

Keep Your Promise

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Choose to Love and Serve God

Joshua 24:1-3, 13-15, 21-24

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Whether Christian or non-Christian, we're called upon to make choices which will have significant results. Frances Schaeffer

Unifying Principle:

At critical junctures in life, people are forced to make life-changing decisions. How do they decide which path to take? When challenged by Joshua to serve God or other gods, the Israelites definitely chose to serve God.

Joshua Invites Israel to Shechem

Joshua 24:1-3

The call issued by God Himself: (1) The summons for all Israel to gather at Shechem was made by Joshua. This was an excellent place for this speech.

The call to remember the history of redemption: (2-3)

- a. God saved Abraham from a life of idolatry and false worship: (2) Joshua goes all the way back to Terah and Abraham to remind them that just as God provided for the patriarchs he provides for Israel out of their sin and into his grace.
- b. God gave Isaac as the promised seed. (3) The promised seed has a threefold meaning.
 - 1) The promised seed means Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites. "... *And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful...*" (Gen. 17:6-7)
 - 2) The promised seed is a reference to the Messiah. "...*He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*" (Gal. 3:8)
 - 3) The promised seed is a reference to all the descendants of faith. "*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus...*" (Gal. 3:26, 29)

Joshua Encourages Israel to Serve the Lord

Joshua 24:13-15

- c. God freely gave the Promised Land to His people. (13)
 1. The land they presently possessed.
 2. The land they did not deserve.

The call to make a decision for the Lord: (14-15)

- a. The strong exhortation: (14) Up to this point, Joshua had been preaching the prophetic message of the Lord, but now he shared from his heart. Two actions were necessary.
 - 1) Fear the Lord.

- 2) Serve the Lord. The Lord alone was to be served-exclusively.
- b. The decision to be made: (15) Choose this day whom you will serve.
 - 1) The false gods of your forefathers.
 - 2) The Lord-God of Joshua and his family:

Israel Promises to Serve the Lord

Joshua 24:21-24

- a. An emphatic response: The people stressed their renewed commitment. (21)
- b. The people were witnesses against themselves-accountable for their decisions. (22)
 - 1) Must put away all false gods and worship. (23)
 - 2) Must do what they profess: (24)

Spiritual Thought: There are two lessons for us:

- 1) God is holy and He is jealous of His holiness.
- 2) There is to be a final judgment, a day when the world will end and every human being will stand before God to be judged.

The renewed covenant or commitment memorialized: (25) To be remembered, never forgotten.

Principle: You can't choose God and someone else; serving the Lord all-out, sold-out, wholehearted commitment.

References: Holman OT Commentary

The Communicator's Commentary