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**Day 74 – March 15**

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## **Conquering the Land (1400 – 1100 BCE)**

### ***Joshua's Farewell Addresses***

**Readings: *Joshua 22:1-24:28; Judges 2:6***

#### ***Reflections:***

- Joshua's farewell addresses find a lot of parallels to Moses. It shows the impact of mentorship.
- The one tribe's decision to build an altar and the other tribe's plan to go to war against them shows again the importance of not jumping to conclusions about another person's relationship to God. Rather than going to war they send a delegation to build relationship, ask questions and listen. Many problems can be solved just by engaging in healthy conversation and active listening.
- We also learn from this story that external expressions may have a different reality for other people than we might initially assume. Here this tribe had a vision for their children and everyone else misread it. This story can challenge us to consider how we can create physical teaching experiences for our children. How do we pass on what God has shown us to our children? What experiences do we want them to have?
- Joshua's final address to the western tribes contains a number of key verses. "...it was the Lord your God who fought for you....Be strong...hold fast to the Lord your God." These key thoughts are repeated over and over because these are the key elements Christ-followers must hold on to. God takes care of all of the issues that people face: our own sin, weakness, enemies and even our own death. He fights for his people and gives them victory as they allow his power to be perfected in their weakness. Our part is simply to walk by faith and to hold fast to him with unyielding dependence and humility.
- The nation is assured of God's blessing and fulfilled promises if they are faithful and warned of judgment if they turn away and are disobedient. In just a very few short chapters we will see none of this stops Israel from completely messing up. Without the Spirit, no amount of blessing or judgment can keep the human heart on track.
- Joshua then retells the story again in a shortened version. Israel makes a third oath to be faithful. "We too will serve the Lord, because he is our God." Joshua again warns them: "He is a holy God; he is a jealous God....yield your hearts to the Lord." God's love

is a jealous love and a jealous love only wants complete devotion, complete loyalty. They commit again and make a monument but it will do no good. All of this shows that good intentions, external reminders, the threat of punishment, and the promise of blessing do nothing if God is not at work in our hearts through his Spirit. Everything people can layer on, every external prop, simply does not work to change our hearts or keep us in the right place before God. He must come inside and change us through his love removing our fear and his power turning our weakness into strength.