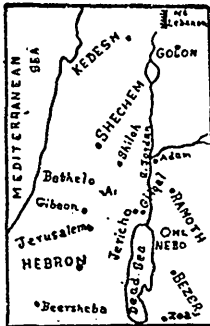


and the cost must be counted. **Holy**; and therefore cannot endure impurity in His people. **Jealous**; will not share the heart with any other god: **Will not forgive**; that is, unless the sin be honestly confessed and resolutely forsaken. **Nay**; but we will. Joshua's seeming opposition was like a hammer driving the nail in to the head. It strengthened the people's determination to serve God only. **Witness against yourselves**. Should they afterwards worship idols, their words of this day would testify against them. This challenge the people accepted. Again Joshua bids them put away false gods from among them, and a third time the people declare their resolve to serve the Lord. If they really mean what they say, they must prove their sincerity by forsaking, once for all, idolatry in every form. **Incline your heart**. True worship can come alone from a heart that loves God.

25-29. Joshua made a covenant; confirmed the covenant between God and His people, made at Sinai (Ex. 24: 3-8) and renewed by Moses on the Plain of Moab, Deut. 29: 1. **A great stone . . . under the oak** (Rev. Ver.); the tree at which Abraham had received his first recorded promise of Canaan and had built his first altar, Gen. 12: 6, 7. **By the sanctuary**; holy place. The spot was regarded as such because Abraham and Jacob (Gen. 33: 18-20) had worshipped and sacrificed there. Perhaps the very altars used by them were still standing. **A witness**. The presence of the stone would be a constant reminder to the people of their solemn promise. Following the Lesson, is an account of Joshua's death and burial and of the burial of Joseph's bones, which closes the Book of Joshua.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



Between the twin mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, whose summits are exactly two miles apart, lies the 'vale of Shechem' from a quarter to half a mile wide from north to south. "This valley is the most luxuriant in Palestine: long rivulets fed by no less than eighty springs run down the hill slopes, and murmur in the deep ravine." At the opening of the vale to the west is the modern town of Nablus, called by the Romans Neapolis, the ancient **SHECHEM**. "Surrounded by gardens and the darker green of the olive and lemon groves, it is a veritable oasis, a setting

worthy the central city and natural capital of the country", which Shechem is to this day.

LESSON QUESTIONS

How had the twelve tribes been occupied for several years? What interruptions had they suffered? What was now the condition of the country? Whom did Joshua call together? Where? For what purpose?

14, 15 Of what had Joshua been reminding the people? What command does he now give them? What does he bid them put away? What choice does he place before them? What does he say of his own purpose? Which prophet made a similar appeal to his people? (1 Kgs. 18: 21.) What choice must the disciples of Jesus make? (Matt. 6: 24.)

16-18 What choice did the people make? What reasons did they give? Show that God's service is reasonable? (Rom. 12: 1.)

19-28 Why did Joshua not accept the people's first offer of service? What effect had his words on the people? Explain "covenant", v. 25. What monument of this covenant was set up? Where? Why was this place called the "sanctuary"?

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Reasons for choosing the service of God.
2. Why confess Christ?

A LESSON FOR LIFE

The choice is not between the true God and no god. For every one has some god, whom he loves and serves. It may be pleasure or money, or power. The questions to ask are: Does pleasure last? Can money give true joy? Will power satisfy? The answer to all these questions is a big NO, written all over the pages of history. Then, the only reasonable choice is to choose God and give Him our heart's love and our life's service.

Prove from Scripture—That we should choose God's service.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 77. *What is required in the ninth commandment?* A. The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbour's good name, especially in witness-bearing.

The Question on Missions—6. What is done for Indian boys and girls? There are 15 schools, in which the children are trained to speak English and to live in a civilized way. The boys learn to farm and take care of cattle, and the girls to keep house. Especially, they receive Christian instruction.

FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. What choice did Israel make at the appeal of Joshua?

2. What monument was set up of this choice?