



Andrews Bible Commentary

JOSHUA

Title and Authorship. In the Jewish canon, Joshua is the first of the section called “the Prophets.” The title of the book is a personal name, meaning “Yahweh saves.” Joshua’s name was originally *hoshea*’, “salvation,” but Moses changed it by prefixing the abbreviated form of the divine name Yahweh. Joshua was a type of Jesus Christ, the “Commander of the army of the Lord” (Josh. 5:13–15).

Joshua is the author of the book that bears his name, though his death account, as well as that of Eleazar, must have been added by another inspired person(s).

Date. Internal evidence shows that the book was composed shortly after the conquest. Scripture supports the fifteenth-century-B.C. dating of the Exodus. Therefore, the conquest of the Holy Land must have begun about 1407 B.C.

Backgrounds. Abraham was promised a land to be inherited by his descendants, which included the promise of an Exodus from Egypt to

the Holy Land. The realization of this promise is the focus of the book of Joshua.

Theology and Purpose. The primary purpose of the book of Joshua is to describe Israel’s entry into the land of promise, the conquest of the land, and its division among the tribes.

The major theological theme of the book of Joshua is the covenant. The book repeatedly emphasizes the Lord’s faithfulness in fulfilling this promise.

The book also places quite an emphasis on the sovereignty of God. The Lord is the “living God” whose promises do not fail (Josh. 3:10).

The book also discusses judgment and salvation within the confines of the covenant. Israel was God’s missionary, serving as a channel of the “blessed hope” to the world.

We also find a theology of leadership. The leaders God appoints are prepared both physically and spiritually for the task at hand. Courage, dynamism, promptness, dedication, a serving attitude, firmness, and reliance on the word of God are some of the qualities of good leaders.