

**LOCAL EXAMINATION
MANUAL.
NOTES ON JOSHUA**

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Local examination manual. Notes on Joshua by J. Davies

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J. DAVIES

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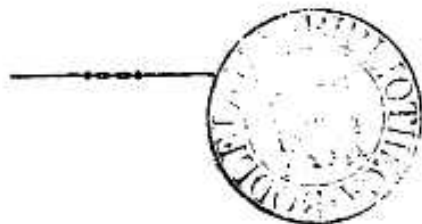
NOTES ON JOSHUA.

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NOTES ON JOSHUA.

THIS is the *First Historical Book of the Bible*, and the first named after a person.

It takes its title either from its having been written by Joshua, or from its relating events which occurred under his leadership of the Israelites.

There are two opinions with regard to the authorship of the work in its present form :—

1. Some think that it was compiled after the death of Joshua, from rough records made by him of events happening under his administration.

Those who adopt this view variously ascribe the compilation and shaping of the narrative to Eleazar, Phinehas, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezra. But there is clear internal evidence that, if the book was constructed in this manner, it must have been by some one who was contemporary with the events it relates ; for—

(1.) The writer was one of those who passed over Jordan,—*“And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their hearts melted,”* &c. (c. v. 1).

(2.) Rahab was living when he wrote,—*“She dwelleth in Israel even unto this day”* (c. vi. 25).

This being so, the only two individuals in the above list who could possibly have produced the work are Eleazar and Phinehas ; for Samuel, the earliest of the last four names, was not born till 280 years after the entrance into Canaan.

2. The majority of authorities attribute the history en-

tirely to Joshua, excepting a few passages that he could not possibly have penned, and which have been added by perhaps one or more of those before named.

The chief passages thus added are—

c. xxiv. 29-31, 33, being the record of the death of Joshua and of Eleazar, and of the religious state of the Israelites during the "*days of the elders that outlived Joshua.*"

c. xix. 47, relating briefly the emigration of part of Dan, which occurred twenty years after Joshua's death, and is fully narrated in Judges.

c. xv. 13-19, containing the account of Caleb's conquest of his inheritance, which he effected soon after Joshua's death, as narrated in Judges.

The book commences with the entrance into Canaan, B.C. 1451, and ends with the death of Joshua, B.C. 1428.

Its main topics are :—The Entrance into Canaan, the Conquest of the greater portion of it, the Setting-up of the Tabernacle at Shiloh, the Division of the Land amongst the Tribes, Joshua's final Charge, and his Death.

The form of government of the Israelites under Joshua was, —as under Moses,—a Theocracy.

CHAPTER I.

God confirms Joshua's commission as Moses' successor, and points out the extent of the Land of Promise.—Joshua gives orders to prepare for passing over Jordan, and reminds the two tribes and a half of their promise to Moses.—All the people acknowledge Joshua's authority.

v. 1. "*The Death of Moses,*"—is related in Deut. xxxiv. 1-8 :—

"And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho : and the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea,

and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar.

"And the Lord said unto him, 'This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.'

"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there, in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

v. 4. "*The Wilderness*,"—to the south of Palestine, as far as the Gulf of Akaba.

"*Hittites*,"—is used here as a general name for all the tribes on the west of the Jordan.

"*The Great Sea*,"—the Mediterranean; called also the *Sea of the Philistines*.

"*Coast*"=territory.

The land, as promised to Moses, was to extend "*from the Red Sea even unto the Sea of the Philistines, and from the desert (i.e., south of Palestine) unto the river (i.e., Euphrates)*." Reference to the map will show the identity of the extent of country here named with that promised to Joshua.

The promised limits were reached in the extent of the kingdom under Solomon, but the Israelites never fully possessed the land, because, instead of driving out or destroying the native tribes, they allowed them to remain amongst them, and, finally, entered into alliance and marriage ties with them. Thus God's promise was not fulfilled with regard to their possessions, because they neglected to fulfil the conditions on which it had been made.

v. 5. "*I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee*." This is quoted by Paul in the following connection:—"Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*" (Heb. xiii. 5).

v. 8. "*This Book of the Law*,"—the five Books of Moses.

v. 11. "*Prepare you victuals*,"—The manna did not cease till after the people had entered Canaan; but, in the haste and bustle of passing over Jordan, there would not be time for all to gather it, and they needed, therefore, to be supplied with other food.

Perhaps we may understand by *victuals*, everything necessary for their enterprise.

vs. 12-15. After the conquest of Sihon and Og, their terri-

teries, which lay on the east of the Jordan, were given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh, Reuben and Gad taking Sihon's territory, and Manasseh, Og's. The circumstances under which this allotment was made, and the promise of the two tribes and a half to Moses, are found in Num. xxxii. 1-33 :—

“ Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle : and when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle, the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying,

“ Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and Nimrah, and Heshbon, and Elealch, and Shebam, and Nebo, and Beon, even the country which the Lord smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle : wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.

“ And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here ? And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the Lord hath given them ? Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnes to see the land. For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the Lord had given them. And the Lord's anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying, Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob ; because they have not wholly followed me : save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenézite, and Joshua the son of Nun : for they have wholly followed the Lord. And the Lord's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the Lord, was consumed. And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord toward Israel. For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness ; and ye shall destroy all this people.

“And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones: but we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land. We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance. For we will not inherit with them on yonder side Jordan, or forward; because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side Jordan eastward.

“And Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the Lord to war, and will go all of you armed over Jordan before the Lord, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him, and the land be subdued before the Lord: then afterward ye shall return, and be guiltless before the Lord, and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the Lord. But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out. Build your cities for your little ones, and folds for your sheep; and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth.

“And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth. Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, shall be there in the cities of Gilead: but thy servants will pass over, every man armed for war, before the Lord to battle, as my lord saith.

“So concerning them Moses commanded Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel: and Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle, before the Lord, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession: but if they will not pass over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.

“And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying, As the Lord hath said unto thy servants, so will we do. We will pass over armed before the Lord into the land of Canaan, that the possession of our inheritance on this side Jordan may be ours.

“And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of

Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about."

v. 16. "*They*,"—the whole of the people.

CHAPTER II.

Two Spies sent by Joshua to Jericho.—They are sheltered by Rahab, escape, return, and make their report to Joshua.

v. 1. "*Sent*,"—should be, "*had sent*." They must have been sent before the events in chap. i., for there Joshua tells the people that they shall cross the Jordan "*in three days*," and the spies were gone *more than three days* (*vid. v. 22*).

"*Shittim*" = *the Meadow of the Acacias*. It was an encampment, not a town. There were groves of acacias opposite Jericho, on both sides of the Jordan.

"*Secretly*," *i.e.*, without the knowledge of the people. When the twelve spies were sent out by Moses from Kadesh, all the congregation knew of their departure, and the evil report of ten of them was publicly made on their return. Joshua, remembering the terrible consequences that had then followed, seems to have sent these two men away unknown to any one but himself, and to have received them privately when they came back; so that, if they brought discouraging tidings, the congregation would be ignorant of them, have no opportunity to murmur and rebel, and, consequently, escape the fearful sentence pronounced on the preceding generation, of forty years' wanderings, and of exclusion from the Promised Land.

"*Jericho*"—was chosen as the first point of attack, because it guarded the passes leading into the interior.

v. 4. "*Took*"—"hid,"—should be, "*had taken*"—"had hidden."

v. 6. "*The roof*,"—was flat, like that of Eastern houses in general.

"*Stalks of flax*,"—(literally, *flax of the wood*),—undressed flax.
