

they are willing to trust God and submit their wills to His. And that choice goes against our fallen nature.

What was true in Joshua's day is true now. Herman Melville summed up the essence of spiritual battle like this: "All of God's commands are hard, because, in order to obey God, we must first disobey ourselves, and it is in this disobeying ourselves wherein the difficulty of obeying God consists." Or, in more common terms, each of us insists on having things our way.

The choice Joshua placed before Israel at the end of the book bearing his name is the central choice in every story of the Bible: triumph through trusting obedience or defeat through defiant disobedience. Trust and obey or go our own way. As you read through Joshua, look at Israel's choices and the outcome brought by obedience. Then, as you read on, contrast Israel's triumph in Joshua with the misery and judgment brought by disobedience in the Book of Judges.

We triumph in the end, when we surrender at the start. The best example is Jesus Christ. The eternal triumph He won on the cross began with the words, "Not my will, but yours be done." All Scripture testifies of our Savior, who leads us in His triumph through trusting surrender to the Father's will.

Prepare for victory. Bow before your Creator as you begin the New Year.

Prayer for ...

- **Northpoint:** May God give our church a united heart and clear vision of our role in His kingdom work in Corona and the world.
- **Local Outreach:** Settlement House and Empty Bowls, helping the homeless.
- **Missions:** Pastor Antonio Camarillo (Bamabas Association); Mount Sinai Baptist Church, Carranza, near Mexicali, Mexico

Need to pray with someone?

It is our privilege to pray for you personally. Share your prayer requests

- By email at prayer@northpointcorona.org
- By phone, at 951.734.1335
- On a Response Card in the pew during the worship service

Prayer Team members are available after every worship service.



prayer life!

Bible Reading Plan and Prayer Guide

(Year TWO) January 2016

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. —Joshua 24:15

The Choice

With the Book of Joshua, we start the year in triumph. After 40 years of wandering in the desert, Israel finally entered the Promised Land. But like all triumphs, the conquest of Canaan was primarily spiritual. And, like all spiritual battles, the central issue was who God is and how to respond to Him.

The 40 years Israel wandered in the desert were years of indecision. The Lord had chosen Israel as His people, but they hadn't completely decided that He would be their God. Idols from Egypt were stashed in their baggage, just in case this new God didn't measure up. Yes He had delivered them out of slavery in Egypt, but would He continue to deliver?

Or would His demands be more than they preferred to pay? After all, the Lord demanded complete obedience. Receiving the blessings He promised required letting Him be in charge. Letting Him define right from wrong. Giving Him the right to decide reward and punishment, as He deemed best. As far as Israel was concerned, the jury was still out on which god would receive their complete allegiance.

Israel never triumphed militarily until they were willing to surrender spiritually and let the Lord call the shots. Notice this central fact as you read through Joshua. Victory came only after Israel was willing to trust God and submit to Him without reservation. Disobedience brought only failure.

But God, the author of all freedom, gives each generation—indeed each person—the choice to obey Him or not. Spiritual triumph is continually in the balance, as each person decides if

Reading and Prayer Schedule (Year TWO)

January 2016