



*Joshua's Farewell Address (1)*  
*Joshua 23*

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Joshua 23  
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The Fellowship of Ailbe  
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## Joshua 23: Introduction

Joshua's death is approaching, and much work remains to be done. Already it seems the people of God were growing weary of the work of laying hold on God's promises, and were slipping into a kind of complacency that would ultimately be their undoing.

Joshua was determined to do what he could to avert that calamity. He calls the tribes together to remind them of the goodness of God, warn them of His wrath against unfaithfulness, and charge them with continuing the work of subduing and settling the land of promise.

Joshua is a great if flawed leader, and in his farewell address we glimpse not only his true heart, but his determination to leave a legacy of faithfulness in the generations that would follow him.

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T. M. Moore, Principal  
[tmmoore@ailbe.org](mailto:tmmoore@ailbe.org)

## 1 The Faithfulness of God

*Read Joshua 23.1-5.*

*Reflect.*

1. Joshua reviews the work of the Lord for His people. Why is it a good idea to do this from time to time?
2. What seems to be the situation in Israel as far as the Canaanites are concerned? Is that “good enough” for Joshua?

*Think about it.*

Joshua feels a sense of responsibility to keep the people focused on their calling. They have not yet completed driving out all the Canaanites, and it seems increasingly unlikely that they will do so. But Joshua feels like he needs to urge them on in this work, anyway.

In his farewell address, Joshua does not tout his own achievements. He mentions his role in cutting off the nations and dividing the land (v. 4), but he focuses on the Lord and recalls the Lord's faithfulness for all that has been accomplished thus far. In Joshua's mind, the conquest of Canaan has been all about the Lord. He works through leaders and people alike, but His is the power to accomplish His will and fulfill His promises.

Joshua does not want the people to become complacent, so, in verse 5, he reminds them that much remains to be done. Gaining the promises of God is ongoing, generation-spanning work. But Joshua also reminds them that God, Who has been faithful thus far, will be faithful in all that He has promised, and all the land of promise will ultimately be theirs.

If, that is, they take Joshua's exhortation to heart and keep focused on God and His Word.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Sometimes, as Christians, our attitude toward the Lord can be “What have You done for me lately?” or “What can You do for me next?” Is this the right way to think about the promises of God?
2. Why will we never be finished in our work of laying hold on the promises of God? For Israel, it was a constant war against pagan peoples and pagan ways. What is it for us?
3. Why is it a good idea to review and rehearse God's faithfulness to His people in previous generations?

*“The pious solicitude of Joshua is here also set forth, for the imitation of all who are in authority. For as the father of a family will not be considered sufficiently provident if he thinks of his children only till the end of his own life, and does not extend his care farther, studying as much as in him lies to do them good even when he is dead; so good magistrates and rulers ought carefully to provide that the well arranged condition of affairs as they leave them, be confirmed and prolonged to a distant period.” John Calvin, Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*Today, Lord, Your precious and very great promises await. In particular, today I am praying and planning to...*

*Pray Psalm 44.1-8.*

Meditate as you pray on all the ways God has been faithful to you in the past. Thank Him for His faithfulness to our ancient forebears, and call on Him to help you be faithful in serving Him in the day ahead.

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**Psalm 44.1-8, 23-26** (*Faithfulness: Great is Thy Faithfulness*)

O God our ears have heard, ancients have taught us,  
All that You did for them long years ago,  
How by Your hand You defeated the nations,  
And to the promised land let Israel go.

*Refrain vv. 23-26*

Rise up, awake, O Lord! Hide not Your face from us,  
See our affliction, our suffering and pain!  
See how our soul is sunk down with oppression;  
Rise up and help and redeem us we pray!

Not by their sword did they drive out the nations;  
Not by their arm did they settle the land.  
Your saving mercy and light triumphed for them:  
Victories for us, our King, please now command.

*Refrain*

Through You shall we all our enemies vanquish;  
Them will we trample in Your mighty Name.  
We will not trust in our strength or our wisdom;  
Jesus will save us; we'll boast of His fame!

*Refrain*

## 2 Be Very Courageous!

*Read Joshua 23.6-8.*

*Reflect.*

1. Joshua uses the same words God used with him to charge the leaders of Israel. Why?
2. Why must there be no compromise with paganism? Is this still a valid message for God's people?

*Think about it.*

I'm persuaded that the greatest need of the people of God today and in every generation is courage. This is why God sent His Holy Spirit – the *Encourager* – into our hearts, so that, in Him and His power, we might go beyond ourselves day by day in laying hold on the precious and very great promises of God which are in Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 1.20; 2 Pet. 1.4).

What the Spirit does for believers today, Joshua sought to do for the leaders and people who would succeed him in Israel.

Joshua called the leaders and people of Israel to “be very courageous,” for unless they were, they would give in to their fears, doubt God's as-yet-unrealized promises, and just hunker down in their new homes and hope for the best. Courage is a disposition of the heart – from which flow the issues of life (Prov. 4.23) – which enables us to overcome fear, banish doubt, nurture hope and faith, and step forward into new challenges in the life of faith. The land of Canaan was conquered, but not yet subdued. As God had charged Joshua to be courageous and go forward in faith, so Joshua now charges the leaders of Israel to do the same.

They must hew to the path marked out by God's Law, and not allow themselves to be lured or lulled into taking up the practices of unbelieving peoples. No place must be allowed for pagan religious practices, or even for mentioning the names of pagan deities. It would take courage to “hold fast to the LORD your God” in the face of so much remaining work and so many lingering temptations, but they must seek the Lord and *encourage* one another, so that they might continue to lay hold on the promises of God.

Joshua's farewell message comes in two parts. It's not clear whether these – chapters 23 and 24 – were separate gatherings or part of the same gathering of God's people (23.1, 2 and 24.1). My inclination is to see them as two parts of the same address and charge, each with a different flavor and flare, but each focused on the same end: “Be courageous!”

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Do you agree that courage is the greatest need of God's people today? Why or why not?
2. How does one become “very courageous”? What is the source of courage? Is there a connection between being courageous and “holding fast” to the Lord? Explain.
3. We live in a world awash in pagan – unbelieving – ways, culture, ideals, morals, practices, and priorities. How can believers and their churches resist the temptation to accommodate or conform to pagan ways?

*“The expression, Be you very courageous, as has elsewhere been said, denotes serious study, because in the great weakness of our nature no man will set about the thorough observance of the Law, if he does not exert himself above his strength. Attention ought also to be paid to the definition of true obedience which is here repeated from Moses, (Deuteronomy 5:32) and said to consist in*

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*not turning either to the right hand or the left.” John Calvin, Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*Lord, wherever I lack the courage to obey You, and to hold fast to You and Your Word, let Your Spirit encourage me, and I will...*

*Pray Psalm 104.24-35.*

As you contemplate the power and magnitude of God's works, and the courage-giving presence of His Spirit with you, sing and praise and meditate on God, and commit your day in all its details to Him.

**Psalm 104.24-35** (*Creation: Exalt the Lord, His Praise Proclaim*)

How many are Your works, O Lord,  
Which You have created by Your Word!  
The earth and sea with creatures teem –  
They look to You to care and feed.  
You give to them, they gather all;  
You hide Your face, they fail and fall.  
You take their breath, they gasp and die;  
You send Your Spirit, they revive.

Lord, let Your glory long endure;  
Rejoice! His works are ever sure!  
He looks on earth, it quails and quakes,  
As we our songs of praises make.  
Lord, let our meditation rise  
And bring great pleasure in Your eyes.  
Consumed shall sinners ever be –  
O, bless and praise the Lord with me!

### 3 Love the Lord

*Read Joshua 23.9-11.*

*Reflect.*

1. What motive does Joshua offer in urging the people to love the Lord? How does that apply to us?
2. How can we know that we love the Lord?

*Think about it.*

Joshua understands that the courage Israel needs to continue seeking the promises of God comes from holding fast to Him in love (vv. 8, 11). He reminds the people of how God has fought for them, and how He has kept His promises faithfully. These are measures of His great love for His people: He delivers them from captivity, spreads out before them precious and very great promises, shows them by commandments and examples how they must live to realize those promises, then comes among them to fight for them and lead them into His blessings.

Since God has shown such love for His people, how can Israel fail to love Him with all their heart, soul, and strength (Deut. 6.4, 5)? And yet, they will fail, because they do not yet have the kind of heart for God that only He can give, and that He gives by His Spirit, according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Deut. 30.1-10; Ezek. 36.26, 27; Gal. 4.3-7). The story of Joshua, and of the entire Old Testament, is of the futility of our seeking the blessings of God on our own strength. Unless the Lord defeats the enemy of our soul, and captures our hearts for Himself, we have no hope of salvation or life eternal. Thus, Joshua and all the Old Testament, give us hope, but not in our own strength or efforts, but in God, Who fights our battles in Jesus and gains the victory our hearts sorely need.

That phrase, “take careful heed to yourselves,” is literally, “guard yourselves exceedingly.” The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and yet from it flow the issues of life (Jer. 17.9; Prov. 4.23). Even we who have a new heart in Jesus Christ must watch our hearts with all diligence. The world of Joshua’s day was filled with distractions, diversions, and allurements of various kinds, to capture the hearts of God’s people and lead them to compromise and disobedience. The world of our day is just the same. But whereas the people of Joshua’s day did not have a heart for God, we in whom the Spirit has come to dwell, and Who has given us a new heart, must be extra vigilant, lest we fail to obtain all the precious and very great promises that are ours in Jesus Christ.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. What does it mean to “guard yourselves exceedingly”? How should believers keep watch over their hearts, to resist the world, the flesh, and the devil and to keep our hearts devoted to God?
2. Joshua thought it was important to remind Israel of all God had done for them (see also chapter 24). Why? Would this help them to love Him? Should we review and rehearse the many good things God has done for us? Such as?
3. All the promises of God are “Yes!” in Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 1.20; 2 Pet. 1.4). How should knowing this shape the way we seek the promises of God?

*“At length he again exhorts them, as they value their life and safety, to be careful in maintaining love to God. From this source all true obedience springs; for if we do not cling to him with free and ardent affection, we shall study in vain to frame our lives in*

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*accordance with the external form of the Law.” John Calvin, Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*Help me to love You more, Lord Jesus, because only if I love You more will I...*

*Pray Psalm 141.*

Lift your eyes to the Lord, and see Him in His glory; meditate on His beauty; rest in His promises, presence, and power. Give thanks to the Lord accordingly, and seek the mercy and grace you will need for this day's work.

**Psalm 141** (*Truro: Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns*)

O Lord, we call to You in prayer! To us come quickly; hear our cry!  
Receive our prayer as incense sweet, our lifted hands as a sacrifice!

Lord, set a guard upon my mouth; let not my heart to evil bend,  
Nor let me work iniquity in company with wicked men.

Lord, let a righteous man rebuke – a kindness this shall surely be.  
Like healing oil upon my head, Your sweet rebuke shall be to me.

When to the judgment wicked men by God are cast, our words shall tell:  
Like broken sod or fresh plowed ground, so shall their bones be cast to hell!

We lift our eyes to You, O Lord, and refuge seek; Lord, save our soul!  
From every trap and snare redeem; deliver us and make us whole.

## 4 Snares and Traps

*Read Joshua 23.12, 13*

*Reflect.*

1. God will not fulfill His promises to people who refuse to obey His Word. Why not?
2. What would it look like if Israel were to “cling” to the pagan peoples and their ways?

*Think about it.*

This is pretty stern stuff. God is serious about His people clinging only to Him and not dallying with pagan peoples or practices. We saw why early on in our study of the book of Joshua, since pagan ways were so diametrically opposed to God’s ways and the ways of neighbor love.

Joshua tweaks the noses of the people of Israel with that phrase, “these that remain among you.” Already, it appears, the people of Israel were getting used to having pagan peoples in their midst. No big deal?

Joshua knew better. Presence leads to familiarity leads to acceptance leads to inter-marriage leads to spiritual and moral compromise leads to God withdrawing His blessing from Israel leads to the destruction of His people and their nation.

Sounds like a preview of the rest of the Old Testament, doesn’t it?

The way of unbelief is strewn with traps and snares and scourges and thorns. Why would anyone want to depart God’s path of blessing to travel such a treacherous route? Why do we do so?

Israel had been motivated by the promises of God to enter the land and subdue it. But if they became complacent about those promises and settled into a “good enough for me” way of life, God would withhold His promises and, ultimately, remove His people from the land of promise itself.

Joshua’s closing words to Israel focus on the faithfulness of God and warn God’s people against fickleness in clinging to Him. They will hear him, and even assent to his admonition. But their hearts are not where they ought to be.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Why are Christians tempted to “go back, and cling” to their old ways of thinking, talking, being, and doing? How can we know when we are departing God’s path to walk this one? What should we do then?
2. Securing God’s promises depends on loving and obeying Him. Is this a form of salvation by works? Explain.
3. Why is “snares and traps” and “scourges and thorns” a good way to think about the path of compromise with unbelief? How should Christians help one another keep to the high road and avoid the alluring “short cuts” of sin and unbelief?

*“It is now proper to consider how far this doctrine is applicable to us. It is true a special command was given to the ancient people to destroy the nations of Canaan, and keep aloof from all profane defilements. To us, in the present day, no certain region marks out our precise boundaries; nor are we armed with the sword to slay all the ungodly; we have only to beware of allowing ourselves*

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*to become involved in fellowship with wickedness, by not keeping at a sufficient distance from it. For it is almost impossible, if we mingle with it, spontaneously to avoid receiving some spot or blemish."* John Calvin, *Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*Let there be no sin or moral compromise in me, Lord, but lead me along the righteous path so that today I...*

*Pray Psalm 139.23, 24.*

Listen as the Lord searches your soul and life. Confess any sins and repent as the Lord leads. Devote the day ahead to walking the Lord's path and resisting every byway of sin.

**Psalm 139.23, 24** (*Ripley: Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah, O My Soul*)

Search my heart, O Lord, and know me, as You only, Lord, can do.

Test my thoughts and contemplations, whether they be vain or true.

Let there be no sin in me, Lord, nothing that Your Spirit grieves.

Lead me in the righteous way, Lord, unto everlasting peace!

## 5 The Good Things of the Lord

*Read Joshua 23.14.*

*Reflect.*

1. What did Joshua mean by “the way of all the earth”? How should we approach this reality?
2. Why does Joshua reiterate the reminder of all the good things God had done for His people?

*Think about it.*

Death is the great leveler, “the way of all the earth.” We can see here that Joshua, as he faces the reality of his death, is dwelling on the good things God has done for His people. God is good, faithful, and strong, Joshua says, as much to himself as to those he will be leaving behind.

Dying is not really the issue. *How* we die is. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that, for those who do not know the Lord, death can be a fearful thing (Heb. 2.15). The prospect of death is disturbing to many people. Is this really the end? Will it be painful? Can it be postponed? What happens after I die?

For Joshua, facing death meant looking to God. From the depth of his being, he resonated with confidence in the goodness and power and promises of God. We don't know how much the people of Joshua's day understood about life after death, but they had at least some notion that death was not the end of life, and after death, something beautiful and wonderful awaited them in the presence of God.

Joshua's message to the people of Israel intends to help them keep their eyes on the Lord. They have followed Joshua and looked to him for many years. Joshua's point is that God was doing all the good things that had come to them, and they needed to continue looking to Him. Though Joshua must depart and go “the way of all the earth,” God would never fail nor forsake them.

We're all going to die. We can approach the end of our lives with dread and uncertainty, or, fixing our eyes on Jesus, exalted in glory, we can approach death with indomitable hope, know that while for us to live is Jesus Christ, to die and be with the Lord is true gain (Phil. 1.21).

Trust in God. Rely on His Word. Remember all His faithfulness and the good things He has done. Face death with joyous anticipation, encouraging those who will mourn your passing to set their minds on Christ (Col. 3.1-3).

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. How can you nurture the kind of confidence in the Lord Joshua talks about in this verse? Why is it important that you do so?
2. What is the Christian's great hope? How should this sustain us as we face the prospect of death? As we deal with the death of loved ones?
3. Joshua does what every good leader should do: Work to connect the people he serves with God. We're all leaders in our own Personal Mission Fields. What are the implications of Joshua's example for you?

*“Joshua says that in regard to himself the common end of all is at hand, inasmuch as he, too, was born mortal. These expressions are evidently adapted to console the people, and prevent them from feeling immoderate grief at the bereavement when he should be taken from them. For there cannot be a doubt that his loss filled the people with the deepest regret, when they saw themselves*

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*reduced, as it were, to a mutilated trunk, by being deprived of their head.” John Calvin, Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*Since I must die some day, Lord, grant that every day I may prepare well for that event by...*

*Pray Psalm 23.*

David surveys the present goodness of God as a token of the promise of greater goodness to come. Use this prayer to do the same.

**Psalm 23** (*The Gift of Love: Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire*)

Because the Lord my Shepherd is  
I shall not want, for I am His!  
He makes me lie in pastures full;  
I rest in Him by waters still.

My soul He quickens and will bless;  
He leads in paths of righteousness.  
Though I may walk in death's dark vale,  
I shall not fear – He will not fail!

The Lord is ever by my side;  
His rod and staff with me abide.  
A table rich for me He spreads;  
With oil my Lord anoints my head.

Goodness and mercy, full and free,  
Shall ever after follow me,  
And in the house of God, my Lord,  
Shall I abide forevermore!

## 6 The Harmful Things of the Lord

*Read Joshua 23.15, 16*

*Reflect.*

1. You might like to review Deuteronomy 28 as background for this passage. God promises blessings and curses. How can we avoid the latter and obtain the former?
2. What does it mean to transgress God's covenant? Is it possible to transgress God's new covenant?

*Think about it.*

Joshua reminds the tribes that they are a covenant people. God has entered a covenant with them in which He promises to bless them with His favor, make them a blessing to all nations, and by this means, glorify Himself and restore His world.

A covenant is a solemn bond, which Israel renewed just before they crossed the Jordan River to begin the conquest of the land. By circumcision and the Passover, the people of God acknowledged His gifts and promises, and pledged themselves to faithfulness in pursuing them.

Motivated in their mission by the vision of promises obtained, which God sketched out in Deuteronomy 28.1-14, Israel might have forgotten that the same God Who promises blessings for abiding in His covenant and will, promises curses for those who transgress against Him (Deut. 28.15-68). Flush with God's promised blessings, Israel needed reminding that they would have to continue working hard to abide in those promises, by resisting the allure of paganism and its vain and fleeting promises.

We transgress God's covenant when we set God aside and assume the role of god in our own lives, and then begin enlisting a bevy of lesser deities – things, status, wealth, power, whatever – to aid us in our pursuit of happiness and rest. With pagan peoples still in their midst, and pagan nations to their north, east, and south, Israel would be continuously faced with encouragement and enticements to serve other gods. Joshua sternly reminds them that, if they do this, they embark on a slippery slope that leads to judgment and the revoking of God's blessing.

These are hard words to put before the people of God, but they needed to hear them then, and we need to hear them now.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. We don't like to think of God warning or threatening us for straying from His path (cf. Heb. 12.3-11). Why? As the people of God, do we need such warnings? Explain.
2. Quickly read Deuteronomy 28. Why do you suppose the section on curses is more than 3 times as long as the section on blessings? Should both blessing and sanctions be allowed to motivate our discipleship? Explain.
3. How can we know when we have begun to set God aside in our lives so that we can be our own god in deciding how we should live? How can Christians help one another avoid this snare?

*"The substance of his whole address amounts to this, that as God had proved himself true by his favors and the fulfillment of his promises, so his threatening would not be empty or vain, and he would certainly avenge the profanation of his worship by their*

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*final destruction.” John Calvin, Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*Guard my heart and mind this day, O Lord, so that I may not...*

*Pray Psalm 101.*

Use this psalm to bring to mind the activities of the day ahead, and to commit yourself to serving the Lord in them.

**Psalm 101** (*Jesus, I Come: Out of My Bondage, Sorrow, and Night*)

I will of lovingkindness now sing –  
Praise to You, Lord! Praise to You, Lord!  
Justice and mercy, Lord, let me bring –  
Praise to You, holy Lord!  
I will the blameless way ever heed;  
No worthless thing my eyes shall impede.  
When will You come and care for my need?  
Praise to You, holy Lord!

I will the works of wicked men scorn –  
Praise to You, Lord! Praise to You, Lord!  
They will not grip me, evening or morn:  
Praise to You, holy Lord!  
Separate every sin from my heart;  
Slanderers all from me shall depart.  
I will not suffer pride in my heart:  
Praise to You, holy Lord!

Let me with saints and faithful ones dwell –  
Praise to You, Lord! Praise to You, Lord!  
He Who is just shall care for me well:  
Praise to You, holy Lord!  
Naught of deceit or falsehood shall be  
Ever allowed a place within me.  
Daily let sin and wickedness flee:  
Praise to You, holy Lord!

## 7 Joshua's Farewell Address (1)

*Review Joshua 23.*

*Reflect.*

1. How would you assess Joshua's leadership of the people of Israel? What has he done well? Where could he have done better?
2. How would you describe Joshua's legacy?

*Think about it.*

As the day of his death approaches, Joshua understands that it's not enough that he has led the people of God in conquest of the land of promise, and ensured that each tribe and family has a home. His great desire for his people is that they remain faithful to God's covenant and courageous in continuing the work of laying hold on God's promises.

Joshua's farewell address consists of two parts. Part 1 – chapter 23 – reviews the immediate goodness of God to Israel, and warns about failing to live in love for and trust in Him. Joshua reminds the people that God's covenant consists of both promises and sanctions, the promises if they continue to obey, the sanctions if they depart from the Lord. Just as God has brought many good things to His people, He can bring harmful things to them if they turn away from Him to worship and serve other gods.

Joshua is not seeking anything for himself here, and we give him credit for that. He longs for the people to be loyal, not to him, but to God, and so reaches back to language from the beginning of the book to help in setting the stage for the ongoing conquest of the land after he has departed. Joshua exhibits many leadership skills which church leaders should emulate, and this determination to keep God's people focused on Him, rather than on their leaders, is one of the most important for leaders to learn.

*Meditate and discuss.*

1. Why is it important that leaders work hard to keep God's people connected to Him?
2. Joshua appeals to a variety of affections here to keep God people rightly focused. These include love, gratitude, fear, and hope. Where do you find each of these, and what role do such affections play in our calling to serve the Lord?
3. Joshua's "sermon" includes reminder, exhortation, and admonition. What can we learn from this about how to read the Word of God?

*"...true faith, while it reclines upon God, keeps those who possess it in his fear. In short, those who would find God must seek him sincerely, and if we desire to be regarded by him, we must beware of turning our backs upon him." John Calvin, Commentary on Joshua (1509-1564 AD)*

*Remind me, exhort me, and admonish me, Lord, so that I...*

*Pray Psalm 145.*

How will the many good works of God lead you to praise Him today? Let this psalm guide you in worshipping the Lord, and in thinking ahead to all the reasons you will have to praise and obey Him.

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**Psalm 145** (*Brother James' Air: The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want*)

I will extol You, God, my King, and ever praise Your Name!  
I bless You, Lord, for everything each day, and e'er the same!  
Great are You, Lord, my praise I bring; unsearchable Your fame!

To ev'ry generation we Your wondrous works shall tell.  
*The splendor of Your majesty we contemplate full well.*  
We speak of all Your mighty deeds and all Your greatness tell!

Then shall we all the glorious fame of Your great goodness sing –  
Your righteousness, Your gracious Name, Your mercy: praise we bring!  
Your steadfast love remains the same, mercy our covering.

Your works shall thank You; all Your saints shall bless and praise You, Lord.  
Your reign we bless without restraint; Your power fills our words.  
Our children we shall educate in all Your splendor, Lord.

Your Kingdom evermore shall be; You reign forever, Lord!  
Your works You do so faithfully, according to Your Word.  
The falling You uphold and the oppressed You rescue, Lord!

The eyes of all look up to You to meet our needs each day.  
Open Your hand, provide the food we need, O Lord, we pray!  
Kindness and righteousness You do, O Lord, in every way!

Be near to all who call on You; all those who fear You, bless.  
Preserve all those whose love is true; save us in our distress.  
Our mouths will speak with praise of You; Your holy Name we'll bless!

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*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. What can we learn from Joshua about holding fast to the Lord? Why should we do so? What can hinder us? How can we overcome hindrances and temptations?
2. The struggle to obtain the promises of God will continue all our days. What does it mean to “be very courageous” in taking up this struggle each day? How can we be courageous like this?
3. Why do you suppose God’s people are so easily distracted from Him to the things of this world? Why must we guard against this? How can we keep from “going back and clinging to” our former way of life apart from Jesus?
4. How do promises and sanctions operate within the new covenant? Are they still valid? Explain.
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from Joshua 23? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org) to learn more.

We hope you found this study helpful. If so, please consider making a gift to The Fellowship. You can contribute to our ministry by using the donate button at the website, or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 19 Tyler Dr., Essex Junction, VT 05452.

Thank you.