

IV. The Survey of the Old Testament: The Former Prophets

A. A snappy overview (introduction) to the former prophets

1. The books, their names, their peculiar emphases...in a short overview format:

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| a. Joshua | .. "God's Rest" |
| b. Judges | .. "God's Ways" |
| c. Samuel | .. "God's King" |
| d. Kings | .. "God's Nation" |

2. In summary, the former prophets show the development of the nation in accord with the law and the covenant. This includes the taking possession of the promised land and the institutionalizing of the state of Israel. These books are the records of the attainment, fall, and punishment of the society that should have been loyal to Jehovah. Authorship of these books is not certain but their place in the canon has not been questioned in any meaningful way. The text of Samuel, as we will later note, has plenty of problems but that the book itself is from God is not doubted among the ancient authorities.

B. A survey study of the book of Joshua

1. An overview:

The writer of Joshua is not known. Traditionally Joshua, Moses' successor, is recognized as the sole author except for the account of his death and burial. Some scholars have tried to find literary sources for Joshua as for the Pentateuch but this has not been successful and the book should be seen as a basic unity. It has been connected to the Pentateuch by some...thus making a "hexateuch" but this has not been the way of the Hebrew Bible or of our understanding.

The author apparently drew from other sources (10:13, 18:4, 6, 8-10), and some records of the activities and words in the book were made at the time when they occurred (24:26). This writer may, therefore, have been a younger contemporary of Joshua who outlived him. In favor of this "early date" theory are statements which imply an eyewitness account (5:1) and a life within Joshua's own time (6:25). In 13:6 the city of Sidon is mentioned as the major coastal power. This would have been true until the beginning of the Israeli monarchy (about 1050) but from the time of David's rule onward Sidon was eclipsed by Tyre and became part of the formula "Tyre and Sidon." Other verses seem to imply a "late date" in the early monarchy. Secacah, mentioned in 15:16, was not inhabited until the time of David and Solomon (if archaeology has