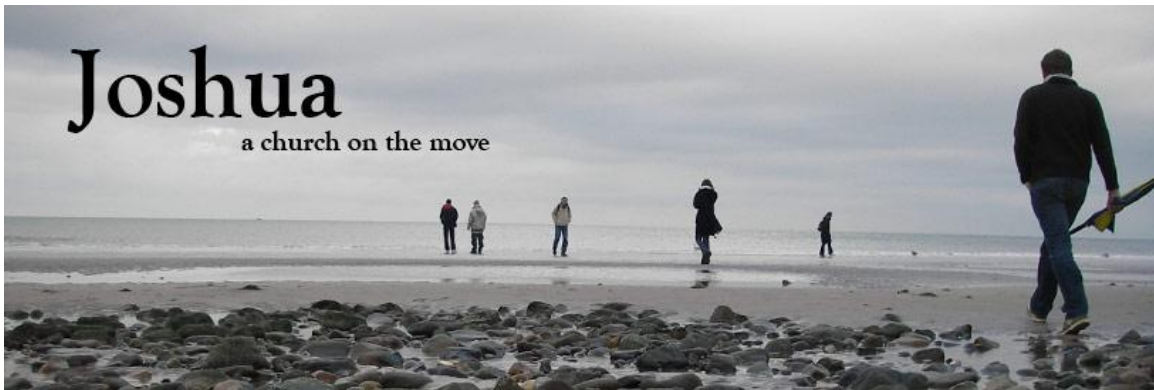


Joshua

A Church on the Move



**Community Group Study Guide
Winter/Spring 2010**

Holy Trinity Church, Chicago

South Side and West Side Congregations

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WELCOME TO A COMMUNITY GROUP

Welcome to a Holy Trinity Church community group! You may be asking, “What is a community group?” Community groups at Holy Trinity Church help us connect on four levels:

- ***Connect to God:*** All people were designed for relationship with God, and God has always been gathering a people to himself. If our community groups excel at the other three points of connection below, but fail to connect people to the one true and living God, then we’ve failed. Ultimately, the only thing that will matter in this life is if our relationship with God has been restored. Through God’s acts in history, He has provided for our redemption through the person and work of Jesus Christ. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, the others in your community group will be journeying alongside you by studying God’s Word, and collectively you will be learning how to be re-connected with God.
- ***Connect to the Word:*** We at Holy Trinity Church are confident that God has spoken to humanity through the Bible, and since God has spoken we need to listen! Therefore, the study of God’s Word is paramount in your community group experience. We believe as Jesus said in Luke 24:44-47, that all of God’s Word is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Through our study of the Word, we will always connect the text back to the larger story of God’s redeeming acts, culminating in Jesus Christ.
- ***Connect to other people:*** Most of us reside in the bustling city of Chicago, but we are often isolated from authentic community. We were made for relationship with each other. Participation in a community group will allow you to connect to other people through our common exploration of the Bible and related times of fellowship.
- ***Connect to the city:*** We believe God has called Holy Trinity Church to be on a mission for his kingdom. This desire comes from what we have experienced through being in communion with God, and the resulting joy and hope in our life. We want to include as many people as possible to experience our community. God cares about each and every Chicagoan! Consequently, we give of our own time and resources to serve others in Chicago so that everyone in Chicago can be part of God’s community. Community Groups will endeavor to develop participant’s hearts with a desire to serve the poor and disenfranchised, including by serving as a group during two Hope for Chicago service days.

Community Group gatherings

Community Groups meet weekly in homes from mid-September to early May. Each group may take a slightly different approach, but generally the time (typically 2 hours) is broken down between discussion of a previously assigned Biblical text, prayer, and social interaction over refreshments or periodic dinners.

You are most welcome!

Welcome to Community Groups!

A Journey through Joshua 9—24

We return to the Old Testament book of Joshua. Our studies will cover Joshua chapters 9 through 24. We will continue with the format that we began last fall. The format allows us to engage with the text at several levels in hope that we will better understand the text, God and our ourselves, as well as to help us to apply the text to life.

Objectives of this study guide:

- **Greater growth:** We believe that the daily study of God’s Word is critical for your spiritual growth. We are providing you with materials to study in an accountable context in order to foster greater growth in the Gospel.
- **Greater application:** The opportunity to study a scripture passage a number of times personally, to hear a sermon preached on the text, and then to discuss it in your Community Group will allow for greater understanding and application.

How it works...

We are asking you to engage the Biblical text through:

- *Personal study* - Study each passage on your own, up to three times;
- *A Sunday Sermon* - Hear a sermon preached on the text;
- *Community Group study* - Discuss and apply the passage with the others in your community group.

Personal Study

We suggest that you find a regular time and place for 30 minutes each day to learn from the Scriptures. You will need a pen or pencil, your Bible, a notebook and study materials. In the following pages, each study suggests three readings for each text, along with a set of questions for each reading, each with a slightly different focus.

- *God:* What does this passage tell you about God?
- *Yourself:* What does this passage tell you about yourself (or people in general)?
- *Your life:* What does this passage tell you about how you should live?

Sunday Sermons

Typically each Sunday you will hear a sermon based on the same text as the Community Group study. Our prayer is that the sermon will be a meaningful resource for understanding and applying the Biblical text. The Sunday sermon will also be available online at www.htcchicago.org for those unable to make the service, or if you would like to listen again.

Community Group Study

Most weeks you will have a chance to study and discuss the text together in your community group (see calendar on next page).

Resources

Resources provided through Holy Trinity Church:

In order to help you grow in God's word, we will provide you with the following resources:

1. *The Biblical text* – the attached studies have the applicable Biblical text printed (in most cases; because of the length of some of this study's passages, some have been edited) at the beginning of each study. Our study efforts are primarily a study on the Biblical text.
2. *Personal study questions* – the attached studies contain three sets of questions for each study. Arrange your schedule during the week to allow for three separate readings of this text, attempting to answer the questions to the best of your ability. As things come to mind when interacting with the Biblical text, make them a matter of prayer.
3. *Study Bible Notes from the ESV Study Bible* – Through the generosity of the publisher (Crossway Books), we can provide you with a copy of the ESV Study Bible notes on Joshua. Please request these if you desire this study aid.

Additional optional resources:

If you would like to study Joshua at a more in depth level, we recommend the following commentaries:

Calvin, John, *Joshua*

Hawk, L. Daniel. *Joshua*: In the Berit Olam Old Testament Series,

Hess, R. S. *Joshua*. TOTC. Inter-Varsity, 1996

Wiersbe, Warren W. Be Strong (Joshua), Chariot Victor Publishing

Woudstra, M. The Book of Joshua, NICOT, Eerdmans, 1981

Winter 2010 Calendar

Feb 8	Group Study #1	Joshua 9:1-27 <i>personal study/sermon/group discussion</i>
Feb 15	Group Study #2	Joshua 10:1-28 <i>personal study/sermon/group discussion</i>
Feb 22	Group Study #3	Joshua 10:29—14:5 <i>personal study/sermon/group discussion</i>
Mar 1	Group Study #4	Joshua 14:6-15 <i>personal study/sermon/group discussion</i>
Mar 8	Group Study #5	Joshua 15—21 <i>personal study/sermon /group discussion</i>
Mar 15	Group Study #6	Joshua 22:1-34 <i>personal study/sermon/group discussion</i>
Mar 22	Group Study #7	Joshua 23:1-16 <i>personal study/sermon/group discussion</i>
Mar 29	Group Study #8	Joshua 24:1-33 <i>personal study/sermon/group discussion</i>
Apr 4	No group studies until the week of April 12	

Study #1: Joshua 9:1-27

Week 1 – Week of February 8th

Community Group calendar: Study #1

Text: **Joshua 9:1-27**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermon preached on February 7th from Joshua 9:1-27
- Group discussion during week of February 8th

Joshua 9:1-27 (ESV)

As soon as all the kings who were beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland all along the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, heard of this, [2] they gathered together as one to fight against Joshua and Israel.

[3] But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, [4] they on their part acted with cunning and went and made ready provisions and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, [5] with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes. And all their provisions were dry and crumbly. [6] And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant country, so now make a covenant with us." [7] But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a covenant with you?" [8] They said to Joshua, "We are your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who are you? And where do you come from?" [9] They said to him, "From a very distant country your servants have come, because of the name of the Lord your God. For we have heard a report of him, and all that he did in Egypt, [10] and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth. [11] So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, "Take provisions in your hand for the journey and go to meet them and say to them, "We are your servants. Come now, make a covenant with us." ' [12] Here is our bread. It was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey on the day we set out to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and crumbly. [13] These wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they have burst. And these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey." [14] So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the Lord. [15] And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore to them.

[16] At the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors and that they lived among them. [17] And the people of Israel set out and reached their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. [18] But the people of Israel did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel. Then all the congregation murmured against the leaders. [19] But all the leaders said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel, and now we may not touch them. [20] This we will do to them: let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath that we swore to them." [21] And the leaders said to them, "Let them live." So they

became cutters of wood and drawers of water for all the congregation, just as the leaders had said of them.

[22] Joshua summoned them, and he said to them, "Why did you deceive us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' when you dwell among us? [23] Now therefore you are cursed, and some of you shall never be anything but servants, cutters of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God." [24] They answered Joshua, "Because it was told to your servants for a certainty that the Lord your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you—so we feared greatly for our lives because of you and did this thing. [25] And now, behold, we are in your hand. Whatever seems good and right in your sight to do to us, do it." [26] So he did this to them and delivered them out of the hand of the people of Israel, and they did not kill them. [27] But Joshua made them that day cutters of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, to this day, in the place that he should choose.

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. Where does the Lord come into clear view in this week's text? See vv. 9, 14, 18, 24.
2. What do these verses say or suggest about God's reputation in Canaan?
3. What had the inhabitants of Canaan "heard" in vv. 1 and 3?
4. How do the verses above compare with what we've seen earlier in the book of Joshua (see Joshua 2:10-11; 5:1; notice also Joshua 10:1-2)?

Second Reading – What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. What do you make of the contrast that we see in Joshua 9:1-2 and vv. 3ff?
2. Compare and contrast the actions of the coalition of kings in vv. 1-2 and the actions of the inhabitants of Gibeon in vv. 3ff. What was the motivation in each case?
3. Comment on the actions of Joshua and the leaders of Israel in response to the Gibeonites. What did they do right? What did they do wrong?

Third Reading – What are the "take aways" from the text as to how we should live?

1. What things were missing from the processing of this matter by Israel's leaders? How do Proverbs 3:5-6 speak to the issue at hand?
2. How can those who are marked for God's judgment today escape judgment? What's the danger of "personal escape" plans and strategies?
3. The book of Joshua is about God's people possessing what God has promised, about God's people entering into their inheritance. What can hinder God's people from fully possessing what He has promised?
4. What prayer requests emerge from the study of this passage?

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests

Study #2: Joshua 10:1-28

Week 2 - **Week of February 15th**

Community Group calendar: **Study #2**

Text: **Joshua 10:1-28**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermon preached on February 14th from Joshua 10:1-28
- Group discussion during week of February 15th

Joshua 10:1-28 (ESV)

As soon as Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had captured Ai and had devoted it to destruction, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, [2] he feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were warriors. [3] So Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon, saying, [4] "Come up to me and help me, and let us strike Gibeon. For it has made peace with Joshua and with the people of Israel." [5] Then the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered their forces and went up with all their armies and encamped against Gibeon and made war against it.

[6] And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, "Do not relax your hand from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country are gathered against us." [7] So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. [8] And the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you." [9] So Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched up all night from Gilgal. [10] And the Lord threw them into a panic before Israel, who struck them with a great blow at Gibeon and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah. [11] And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth-horon, the Lord threw down large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

[12] At that time Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the Lord gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still at Gibeon,

and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."

[13] And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped,
until the nation took vengeance on their enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. [14] There has been no day like it before or since, when the Lord obeyed the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel.

[15] So Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

[16] These five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah. [17] And it was told to Joshua, "The five kings have been found, hidden in the cave at Makkedah." [18] And Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave and set men by it to guard them, [19] but do not stay there yourselves. Pursue your enemies; attack their rear guard. Do not let them enter their cities, for the Lord your God has given them into your hand." [20] When Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished striking them with a great blow until they were wiped out, and when the remnant that remained of them had entered into the fortified cities, [21] then all the people returned safe to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah. Not a man moved his tongue against any of the people of Israel.

[22] Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me from the cave." [23] And they did so, and brought those five kings out to him from the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. [24] And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, "Come near; put your feet on the necks of these kings." Then they came near and put their feet on their necks. [25] And Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous. For thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight." [26] And afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees. And they hung on the trees until evening. [27] But at the time of the going down of the sun, Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and they set large stones against the mouth of the cave, which remain to this very day.

[28] As for Makkedah, Joshua captured it on that day and struck it, and its king, with the edge of the sword. He devoted to destruction every person in it; he left none remaining. And he did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. In what ways was the Lord directly or indirectly involved in the defeat of the enemy in this week's text?
2. In what ways do we see Joshua 1:5-9 fulfilled in Joshua 10:1-28?
3. Which verses show that the Lord controlled the outcome of the battle? Note the actions of the Lord.

Second Reading –What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. What words describe Joshua in this week's text?

2. How do the words “A promise is a promise!” come into focus in Joshua 10?
3. What are the surprises in the text?
4. Does this text anticipate the gospel in any way? If so, how so?
5. If you were a leader in Israel’s army, how might you have felt under the circumstances of Joshua 10? Note Joshua’s words his troops in v. 25. They echo words heard earlier in the chapter (v. 8) and in the book (1:9), words that are needed for all in the process on inheriting what the Lord has promised!

Third Reading – What are the “take aways” from the text as to how we should live?

1. How can we be assured when we find ourselves faced with “against the odds” challenges?
2. What are the opposing forces that Christians face today as they move forward in the Christian life?
3. What kind of things intimidate us as we move forward in the Christian life in the midst of opposing forces?
4. How does Christ our Captain reassure us when we face enemy forces?
5. Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text for application to your life.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests

Study #3: Joshua 10:29—14:5

Week 3 - **Week of February 22nd**

Community Group calendar: **Study #3**

Text: **Joshua 10:29—14:5**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermon preached on February 21st from Joshua 10:29—14:5
- Group discussion during week of February 22nd

The Conquests of Southern and Northern Canaan—Joshua 10:29—11:23

Joshua 10:29-43 (ESV)

Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against Libnah. [30] And the Lord gave it also and its king into the hand of Israel. And he struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it; he left none remaining in it. And he did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

[31] Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish and laid siege to it and fought against it. [32] And the Lord gave Lachish into the hand of Israel, and he captured it on the second day and struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it, as he had done to Libnah.

[33] Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish. And Joshua struck him and his people, until he left none remaining.

[34] Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon. And they laid siege to it and fought against it. [35] And they captured it on that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword. And he devoted every person in it to destruction that day, as he had done to Lachish.

[36] Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron. And they fought against it

[37] and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword, and its king and its towns, and every person in it. He left none remaining, as he had done to Eglon, and devoted it to destruction and every person in it.

[38] Then Joshua and all Israel with him turned back to Debir and fought against it

[39] and he captured it with its king and all its towns. And they struck them with the edge of the sword and devoted to destruction every person in it; he left none remaining. Just as he had done to Hebron and to Libnah and its king, so he did to Debir and to its king.

[40] So Joshua struck the whole land, the hill country and the Negeb and the lowland and the slopes, and all their kings. He left none remaining, but devoted to destruction all that breathed, just as the Lord God of Israel commanded. [41] And Joshua struck them from Kadesh-barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, as far as Gibeon. [42] And Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. [43] Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

Notes:

1. The pattern of victory continues in Canaan with the conquest of southern Canaan (10:29-43) and the conquest of northern Canaan (11:1-22).
2. Joshua 11:23 is a summary verse. *So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord had spoken to Moses. And Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.* The verse notes that the entire land was taken and that war had ceased. It also previews what's ahead in the book—the division of the land by tribal allotment.
3. Joshua 12:1-24 is a “trophy case” of sorts in that it lists the conquests of kings by Moses and Joshua.
4. Joshua 13. War is behind the children of Israel, the division of the land is before them. The chapter opens with an elderly Joshua being reminded that much land needs to be possessed (v. 1) and allotted (vv. 6b-7).

5. Joshua 13:8-33 reviews what has been allotted east of the Jordan and the allotments west of the Jordan begin in Joshua 14—beginning with Caleb and the tribe of Judah.

Kings Defeated by Moses and Joshua under the Lord's Leadership!—Joshua 12:1-24

[12:1] Now these are the kings of the land whom the people of Israel defeated and took possession of their land beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon, with all the Arabah eastward:... [6] Moses, the servant of the Lord, and the people of Israel defeated them. And Moses the servant of the Lord gave their land for a possession to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

[7] And these are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the people of Israel defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the Valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, that rises toward Seir (and Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their allotments,... in all, thirty-one kings.

Lands Still to Be Conquered—Joshua 13:1-7

[13:1] Now Joshua was old and advanced in years, and the Lord said to him, "You are old and advanced in years, and there remains yet very much land to possess. [2] This is the land that yet remains: I myself will drive them out from before the people of Israel. Only allot the land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you. [7] Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh."

The Inheritance East of the Jordan—Joshua 13:8-33

[8] With the other half of the tribe of Manasseh the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the Lord gave them:...These are the inheritances that Moses distributed in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan east of Jericho. [33] But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance; the Lord God of Israel is their inheritance, just as he said to them.

The Inheritance West of the Jordan—Joshua 14:1-5

[14:1] These are the inheritances that the people of Israel received in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel gave them to inherit. [2] Their inheritance was by lot, just as the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses for the nine and one-half tribes. [3] For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan, but to the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. [4] For the people of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. And no portion was given to the Levites in the land, but only cities to dwell in, with their pasturelands for their livestock and their substance. [5] The people of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses; they allotted the land.

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. While Moses and Joshua are the human players in the narrative, who actually is the main character in the story?
2. What does the text say about God's role in securing the land of Israel's inheritance? See Joshua 10:30, 32, 42.
3. Though the human players changed—the Lord's promise, presence and power prevailed!

Second Reading –What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. While the Lord is the captain and ultimate victor in Israel’s battles, note what the text says about Joshua and Israel’s activities (see 10:29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41).
2. How would you describe the language of the verses noted above?
3. Joshua 10:40 notes that the Israelites were doing this at the “command” of God. Read Deuteronomy 20:10-18. What were the Lord’s directions to Israel regarding cities that were far away from Israel’s inheritance and those cities that were near?
4. Joshua 11:15 is a key verse. Read it and note particularly that, “He left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.”

Third Reading – What are the “take aways” from the text as to how we should live?

1. The perennial enemies of the people of God are the world, the flesh and the devil. What do faith and obedience have to do with victory over our foes—forces that keep us from the Lord’s best for us?
2. How does the gospel (the cross-work of Christ) speak to us through passages like the one before us?
3. How might passages like Colossian 3:5-11 and Ephesians 6:10-20 factor into the warfare of believers today?
4. Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text for application to your life.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests

Study #4: Joshua 14:6-15

Week 4 – **Week of March 1st**

Community Group calendar: **Study #4**

Text: **Joshua 14:6-15**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermon preached on February 28th from Joshua 14:6-15
- Group discussion during week of February 1st

Joshua 14:6-15 (ESV)

Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the Lord said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. [7] I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. [8] But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the Lord my God. [9] And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.' [10] And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the Lord spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. [11] I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. [12] So now give me this hill country of which the Lord spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the Lord said."

[13] Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. [14] Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the Lord, the God of Israel. [15] Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba. (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. Read Numbers chapters 13 and 14. What do we learn from there and from this week's passage about "promise" and "fulfillment"?
2. What's the Lord's testimony concerning Caleb in Numbers 14:24? Where do we see such words echoed in this week's passage?
3. The Lord's power to preserve length and strength of days and faith come into focus in Joshua 14:10-12. These are worthy of reflection and comment.

Second Reading –What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. Scripture's testimony of Caleb is that he "wholly followed the Lord." What's involved in wholly following the Lord?
2. In Caleb we have a man of courage. Are you more inclined to make "the hearts of people to melt" or to encourage their faith by your words and acts of faith?
3. How does Christ or the gospel come into the picture in Joshua 14:6-15? How did Christ fully follow God the Father? Consider a passage like Hebrews 12:1-3. See also Psalm 2:7-9 as it concerns our Lord's future heritage.

Third Reading – What are the “take aways” from the text as to how we should live?

1. As you consider your legacy, will it include a testimony that you wholly followed the Lord? What might you need to do to insure that you will leave such a heritage behind?
2. In what areas of our lives might we be tempted to not follow the Lord fully?
3. Evaluate or comment on this statement: *God’s initiatives in this world need godly people who will fully and faithfully follow Him.* Comment on Jesus’ perfect example of this.
4. Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text for application to your life.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests

Study #5: Joshua 15:1—21:45

Week 5– **March 8th**

Community Group calendar: **Study #5**

Text: **Joshua 15:1—21:45**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermon preached on March 7th from Joshua 15—21
- Group discussion during week of March 8th

Notes:

1. The division of the lands west of the Jordan is introduced in Joshua 14:1-5.
2. Caleb, rightly so, is at the “head of the line”—Joshua 14:6-15. He is the model for overcoming, conquering and inheriting (as such, a type of the Lord Jesus!).
3. The inheritance for Joshua, as the leader and other person of prototypical person of faith, comes at the end of the allotment section for the tribes—Joshua 19:49-50. Joshua’s faith is seen throughout the narrative, thus no special section is needed for him like it was for Caleb.
4. The tribe allotment section ends in Joshua 19:51. Notice how it serves as a bookend to 14:1.
5. Chapters 20 and 21 show the special allotments for cities of refuge and the Levites.
6. Joshua 21:43-45 are key summary verses for the book up to this point.

7. Throughout the book it seems clear that the author show that the Lord had given “the blueprint” to Moses and that Joshua—with blueprint in hand—courageously executed the plan. See Joshua 1:7, 13; 4:10; 8:31, 33, 35; 9:24; 11:12, 15, 20, 23; 14:2, 5; 17:4; 21:2, 8; 22:2, 5.

Joshua 21:43-45 (ESV)

[43] Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. [44] And the Lord gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the Lord had given all their enemies into their hands. [45] Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. According to the text above, what did the Lord give to Israel?
2. How do Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 26:3; 28:4, 13 factor into all of this?
3. Connect Joshua 21:44b to Joshua 1:5.
4. Count the “alls” in Joshua 21:23-45. What’s their significance?

Second Reading –What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. While the verses above are rightly God-centered, as you look at the book of Joshua, what role did leadership and the people play in conquest of the land?
2. Who were the major players and their roles? What was Moses’ role in all of this?
3. What about Joshua? What about the people of Israel?
4. What were are the obstacles faced in inheriting what the Lord had promised?
5. How do we overcome the various points of resistance in possessing what the Lord has promised?

Third Reading – What are the “take aways” from the text as to how we should live?

1. If you were to give the verses above a title, what would it be?
2. If you were to give an exhortation to yourself or others from these verses, what would it be?
3. Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text for application to your life.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests

Study #6: Joshua 22:1-34

Week 6 – **Week of March 8th**

Community Group calendar: **Study #6**

Text: **Joshua 22:1-34**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermons preached on March 14th from Joshua 22:1-34
- Group discussion during week of March 15th

Joshua 22:1-34 (ESV)

At that time Joshua summoned the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, [2] and said to them, "You have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you and have obeyed my voice in all that I have commanded you. [3] You have not forsaken your brothers these many days, down to this day, but have been careful to keep the charge of the Lord your God. [4] And now the Lord your God has given rest to your brothers, as he promised them. Therefore turn and go to your tents in the land where your possession lies, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you on the other side of the Jordan. [5] Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." [6] So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

[7] Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua had given a possession beside their brothers in the land west of the Jordan. And when Joshua sent them away to their homes and blessed them, [8] he said to them, "Go back to your tents with much wealth and with very much livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, and iron, and with much clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers." [9] So the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned home, parting from the people of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, their own land of which they had possessed themselves by command of the Lord through Moses.

[10] And when they came to the region of the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar of imposing size. [11] And the people of Israel heard it said, "Behold, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built the altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region about the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the people of Israel." [12] And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to make war against them.

[13] Then the people of Israel sent to the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, [14]

and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, every one of them the head of a family among the clans of Israel. [15] And they came to the people of Reuben, the people of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they said to them, [16] "Thus says the whole congregation of the Lord, 'What is this breach of faith that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning away this day from following the Lord by building yourselves an altar this day in rebellion against the Lord? [17] Have we not had enough of the sin at Peor from which even yet we have not cleansed ourselves, and for which there came a plague upon the congregation of the Lord, [18] that you too must turn away this day from following the Lord? And if you too rebel against the Lord today then tomorrow he will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel. [19] But now, if the land of your possession is unclean, pass over into the Lord's land where the Lord's tabernacle stands, and take for yourselves a possession among us. Only do not rebel against the Lord or make us as rebels by building for yourselves an altar other than the altar of the Lord our God. [20] Did not Achan the son of Zerah break faith in the matter of the devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? And he did not perish alone for his iniquity.' "

[21] Then the people of Reuben, the people of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh said in answer to the heads of the families of Israel, [22] "The Mighty One, God, the Lord! The Mighty One, God, the Lord! He knows; and let Israel itself know! If it was in rebellion or in breach of faith against the Lord, do not spare us today

[23] for building an altar to turn away from following the Lord. Or if we did so to offer burnt offerings or grain offerings or peace offerings on it, may the Lord himself take vengeance. [24] No, but we did it from fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, 'What have you to do with the Lord, the God of Israel? [25] For the Lord has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you, you people of Reuben and people of Gad. You have no portion in the Lord.' So your children might make our children cease to worship the Lord. [26] Therefore we said, 'Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, [27] but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we do perform the service of the Lord in his presence with our burnt offerings and sacrifices and peace offerings, so your children will not say to our children in time to come, "You have no portion in the Lord." ' [28] And we thought, If this should be said to us or to our descendants in time to come, we should say, 'Behold, the copy of the altar of the Lord, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifice, but to be a witness between us and you.' [29] Far be it from us that we should rebel against the Lord and turn away this day from following the Lord by building an altar for burnt offering, grain offering, or sacrifice, other than the altar of the Lord our God that stands before his tabernacle!"

[30] When Phinehas the priest and the chiefs of the congregation, the heads of the families of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh spoke, it was good in their eyes. [31] And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh, "Today we know that the Lord is in our midst, because you have not committed this breach of faith against the Lord. Now you have delivered the people of Israel from the hand of the Lord."

[32] Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the chiefs, returned from the people of Reuben and the people of Gad in the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the people of Israel, and brought back word to them. [33] And the report was good in the eyes of the people of Israel. And the people of Israel blessed God and spoke no more of making war against them to destroy the land where the people of Reuben and the people of Gad were

settled. [34] The people of Reuben and the people of Gad called the altar Witness, "For," they said, "it is a witness between us that the Lord is God."

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. What words or phrases in this week's text convey the perspective of God's people as to who the Lord is?
2. What was the concern of the western tribes regarding the tribes east of the Jordan?
3. What do vv. 17-20 say about the Lord? How had He disciplined His people in the past?

Second Reading –What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. "Commitment" is a key word that describes what we see in this text on several levels.
 - a. Commitment to brothers (vv. 8-9).
 - b. Commitment to unity (vv. 24-29) amongst brothers.
 - c. Commitment to God—as expressed by both the eastern tribes and the western tribes.
 - d. Comment on the words and actions that express the commitments to God and their brothers.
2. What does this text tell us about confrontation? When is it right to confront a person or group? What keeps us from loving confrontation?
3. Are there any surprises in the text?
4. What does this text say about the zeal of God's people during this era?

Third Reading – What are the "take aways" from the text as to how we should live?

1. Is there a "gospel" answer to the dilemma in this week's text? If so, what might it be?
2. What are some things that you might be encouraged to do or not do because of this week's text?
3. Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text for application to your life.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests

Study #7: Joshua 23:1-16

Week 7 – **Week of March 22nd**

Community Group calendar: **Study #7**

Text: **Joshua 23:1-16**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermon preached on March 21st from Joshua 23:1-16
- Group discussion during week of March 22nd

Joshua 23:1-16 (ESV)

A long time afterward, when the Lord had given rest to Israel from all their surrounding enemies, and Joshua was old and well advanced in years, [2] Joshua summoned all Israel, its elders and heads, its judges and officers, and said to them, "I am now old and well advanced in years. [3] And you have seen all that the Lord your God has done to all these nations for your sake, for it is the Lord your God who has fought for you. [4] Behold, I have allotted to you as an inheritance for your tribes those nations that remain, along with all the nations that I have already cut off, from the Jordan to the Great Sea in the west. [5] The Lord your God will push them back before you and drive them out of your sight. And you shall possess their land, just as the Lord your God promised you. [6] Therefore, be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left, [7] that you may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them, [8] but you shall cling to the Lord your God just as you have done to this day. [9] For the Lord has driven out before you great and strong nations. And as for you, no man has been able to stand before you to this day. [10] One man of you puts to flight a thousand, since it is the Lord your God who fights for you, just as he promised you. [11] Be very careful, therefore, to love the Lord your God. [12] For if you turn back and cling to the remnant of these nations remaining among you and make marriages with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, [13] know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations before you, but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good ground that the Lord your God has given you.

[14] "And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good things that the Lord your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed. [15] But just as all the good things that the Lord your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for you, so the Lord will bring upon you all the evil things, until he has destroyed you from off this good land that the Lord your God has given you, [16] if you transgress the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them. Then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and you shall perish quickly from off the good land that he has given to you."

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. Notice in this week's text the Lord's past and future commitments to His people. What were they? See Joshua 23:3, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15.

2. Summarize in a “word” or brief statement the Lord’s commitment to His people?

Second Reading –What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. In view of the Lord’s kindnesses (noted above), what were the responsibilities of God’s people? See Joshua 23:6, 8, 11.
2. What would be the consequences of disobedience for the people of God? See vv. 15-16.
3. What thoughts and feelings might you have if you were in the assembly where the aged Joshua (v. 2), nearing death (v. 14), was speaking to the leaders of the nation?
4. Are there any parallels to this scene in the gospels or other NT texts? See Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:36-49; John 13-16; Acts 1:4-11; Acts 20:17-38.

Third Reading – What are the “take aways” from the text as to how we should live?

1. Imagine: You’re in the audience when Joshua gave his speech. What difference will it make in your life?
2. What has the Lord done for you in and through His Son? In view of what Christ has done for you, what are some your commitments to Him?
3. Do you ever think of the consequences of not living as one purchased through the sacrificial work of Jesus? What might some of the consequences be?
4. Communion is a special time of remembering and reflecting on God’s work on your behalf through His Son. How can you make the next communion service more special for yourself?
5. Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text for application to your life.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests

Study #8: Joshua 24:1-33

Week 7 – **Week of March 29th**

Community Group calendar: **Study #8**

Text: **Joshua 24:1-33**

Ways in which you will interact with the text:

- Personal study
- Listen to sermon preached on March 28th from Joshua 24:1-33
- Group discussion during week of March 29th

Joshua 24:1-33 (ESV)

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God. [2] And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. [3] Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac. [4] And to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. [5] And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it, and afterward I brought you out.

[6] "Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. [7] And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness a long time. [8] Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. [9] Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you, [10] but I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I delivered you out of his hand. [11] And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And I gave them into your hand. [12] And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow. [13] I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.'

[14] "Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. [15] And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

[16] Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, [17] for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. [18] And the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God."

[19] But Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. [20] If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good." [21] And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will

serve the Lord." [22] Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." [23] He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the Lord, the God of Israel." [24] And the people said to Joshua, "The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey." [25] So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. [26] And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. [27] And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God." [28] So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

[29] After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being 110 years old. [30] And they buried him in his own inheritance at Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash.

[31] Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the Lord did for Israel.

[32] As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money. It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

[33] And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of Phinehas his son, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

First Reading – What does the text tell us about God?

1. Joshua 24:2 begins with Joshua speaking in the name of the Lord: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel...." Note the many first person statements that the Lord makes that highlight His work on behalf of His people (vv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13). The Lord's works for His people are catalogued. What are some of those works?
2. What attributes of God come into view in vv. 19-20?
3. Compare Joshua 24:29-33 with Genesis 50:22-26. What is the author communicating? Note the years of the lives of Joseph and Joshua. Note the tribe that both came from. But more importantly note that the Lord has kept His promises!

Second Reading –What does the text tell us about people/ourselves?

1. If the first part of the chapter could be captioned "God's Works for His People," vv. 14-15 could be captioned "The Requirements of God's People." What were those requirements?
2. What are the commitments of the people in vv. 16-18, 21, 24?
3. What ceremonies in the Christian life express/affirm our covenant commitments to the Lord in view of His grace, kindness and mercy to us?
4. What glimpses of the gospel do we see in this chapter?

Third Reading – What are the "take aways" from the text as to how we should live?

1. What's your response to seeing the how the Lord kept His promises to the children of Israel to bring them into the land?
2. What we see here is but one of multitudes of biblical accounts of the Lord's trustworthiness. Think of God's big promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, 7; His promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16; His new covenant promises as recorded in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and the fulfillment of these promises in the person and work of the Lord Jesus.
3. For a brief but blessed time God's people are situated in God's place, under God's rule. Where those conditions exist, God's kingdom exists.
4. Hebrews chapters 3 and 4 indict unbelief, 3:18-19 as the reason why God's people failed to enter into promised rest. How's your trust and obedience?
5. Write out any prayer requests that come to mind as you read this text for application to your life.

Summarize the passage:

What is the **primary emphasis** of the passage (i.e., a sentence that captures the timeless essence of the passage)?

How might the primary emphasis of the passage **apply to the lives of Christians today** (i.e., how should you respond to this passage in thought and behavior)?

Prayer requests
