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Study Questions for the *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible*

The Book of Joshua

Scott Hahn and Curtis Mitch

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STUDY QUESTIONS

Joshua

Chapter 1

For understanding

- 1:1. At what point does the Book of Joshua begin? Who has the honorary title "servant of the Lord"? What has Joshua accomplished together with Caleb? Allegorically, according to St. Jerome, how is Joshua a type of the Lord Jesus? According to Lactantius, why does Joshua succeed Moses?
- 1:4. How large is the land promised to Israel supposed to be in comparison with the land conquered under Joshua? When does it come under Israelite control?
- 1:5. With what is Joshua graced? What are the nine explicit statements and implicit suggestions that highlight the similarities between Joshua and his forebear Moses?
- 1:13. When will Israel enjoy the Lord's peace and protection in Canaan? What will this new era follow? In the Book of Hebrews, of what is the *rest* that Joshua gives the people in Canaan a sign?

For application

- 1:1–2. Has the death or departure of a leader ever left you feeling uneasy about the future? Did new responsibilities fall upon you because that person was gone? If so, what considerations helped you to assume your new responsibilities?
- 1:5. Scripture promises that the Lord will not fail or forsake those who seek him (Ps 9:10; 37:28; 94:14; Is 41:17). How confident are you of such promises for yourself? Have you ever called on the Lord for help and received it? If so, how did that assistance affect your overall confidence?
- 1:7. The Lord exhorts Joshua not to turn from the Law "to the right hand or to the left"—in other words, to be strict in his obedience to it. What are some temptations to swerve from the moral law that people in our culture face by relaxing their obedience to it? Why is being strict with yourself generally better than letting yourself off easy when it comes to moral choices?
- 1:13. The note for this verse refers to Heb 4:1–10, which stresses faith and obedience, and says (in part) that "we who have believed enter into that rest." About what kind of rest is Hebrews talking? What does Hebrews (quoting Ps 95) mean by exhorting us to listen to the Lord's voice today?

Chapter 2

For understanding

- 2:1–24. Where is ancient Jericho located? How was it built? As one of the oldest settlements known to history, how long has Jericho been inhabited? What have archaeological excavations at Jericho unearthed? About what do experts disagree regarding Jericho's demise? What complicates the interpretation of the evidence?
- 2:1. What is Shittim, and where is it located? Although the Hebrew refers to a "prostitute", what does Jewish tradition consider Rahab to be? As a Canaanite, what shows her conversion to the faith of Israel? How does she escape the devastation of Jericho? As what does the NT designate Rahab? Allegorically, according to Cassiodorus, of what is Rahab a type?
- 2:15. What have archeologists discovered above the lower revetment wall around Jericho? How would one escape the city once the gates had been closed for the night? How is this similar to Paul's escape from Damascus?
- 2:18. Of what is the scarlet cord a sign? Allegorically, according to St. Jerome, what does the color of the cord signify, and of what is Rahab a type? How does St. Justin Martyr understand the red cord?

For application

- 2:5. Read the note for this verse, particularly the part about lying. Why is lying an evil act? How is lying an offense against justice and charity (CCC 2485)? If you were in a hostile situation that required you to witness to your faith, how should you profess it (cf. CCC 2471)?
- 2:11. This verse is where Rahab professes her belief in "the LORD your God", on the basis of what she has heard he has done. What is the basis of *your* faith in God? Through what process did you come to that faith?
- 2:18. Several sacramentals, such as certain scapulars and medals, have promises attached to them related to preserving people in the state of grace. What prevents these from becoming magical or idolatrous talismans? What is the purpose of sacramentals like these in their holders' lives?
- 2:24. Why do you think the culture of the world is so hostile to Christianity? What does the world's hostility say about the power of the Christian message? How should that power encourage you as someone commissioned by your Baptism to proclaim it?

Chapter 3

For understanding

- 3:1–5:1. What do these chapters describe? What are five ways in which the narrative is worded to evoke memories of the Exodus? Morally, according to St. Gregory of Nyssa, what does the crossing of the Jordan teach us to do?
- 3:3. What does the Ark of the Covenant represent? What does the prominent role of the Ark in Joshua show?
- 3:15. Why does the Jordan overflow? What does stressing the high water level do in the story? When does the time of harvest begin?
- 3:16. Where is the town of Adam? Where is the Salt Sea in relation to the town? Although how the Lord effected the damming of the Jordan is not described, to what do medieval and modern reports attest? Allegorically, according to Origen, how does the crossing of the Jordan serve as a type of Baptism?

Study Questions

For application

1. **3:3–4.** The text says that the Israelites must not come near the Ark of the Covenant out of respect for the awesome presence and power of God. How near does God want you to come to him? How do you express reverence for his presence in the Most Blessed Sacrament? In what ways might you be overly casual in your handling of sacred things (such as the Bible)?
2. **3:5.** Read the note for this verse. How might the actions mentioned there suggest an interior purification? If you were told to sanctify yourself before coming to Mass this Sunday, what would you do?
3. **3:10.** Joshua proclaims that God is a living God. What does Jesus mean by claiming that he is life itself (Jn 11:25; 14:6)? How does he communicate this life to you (e.g., Jn 3:15; 4:14; 6:35, 47–48)?

Chapter 4

For understanding

1. **4:3.** What do the twelve stones represent? Where are they carried, and why? What wordplay might the author intend with the Hebrew word for "stone"? Allegorically, according to St. Gregory of Nyssa, of what are the twelve stones set up at the Jordan a type?
2. **4:7.** How many stone monuments are set up in Canaan, and to what do they bear witness?
3. **4:19.** What is the first month of the Hebrew calendar, and when does it start? What happens on the tenth of Abib? What does the name Gilgal mean? Where is it located, and what purpose does it serve for Joshua?
4. **4:24.** What is the purpose of divine miracles? What function does news of the Lord's mighty acts serve?

For application

1. **4:5–7.** What souvenirs have you collected over the years, and what do they mean to you? How many of them are souvenirs that remind you of your faith (e.g., souvenirs of a pilgrimage)? How might they help you to communicate your faith to your children or other relatives?
2. **4:9.** Certain shrines, such as the one at Lourdes, display items that visitors leave there, such as crutches or braces. Why are they there? What do they mean to the people who left them and to those who see them afterward?
3. **4:19.** The note for this verse points out the link between the timing of the Jordan crossing and the date when lambs were selected for the first Passover. What is the liturgical significance behind the timing of Easter with Passover or between the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and the Jewish feast of Pentecost? Why do people often time an important event, such as a wedding, so that it occurs on the anniversary of another important family event?

Chapter 5

For understanding

1. **5:1–12.** With what two liturgical events does Israel's life in Canaan begin? Of what is circumcision the sign? What does Passover commemorate? What is the reason for completing these two events at this point?
2. **5:2.** How does the way flint fractures determine the use of these knives? Why is it important before Passover to circumcise males born during the wilderness wandering? Allegorically, according to Tertullian, why does Joshua instead of Moses lead a new people into Canaan, and what does this have to do with Jesus? According to Lactantius, how does the second circumcision go beyond the first?
3. **5:9.** How could the events of the Exodus put Yahweh's reputation on the line? What play on words is the author making about Gilgal?
4. **5:12.** How does Yahweh feed Israel for 40 years of wilderness wandering? Of what did its flavor offer a foretaste? What does the end of the manna signal?

For application

1. **5:1–12.** The note for these verses says that circumcision and the celebration of Passover prepare Israel for coming battles. How can Christians prepare themselves for the spiritual battles that they will face? What benefits do regular reception of Penance and the Eucharist provide in this regard?
2. **5:2–7.** According to CCC 1257, why is Baptism necessary for entrance into the Communion of Saints? What is the responsibility of Christian parents to have their children baptized? What is their responsibility after Baptism has taken place?
3. **5:11–12.** How have the personal and spiritual supports you enjoyed as a child changed now that you are an adult? Which (if any) of these supports have continued into adulthood, and which changes have forced you to take responsibility for yourself and others?
4. **5:15.** The angel tells Joshua to take his sandals off, as Moses did, "for the place where you stand is holy". What benefit is there for Joshua in direct physical contact with the holy (without the interference of his sandals)? With what holy things do you have direct physical contact? What benefit does such contact confer on you?

Chapter 6

For understanding

1. **6:1–27.** As the lead character in the story of the conquest of Jericho, what does Yahweh do? In these events, what do we see of the Lord's activity? Anagogically, according to Origen, what does the fall of Jericho prefigure? According to St. Augustine, what happens when the walls of Jericho (representing the frail defenses of the world) fall?
2. **6:4.** What does the number seven enumerate? Since in Hebrew the word seven (*sheba'*) shares the same root as the verb for swearing an oath (*shaba'*), what may the number signal? How does the second wave of judgments in the Book of Revelation evoke memories of the fall of Jericho? According to St. Cyril of Jerusalem, how does the fall of the walls of Jericho resemble the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem?
3. **Word Study: Devoted (6:17).** What does the Hebrew word *herem* mean? What things can be devoted in this sense? In the context of Israelite warfare, how are persons and things dedicated to Yahweh, and how does Jericho serve as an example?

What happens to warriors who violate the ban on devoted things by taking what is forbidden? On which cities and towns is the ban placed? Historically, where else besides Israel is the law of the ban attested to?

4. **Essay: The Conquest of Canaan.** What reaction do many readers have when they read the war stories of the Book of Joshua? Before all else, what is the purpose of the war against Canaan, and how does Scripture reveal this underlying reason? How is the Conquest also a form of divine protection of Israel, and how does Scripture highlight that aspect? Despite common misperceptions, how is the Israelite Conquest of Canaan *not* a form of ethnic cleansing, and what are some ways in which that is made clear?

For application

1. **6:4–5.** Read the note for v. 4. Since the trumpet is used as a call to worship as well as to battle (e.g., Num 29:1; Is 27:13), how are worship and spiritual warfare interrelated?
2. **6:8.** What purposes do public religious processions, like Corpus Christi processions, serve? How might such events resemble the procession of Israelites around Jericho?
3. **6:12–16.** While the tactic of an army repeatedly circling the city in silence (except for the blowing of trumpets) for a week would inspire fear in the citizens of Jericho, what would it do for the soldiers in Joshua's army? In a similar vein, why would a Christian choose to repeat a set of formal prayers over a set period of time (e.g., like the nine First Fridays)? Why is such persistent prayer important?
4. **6:17–18.** Read the word study note for v. 17. For Christians, how would an application of the "ban" involve ridding ourselves of anything that leads us into sin, such as putting aside possessions, pastimes, even questionable friends? What has the "banning" of such things meant to you in your pursuit of holiness?

Chapter 7

For understanding

1. **7:1.** How does Israel break faith with Yahweh? Who is the culprit? How is his thievery a double violation of the ban?
2. **7:2.** What does the name Ai mean? Where is the town located? Where has archaeology located it, and why is the identification problematic? Where (or what) is Beth-aven?
3. **7:25.** Because it is difficult to understand why the family of Achan shares the fate of the criminal himself, what three considerations may help explain it?
4. **7:26.** How is Achan's body buried? Against what is this crude memorial a warning? What is the significance of the name Valley of Achor? How does the prophet Hosea, looking to a future age, envision the place?

For application

1. **7:4–5.** How do small setbacks in your spiritual life, such as falling into old patterns of sin, affect your confidence in God? What is usually their cause? What approach do you take toward a remedy?
2. **7:6–9.** The second of the Beatitudes is "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Mt 5:4). What are some of Joshua's reasons for mourning over the sin of Israel? Why does Jesus consider those who grieve over sin to be blessed? Why do many Christians fail to mourn over sin (their own or that of others) when the results are often so clearly disastrous?
3. **7:12a.** How does the commission of even a single venial sin weaken a person? According to CCC 1863, what does venial sin weaken, even though it does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace? How does sin do that?
4. **7:24–25.** Why is there no such thing as a totally private sin? How does my sin affect my family, my friends, and my community, even if they are not guilty of it?

Chapter 8

For understanding

1. **8:1–29.** How is the conquest of Ai accomplished? What happens to the king of Ai and his servicemen and civilians as a result?
2. **8:2.** Why is booty allowed at Ai? Although Ai and its inhabitants would normally fall under the ban, of what do the spoils consist? Of what does the relaxation of the ban for Ai appear to be an instance?
3. **8:18.** What does Joshua's battlefield gesture with the javelin signify? How does it resemble what Moses did during the battle with the Amalekites?
4. **8:30–35.** How do the priests and the lay tribes participate in the public ratification of the Deuteronomic covenant? Where does the ceremony take place? Why is the location significant?

For application

1. **8:2.** As circumstances change, the Church may relax certain regulations, such as the length of the Communion fast or the former Lenten disciplines. What considerations might prompt the Church to relax the rules? How might relaxing the rules change the attitudes of the faithful toward practices of self-discipline or mortification?
2. **8:16–17.** Ai's response to Israel shows how a rash offense may become the worst defense. How often, when you took what seemed like a safe initiative (like buying an expensive car or house), have you been surprised by attacks from an unexpected quarter (like a downturn in the economy)? How do such situations apply to the spiritual life (e.g., committing yourself to a cause)?
3. **8:18.** As the note for this verse indicates, Joshua's gesture represents a form of continuous intercession during battle. What kinds of battles is the Church facing nowadays? Even though Jesus promises ultimate victory, why is ongoing prayer needed? What does it do for the combatants? for the person interceding?
4. **8:30–35.** Read Deut 27 after reading these verses. How does the chapter aid your understanding of what is going on? Why are such elaborate ratification ceremonies necessary? What analogous ceremonies can you think of in Catholic Church worship? Why, for example, does the Church ask you to profess your faith after several long readings at the Easter Vigil?

Study Questions

Chapter 9

For understanding

1. **9:1–2.** How do local Canaanites respond to Israel's advance? What success will the coalition have?
2. **9:14.** To what does failure to discern the Lord's will lead? What is the consequence of the very act of making a covenant with the Gibeonites? Instead of rushing through negotiations, what should Israel have done?
3. **9:15.** How does Israel ratify a covenant of nonaggression with Gibeon? What does the treaty obligate Israel, the superior partner, to do? When will the binding force of this covenant become apparent? What may the literal expression "cut a covenant" indicate about the ceremony?
4. **9:27.** To what does "the place" refer? Where is the sanctuary stationed in Joshua's day and, then, later?

For application

1. **9:3–13.** Since their lives are at stake, the residents of Gibeon resort to subterfuge to protect themselves, and it works. What do you think of the morality of their method? To what lengths would you go to preserve your own life or that of your family? What ethical or moral considerations would guide your thinking here?
2. **9:14.** When have you or someone you know made a major decision without praying about it first? In what ways was the decision rash or precipitate? What were the consequences for those involved? What did you learn from it?
3. **9:18.** Why does Scripture condemn murmuring on the part of the People of God against their leaders (e.g., Ex 16:8; Num 14:27; Ps 106:24–27)? How justifiable in this case is the complaint of the Israelites? If you have cause for complaint against a Church leader such as a priest or a bishop, how should you make your concerns known without such "murmuring"?
4. **9:19–20.** What happened in the Catholic Church in America when, three years after the Second Vatican Council, the pope published an encyclical upholding the teaching about contraception? What should have been the response of the faithful (cf. CCC 2037–2040)? What moral dangers accompany dissent from unpopular teaching?

Chapter 10

For understanding

1. **10:1–43.** Where is Joshua's campaign taking place? Coupled with the overthrow of Jericho, Ai, and Bethel, as well as the subjugation of Gibeon, what do these military expeditions accomplish? Nevertheless, what is left for future generations to do? How does the nature of the warfare switch in chaps. 10–11?
2. **10:6.** What does the peace treaty made in 9:15 obligate Israel to do? What does the appeal for help made to Joshua mean he must do?
3. **10:13.** What does Joshua's prayer call forth? In what two ways can the poetic fragment be interpreted, and what considerations must be taken into account in either case? Whether the miracle was in the sky or on the ground, what is the only real explanation for it? What is the Book of Jasher?
4. **10:40–42.** What are these verses about? What have comparative studies of Near Eastern war annals shown about these types of synopsis statements? Taken literally, what does it sound like Israel has accomplished? However, what would ancient readers of Joshua have understood about this convention, and how is this confirmed? What does Catholic teaching hold about the interpretation of Scripture?

For application

1. **10:6–7.** If Joshua had been so inclined, how might he have excused himself from helping the Gibeonites who tricked him into a covenant? What kind of man does he show himself to be by keeping his commitment? What does his example say to those who want to avoid inconvenient responsibilities?
2. **10:13.** Miracle stories like the one narrated here often arouse a great deal of skepticism from modern readers. How do you react to stories like this? How helpful are explanations like the note for this verse? What purposes are such stories intended to serve?
3. **10:14.** Of the three theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity), which is most closely associated with prayers of petition (see CCC 2630)? Why do scriptural authors (e.g., Sir 2:8–12 and Jas 1:6–7) warn against doubt when praying for what you need?

Chapter 11

For understanding

1. **11:1–15.** In the northern campaign, what do Joshua's forces accomplish? How does Joshua win the day against an impressive coalition of troops assembled against him?
2. **11:1.** What kind of name is Jabin? What is Hazor, and where can we be certain it is located? Although Hazor is large and well-fortified, what does archaeology show about it?
3. **11:4.** How many people does a chariot hold? When is this type of advanced military technology found in Israel? What does that say about the ability of the foot soldiers of Israel?
4. **11:20.** What does the hardening of the hearts of Israel's enemies show about God? How was this mystery earlier displayed in the narrative of Exodus?
5. **11:21.** Who are the Anakim? How did sightings of the Anakim in Canaan affect Israel years earlier?

For application

1. **11:6.** The psalms often encourage readers not to be afraid even when they face overwhelming odds (e.g., Ps 91:7). Of what are you most afraid, either for yourself personally, for your family, or for anything else? How does prayer help alleviate or dissipate that fear?
2. **11:15.** How does this verse illustrate what the Holy Spirit accomplishes in the Church through apostolic succession? For example, how does apostolic succession serve to guarantee the truth of the faith you have been taught (CCC 857)?
3. **11:20.** What does Ps 95:8 mean by exhorting us not to harden our hearts? How do we harden our hearts against God? How does one recognize when his heart has actually become hardened against him?

Chapter 12

For understanding

1. **12:1–24.** Of what are these verses an inventory? How many kings did Moses dethrone east of the Jordan, and how many does Joshua oust west of the Jordan? Of what does the fact that several cities and rulers in this list are not elsewhere mentioned in the book serve as an indication?
2. **12:1.** What is the Arnon? Where is Mount Hermon? What territorial limits do both sites mark?
3. **12:7.** What does the west side of the Jordan constitute? What do scholars sometimes call it?

For application

1. **12:2.** Sihon, the Amorite king who refuses to let Israel pass peacefully through his territory but fights it instead and is conquered, is mentioned more than 30 times in the Old Testament. Why is it so important to remember the defeat of a significant enemy? Of the three enemies defeated by the Cross of Christ (the world, the flesh, and the devil), whose defeat is the most significant to you?
2. **12:2, 4.** Ps 135 and 136 celebrate the defeat of Sihon and Og as examples of God's power and his steadfast love for Israel. How has God shown his power and love in your life? What has God given you that you would not have if not for his intervention?

Chapter 13

For understanding

1. **13:1–21:45.** What do these nine chapters outline? Although some of the locations of towns and territories are no longer known with certainty today, what is the general picture of the allocation of territories to the tribes? Allegorically, according to St. Justin Martyr, how does Joshua's leading of the people into the land and giving them a temporary inheritance compare with what Jesus has accomplished?
2. **13:1.** How old was Caleb, Joshua's contemporary? Of what do the unconquered lands mainly consist? When would these regions be finally subdued?
3. **Word Study: Inheritance (13:7).** What does the Hebrew word *nahalah* mean, and to what does it refer? What are three ways that Scripture extends this basic idea? How does the third understanding pave the way for the gospel?
4. **13:14.** Which is the one landless tribe in Israel? Instead of territory, what does it receive?

For application

1. **13:1.** Why does it seem that there is no final victory in this life, that so much remains to be done even for the old? What do you believe is your mission in life, and how much of it remains to be achieved?
2. **13:7.** What have you inherited from your family? How has this inheritance been divided or parceled out among other family members? What personal characteristics—physical, psychological, and spiritual—have you inherited, and which seem most valuable to you? What does it mean to have God as an inheritance?
3. **13:13.** Of the physical, psychological, and spiritual traits you have inherited, which represent problem areas on which you still need to work?

Chapter 14

For understanding

1. **14:1.** Who is Eleazar? What is his role in parceling out the land? Where are the sacred lots kept?
2. **14:4.** Which two tribes come from the two sons descended from Joseph in Egypt? What does their adoption into the family of Israel maintain?
3. **14:6–15.** What does Joshua grant Caleb? What are we to recall about these two men? Why does the Lord prolong Caleb's life and preserve his strength?
4. **14:10.** To what does Caleb's mention of forty-five years of prolonged life refer? What does this time span imply?

For application

1. **14:2.** How do people use lots (e.g., by drawing straws, drawing names, etc.) for decision making these days? What are some advantages of making decisions by drawing or casting lots? What are some of the disadvantages? What might be some better ways of discerning the Lord's will than by casting lots?
2. **14:8.** Caleb recalls how he maintained his trust in God even though it meant suffering the fate of those who failed to trust. Why do you think God allows such things to happen? What does it say about people like Caleb?
3. **14:14.** Caleb's fidelity was eventually rewarded. What reward can we expect by remaining faithful in a hostile world?

Chapter 15

For understanding

1. **15:1–63.** What land does the tribe of Judah inherit? What are its northern and southern borders? Why does Judah stand first in line to receive its inheritance?
2. **15:20–62.** Into what four geographical regions do the cities assigned to Judah fall?
3. **15:63.** On what border is Jerusalem situated? What do the two tribes do with the fortified settlement established there? Who finally ousts the Jebusites?

For application

1. **15:19.** If you were forced to live in an undesirable location, what might you do to improve it? How might such a circumstance be good for your character development? For example, while the desert might in many ways be an uninviting place to live, how might it be a desirable place to spend some time?

Study Questions

1. **15:47.** Among the cities given to Judah are places like Gaza, listed earlier in Joshua as among several of those not taken (13:2–3.). What do you know about Gaza from both biblical and even modern sources? How can a difficult place like Gaza be considered an inheritance if the inheritor is not in a position to take it? How, for example, can heaven be considered an inheritance when we have not yet taken it?
3. **15:48–60.** The "hill country" includes places with religious significance, such as Carmel (where the contest between Elijah and the priests of Baal took place). What religious association does the hill country have for Christians? How does Elizabeth address Mary when the two of them first meet (Lk 1:43)?
4. **15:63.** Jerusalem has been called the "spiritual capital of the world". What is its spiritual importance today? What is the spiritual importance of the "new Jerusalem", as the Book of Revelation describes it (Rev 21:2–3)?

Chapters 16–17

For understanding

1. **16:1–17:18.** What do these two chapters delineate? What tracts of land are acquired by these two tribes? Who has already acquired land east of the Jordan? How do these tribes rank in comparison to Judah, and why are they among the first to receive lands?
2. **16:10.** What situation does this verse confirm? What does Israel do to the surviving Canaanites who have not fallen in battle? Of what curse is this presumably the fulfillment? From whom does Genesis state that Canaan and Israel are descended?
3. **17:4.** What rule did Moses pass with regard to inheritance by daughters? What does the promise to allot land to the daughters of Zelophehad parallel?
4. **17:18.** What will deforesting parts of the hill country accomplish? How will Ephraim and Manasseh overcome the superior might of the Canaanites?

For application

1. **16:10.** Failure to eradicate evil completely in a community means that it remains to contaminate the morals of society despite efforts to control it. Can you think of any such evils that your community has failed to remove or control? What are the effects on the community? What efforts have been made to control the situation, and how successful have they been?
2. **17:4.** According to CCC 1222, the taking of the Promised Land fulfills God's covenant promise to Abraham of the land he was to inherit. Of what is this inheritance an image? How is it completely fulfilled in the New Covenant?
3. **17:14–18.** Have you ever been the executor of an estate or known someone who was? What are some of the problems that an executor faces, especially when the will is not specific or clear? What does Joshua require the tribe of Joseph to do as he tries to settle its complaint?

Chapter 18

For understanding

1. **18:1–10.** Whom does Joshua dispatch in these verses, and for what purpose? How is information about the towns and topography recorded?
2. **18:1.** In whose territory is Shiloh? Where is it with certainty located? Of what is Shiloh chosen to be the host city, and what does it become? How long does Shiloh remain in that capacity?
3. **18:11–28.** What does the tribe of Benjamin inherit? Where does the land extend horizontally? How many cities does Benjaminite territory encompass?

For application

1. **18:3.** What are some of your most important spiritual commitments (e.g., for daily prayer, Scripture study)? How often do you procrastinate about doing them? What seem to be the main excuses for doing so?
2. **18:7.** According to the word study on *inheritance* above (13:7), the Levites do not inherit land because the Lord is their inheritance. What does this mean for them? What does having the Lord as your inheritance mean for you? Why does Jesus say that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt 19:23)?
3. **18:9–10.** If you and your siblings have ever had to divide an inheritance among you, what process did you follow to allocate who got what? If each person was to get equal shares, how did you determine what "equal" means? How did that process affect relationships among you? If the effects were negative (such as rifts in the family), what have you done to rectify or resolve them?

Chapters 19–20

For understanding

1. **19:1–9.** What does the tribe of Simeon inherit? How large is the tribe of Simeon, and what might be the reason for its size?
2. **19:40–48.** What does the tribe of Dan inherit? Who eventually runs it out of this territory, and where does it migrate?
3. **20:1–9.** What purpose do the six cities of refuge serve? Why is this type of protection needed? Where are the cities located? Which tribe occupies them?
4. **20:6.** What does the death of the high priest allow the innocent manslayer to do?

For application

1. **19:51.** The decisions regarding division of the land are made "before the LORD, at the door of the tent of meeting". Where do you tend to make important decisions? Why does the place matter? What difference can making an important decision before the tabernacle make?
2. **20:1–9.** Read the note for these verses. Why is it significant that the cities of refuge are occupied by Levites? Why do people go to a priest when they need help of a spiritual nature? In addition to the possible grace of a sacrament, for what are they looking?

3. **20:5.** According to CCC 1467, why does the Church require confessors to keep absolute secrecy under pain of "very severe penalties"? How does the "sacramental seal" resemble a city of refuge?
4. **20:9.** Why does Scripture command that vengeance over a crime be left to God rather than to an individual (Deut 32:35; Rom 12:19; Heb 10:30)? What does Scripture command us to do instead of exacting vengeance?

Chapter 21

For understanding

1. **21:1–42.** Where are the 48 cities that the tribe of Levi inherits? When did Moses make provision for this? How are the cities divided? Where do some lay Israelites live, and what does that mean about the clergy, practically speaking?
2. **21:43–45.** What do these verses briefly summarize? What is the major premise of Joshua's theology? What does fidelity to his pledge move Yahweh to do?
3. **21:44.** What did the initial campaigns against Canaan accomplish, and what remains to be done? What is the point about the rest referred to in this verse?

For application

1. **21:3.** According to this verse, who gave the Levites the cities in which they were to dwell? What kinds of support do the Christian people owe to their clergy (CCC 2043)?
2. **21:41–42.** Since the Levites are supported for their religious work, why is it important for them to have pasture lands? When they are not serving in a clerical capacity, how would they support themselves? How might the pasture lands have a connection with Israelite liturgical functions?
3. **21:44.** The Book of Hebrews (Heb 3:7–4:13) links the process of entering into the Lord's rest with obedience to the "living and active" word of God. How does obedience accomplish that goal? How does "hardness of heart" impede it?

Chapter 22

For understanding

1. **22:1–9.** What have the Transjordan tribes fulfilled? How does Joshua respond? How do Moses and Joshua handle their agreement to serve in the campaigns west of the Jordan?
2. **22:10–34.** What happens when the Transjordan tribes build a giant altar on the Jordan riverbank? How do the tribes west of the Jordan interpret this? How is war averted?
3. **22:17.** To what does the "sin at Peor" refer? Who remembers it well, and what is his role?
4. **22:19.** What does "the LORD's land" designate? Whose possession is the Promised Land, ultimately?

For application

1. **22:2–5.** What does Joshua tell the Transjordan tribes to do following their release from their military commitments? What is the goal of our earthly life, and how do we attain it?
2. **22:10–12.** What is rash judgment? What assumptions are the Israelites west of the Jordan making about the motives of those east of the Jordan for building the giant altar? How should we avoid the sin of judging others rashly (CCC 2477–78)?
3. **22:16–20.** Why are the Israelite delegates concerned about the suspected rebellion on the part of the Transjordan tribes? What do they fear for themselves? What do they suggest as a solution? How practical do you think the solution is for the Transjordan tribes?
4. **22:21–29.** Of what are the Transjordan tribes afraid for the future? How does that explain their conduct? How can isolation lead to distrust and even enmity among people of the same faith?

Chapter 23

For understanding

1. **23:1–16.** What is Joshua doing in these verses? With its Deuteronomic style, to what is Joshua's sermon similar?
2. **23:2.** To whom does the expression "all Israel" refer? Presumably, where does the gathering take place?
3. **23:6.** What is the "book of the law" in this instance, and where is it kept?
4. **23:7.** What is the covenant between Yahweh and Israel like? What does this mean? What will assimilation of pagan ways bring?

For application

1. **23:6–8.** How have we American Catholics in our day accommodated ourselves to the culture around us? What effects has this accommodation had on the level of faith in the Catholic Church here?
2. **23:12–13.** Why does Joshua warn against intermarriage with the Canaanites? What are some of the analogous problems that result when active Christians today intermarry with either non-practicing Christians or with unbelievers? How dire are the consequences?
3. **23:15–16.** Just as the Mosaic covenant carried blessings for obeying it and curses for violating it, what are some of the blessings and curses that attend the Christian covenant? In other words, what blessings accompany obedience to the "law of liberty", and what consequences follow from violating it (cf. Jas 1:22–25; Gal 5:13–26)?

Chapter 24

For understanding

1. **24:1–28.** What does Joshua assemble Israel at Shechem to do, and how is it similar to what happened 30 years earlier? For whom and for what purpose is this event a summons? Of what are renewal ceremonies a common feature?

Study Questions

2. **24:1.** Where in Palestine is Shechem? Where does it sit? What does the Greek LXX call this city? What might the expression "before God" indicate about the Tabernacle?
3. **24:15.** What does the covenant involve? What do the alternative choices bring?
4. **24:27.** Why is the boulder turned up on end? To what does it stand as a witness? How common is this practice of invoking witnesses in Near Eastern covenant procedures?
5. **24:29-33.** Whose deaths close out the Conquest period? Where are they buried?

For application

1. **24:14.** What (or who) are the gods that many people in our culture serve? What forms does the service of these gods take? What does it mean to "put them away"?
2. **24:15.** What does Joshua mean by his "house"? How determined are you that you and your "house" will serve the Lord? What does this determination indicate for your children or others who live with you?
3. **24:19.** Read the note for this verse. How do you understand what Joshua is saying? What does Joshua mean by saying that God is a "jealous God"? How does his "jealousy" apply to you?
4. **24:23.** What does the expression "incline your heart" mean (cf. also Ps 119:36, 112; 141:4)? How do you "incline your heart" to God?