of time—at a time of decision.
—Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation

Now let's dig deep. Begin by looking up *Shechem* (Joshua 24:1) in your Bible dictionary to understand its significance in Israel's history leading to Joshua 24. Record your notes below.



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Joshua 24:1–28

What should God’s recollection in Joshua 24:2–13 have done for the Israelites? What is the value of *remembering* in the Christian’s spiritual life? If we follow the pattern of 24:2–13, what specifically should Christians consistently reflect upon?

After the Israelites said they would follow God (Joshua 24:16–18), Joshua told them they were not able to (24:19–20). What did Joshua mean in 24:19–20, and what relevance does this have today as we reflect on God’s nature? (Don’t forget to consult your commentaries or [online resources](#).)

Fear is a wholesome, worshipful respect for God accompanied by a hatred for sin. . . . To serve is a willing, available obedience based on love and devotion. When I serve Him for His glory, I am willingly available, obeying Him out of love and devotion. —Chuck Swindoll



Correlation

“I gave you land you had not worked on, and I gave you towns you did not build—the towns where you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them” (Joshua 24:13). This incredible truth foreshadows the celestial city God is building for His people.

To inhabit a city built by God—a thought that will make you pause!

The writer of Hebrews developed this theme in the last three chapters of the letter. The gospel of Jesus Christ gives greater clarity to the Old Testament promise of an eternal city. To better understand how, let’s look at these three passages from the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews.



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First, read *Hebrews 11:8–16*. Describe what God promised Abraham. Did Abraham ultimately receive what God promised?

Now, read *Hebrews 12:14–28*. How do Christians today relate to God's city, and how did the Israelites relate to it (*Hebrews 12:18–23*)?

How does Jesus relate to this city (*12:24*)?

Because we have this relationship, how should we respond to God according to *12:25–28*?



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Lastly, read *Hebrews 13:8–16*. How does 13:14 complement our understanding of the city mentioned in 12:18–24?

According to *Hebrews 13:8–13*, how does this hope give us strength to endure?

It was John Chrysostom in the fifth century AD who said, “You are but a poor soldier of Christ if you think you can overcome without fighting and suppose you can have the crown without conflict.”

—Chuck Swindoll



Application

Chuck draws three timeless principles from Joshua 24 that especially aid those making a transition. Do you find yourself in that season? These principles help us recognize God’s work in our lives and strengthen us as we press forward in God’s will.



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The Past

When we look to the past, we see God's grace and are grateful for it. Take a moment to look to your past now, and write down three ways God has graciously worked. Express your gratitude.

The Present

When we look to the present, we hear God's truth and are challenged by it. Did God's Spirit challenge you in any way today? Record a verse from this study that was especially meaningful or challenging for you. Explain why.

The Future

When we look to the future, we remember our commitment and are strengthened because of it. Write down one way you could be tempted to shed any of your spiritual commitments and how you plan to uphold them.



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After his conversion, John Newton (1725–1807) wrote that indelible hymn which now rings from the pews on Sunday mornings as Christians worship the Lord Jesus Christ. It's called "Amazing Grace"—a fitting title for an appropriate prayer as we close this series, *Changing Wanderers into Worshipers*. Take time to meditate upon it and pray through it.



A FINAL PRAYER

Amazing Grace¹

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

The Lord has promised good to me;
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.



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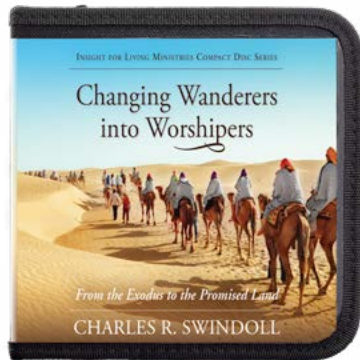
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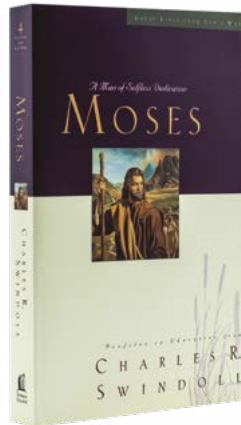
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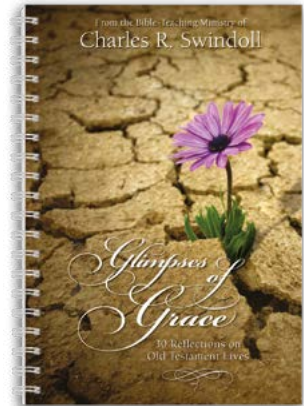
Tools for Digging Deeper



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ENDNOTE

1. John Newton and John P. Rees, “Amazing Grace,” in *The Celebration Hymnal: Songs and Hymns for Worship* (n.p.: Word Music/Integrity Music, 1997), hymn 343; fifth stanza incorporated from Christian Classics Ethereal Library, original hymn, https://www.ccel.org/ccel/newton/olneyhymns.Book1.iCH.h1_41.html.

For the 2018–2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages.



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