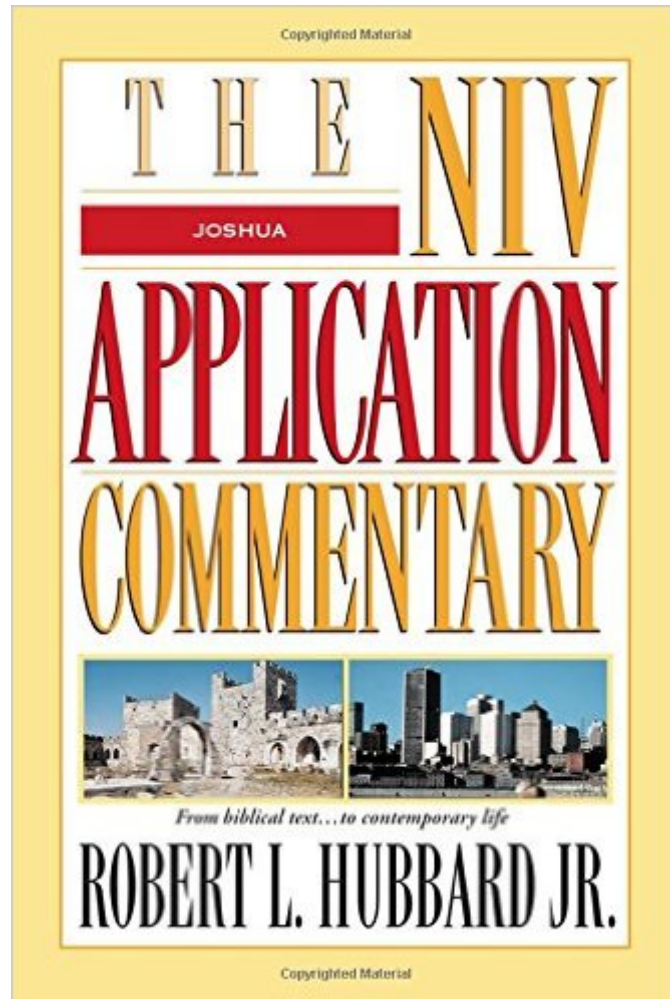


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Joshua (NIV Application Commentary)



Synopsis

Reading Joshua can be, frankly, a jarring experience. Serious, troubling questions about God's attitude toward his created peoples arise, questions with no easy answer. But the book of Joshua presents itself, warts (and wars!) and all, and asks readers to let it tell its story from its point of view and out of its ancient context. It asks them to give it the benefit of the doubt and permit it to speak to them. This commentary aims to give its voice a clear hearing • to translate its ancient cultural form in such a way that it freely speaks about the life of faith today. Basically, the book of Joshua tells how biblical Israel navigated a major historical transition early in its national life. The book shows that guiding these changes is Israel's God, Yahweh, through his chosen servant, Joshua. The introductory sections to follow set the scene for entering the book of Joshua and the ancient world about which it reports. Most Bible commentaries take us on a one-way trip from our world to the world of the Bible. But they leave us there, assuming that we can somehow make the return journey on our own. They focus on the original meaning of the passage but don't discuss its contemporary application. The information they offer is valuable • but the job is only half done! The NIV Application Commentary Series helps bring both halves of the interpretive task together. This unique, award-winning series shows readers how to bring an ancient message into our present-day context. Joshua helps readers learn how the message of Joshua can have the same powerful impact today that it did when it was first written.

Book Information

Hardcover: 656 pages

Publisher: Zondervan (June 7, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 031020934X

ISBN-13: 978-0310209348

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1.4 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars • See all reviews (6 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #232,940 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #354 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Commentaries > Old Testament #698 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Bible Study > Old Testament #1073 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Old Testament

Customer Reviews

My thanks go out to Andrew Rogers at Zondervan for furnishing me with a review copy of this book. The typical Bible student has choices galore when it comes to commentaries on the Bible: big ones, skinny ones; multi-volume sets and single-volume tomes; commentaries by men now dead for hundreds of years, and those by budding scholars. Some commentaries are geared to specific audiences: laymen, preachers, pastors, scholars, teachers. How is one to know which commentaries are best? Don't worry! There are whole books devoted to helping you choose the right commentary! I think a good commentary should discuss the particulars of the Bible text at hand. It will answer the tough questions and will bring relevant historical information to bear. It will unfold the setting of the biblical book and in a sense transport you there. The best commentaries don't leave you there, however. They bring you back to our world equipped with truth from the text. They aim to apply the Biblical text to the questions of today. This is where the NIV Application Commentaries excel, in my estimation. Joshua isn't my first sampling of the NIV Application Commentary. I have the 2nd Corinthians volume on my shelf (my collection of commentaries is a motley crew of mismatched rummage sale finds and a few gifts or purchases sprinkled in). But this is the first volume I've examined at length. Robert Hubbard follows the NIV Application Commentary pattern well as he examines Joshua. The book of Joshua is broken down into fifteen or so passages. Each passage is then approached from three different angles in sections that are standard throughout the book and the commentary series. The "original meaning" section, gives a detailed analysis of the passage much like you would find in a typical critical commentary. Word meaning, syntactical relationships, parallels with other literature and other parts of the Bible are explored, etc. The "bridging contexts" section focuses more on themes that bridge the context of the original passage to today's concerns. It is in a sense a biblical theology section covering the biblical theological themes as found in the given passage. The "contemporary significance" section focuses in on just a few topics and situates them (often by means of illustrations) in the contemporary context in such a way as to make the text's true significance and meaning come alive. Let me offer an example of how the three angles work in Joshua. In chapter 12, the "original meaning" section focuses on the listing of the defeated kings. Then "bridging contexts" hones in on Yahweh's sovereignty as a theme throughout Scripture. "Contemporary significance", then applies all of this to Christians today by focusing on Christ's kingship. Hubbard includes a liturgical reading (suitable for church use) on the kingship of Christ that is very much in the spirit of the list of defeated kings in Joshua 12. Before the book turns to the text of Joshua, a fairly in-depth introduction is provided. There Hubbard sets the stage by bringing up key questions modern readers have of Joshua (why all the killing?) and providing an excellent historical background of the book and major interpretive

questions surrounding it (when and how was Joshua written?; does archeology prove the truth of Joshua's accounts?). I must admit, however, the commentary would have been better with just a few less prefaces. Before the introduction, one is asked to wade through a "series introduction" and a "general editor's preface (to Joshua in particular)", and finally the author gets to provide his preface. But this is just a minor quibble. Throughout Joshua, Hubbard maintained a good balance of discussing scholarly issues and keeping the discussion open to lay readers. He wasn't afraid to be tentative in some of his own positions, as when discussing the question of archeological support for the destruction of Jericho, or in discussing the timing of the Exodus. Hubbard did an excellent job of tracing themes within Joshua, as in comparing the Gibeonite situation with the Ai debacle. He also pointed out several connections with Joshua and the Pentateuch and other OT books (for instance comparing Ezekiel's description of the renewed land with Joshua's depiction of the as-yet-unconquered land). Most importantly, he doesn't hesitate to bring out connections between Joshua and NT thought. He gives an excellent comparison of Joshua's commission in chapter 1 and Christ's great commission to the church. Still, at times he doesn't find connections that could be made, as in his discussion of the herem problem. There he failed to mention obvious parallels with Saul and the command to wipe out the Amalekites and the Psalms that mention "dashing (the children of Israel's enemies) against the stones". These parallels call into question his conclusion on the herem debate. In discussing the book of Joshua, astute readers will wonder what Hubbard's take on the land question would be. I found his discussion of it to be in line with my covenantal perspective on the issue. He highlights how 11:23 declares officially that the land promise was fulfilled. He also intriguingly explains how Joshua's depictions of the land intentionally embellished and expanded the picture to be "huge and fabled". He later quotes Hagner approvingly "Abraham 'knew that what God ultimately had in store for his people transcended security and prosperity in a parcel of real estate on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean.'" So Hubbard takes the view that the NT views the land typographically, yet he still holds a future for Israel is to be found in Rom. 11 and a future conversion to Christ. I can't recommend this book enough. My estimation of the NIV Application Commentary series was enhanced through my study of this particular installment. I learned a lot about Joshua and appreciated how Hubbard navigates the careful reader through some fairly problematic issues all the while maintaining a deep evangelical commitment to an inerrantist, gospel-prizing approach to Scripture.

The NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC) is a unique commentary that seeks to give the reader both the meaning of a passage of Scripture in its original context and a practical application for

today's life. The NIVAC on Joshua begins with an introduction chapter that discusses different areas of the book. I find that the introduction sections of a commentary often hold great nuggets of wisdom in better understanding the book as a whole. In this introduction the authors focus on key topics such as: the contents of the book of Joshua, Who Joshua is, and the historical setting of Joshua. Hubbard also takes on the task of explaining all of the killing that goes on in the book of Joshua. This is where it is helpful to understand the context of the book. We would do great damage as Christians today if we simply "plucked out" the military conquest in Joshua and tried to apply them to the church today. The Text and Commentary section of this book will divide each passage of Scripture into three sections: Original Meaning " This is the section where the author will explain the meaning of the text in its original context. This section is fairly easy to read and is excellent for both Pastors and Laymen. Bridging Context " In this section the author gets us from the original context to the contemporary context by a "bridge". This is usually the shorter section, as its intent is a very simple one: bring the reader from first century times to 21st century times. The comments in this section are very helpful and this is usually where the author discusses the main points of the chapter as a whole, and how the original context may be "fleshed out" over different time periods. Contemporary Significance - This is the section that sets this commentary apart from many others, in my opinion. It answers the question that every reader of the Bible asks: "How does this apply to my life?" This section is such a treat for the reader and often times in other volumes of this series I find myself checking to see what is said in this section, even in clear passages that I may not be studying with a need for a commentary. This section is outstanding. As with any commentary that gives a practical application, the reader may not agree with everything that the author puts forth, but there is a lot of quality application for everyone. This section is especially helpful in Old Testament books that sometimes make practical application difficult. I have found that this is the section that I read the most in every NIVAC commentary on the Old Testament that I own. Hubbard also examines whether the book of Joshua explains who owns the land today. Much of American foreign policy (even as Christian influence declines) is based around the assumption that God's promise of the land still has a future fulfillment. In the church we see this lived out in dispensational theology. The problem with this view, as Hubbard addresses it, is that it denies progressive revelation. It does not allow the New Testament writers to interpret the Old Testament for us. The New Testament writers call both Jews and Gentiles the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise, but make no mention of the land promise. Hubbard notes that even Abraham, as Hebrews 11 tells us, looked across the land of Canaan to a future city whose builder and maker was God. The New Testament writers read the Old

Testament through the lens of "promise-fulfillment: Old Testament events were 'promise' and corresponding New Testament ones were 'fulfillment.'" Because of this view Hubbard focuses on the text in its proper context, not pulling in presuppositions about a future fulfillment or what the text could mean for national Israel today. The NIVAC commentary series proves itself to be highly valuable to better understanding the text of Scripture and making solid applications out of it. This is seen very clearly in this commentary on Joshua. Hubbard examines this book, often times in large sections, in its proper context and helps the reader to better understand the flow of the book and to see the big picture of what is taking place during the conquest of Canaan. Some of the themes that get attention in this volume are: Yahweh the Promise Keeper, Yahweh the Warrior, Joshua the Successor, The People of God, and Israel and the Peoples. I would highly recommend this commentary to anyone looking for a solid intermediate commentary. I received a free copy of this book from Zondervan Academic in exchange for an honest review.

IF you want a ton of information this book is for you. To me it was a bit overwhelming.

Very good

great series, good addition

Excellent book, sent by an excellent provider. This book is a must read for all pastors. Provides great information for the pulpit.

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