

"Upon this rock I will build my church"

Matthew 16:18

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JOSHUA

INTRODUCTION:

Joshua is one of the great leaders of Hebrew history. The book of Joshua manifests his greatness. It shall be our purpose in this lesson to study his life and learn what made this man so great.

B. Joshua or Jehoshua = "Jehovah is salvation"; son of Nun of the tribe of Ephraim and successor to Moses as the leader of the children of Israel; led the conquest of Canaan.

As we study the book of Joshua, we find Joshua became the leader of the children of Israel. The task of taking over the leadership of Moses was a prodigious job. The people of Israel had been under the leadership of Moses for forty years. When someone has been a leader for that long, it can and often is very difficult for the next leader. For this reason, there was little surprise in seeing Jehovah giving him encouragement. Several times in that first chapter Jehovah God told Joshua "to be strong and of good courage" (Joshua 1:6,7,9). From the time he and the other Hebrew people were in the Egyptian bondage, he had seen the rebellion of the Israelites. His knowledge of their rebellion could make him be hesitant to take the leadership role; therefore, it seems it became necessary for God to give him encouragement.

D. Outline of the book (The following outline came from Charles Pledge):

I. ISRAEL CONQUERS THE LAND (1:1-12:24).

A. Preamble to the book (1:1-9).

B. Preparation for entering Canaan (1:10-2:24).

1. Preparations for crossing Jordan (1:10-18).

2. Spies sent to Jericho (2:1-24).

C. Crossing the Jordan (3:1-4:24).

1. Israel comes to the Jordan (3:1).

2. Final preparations to cross the Jordan (3:2-6).

3. The people cross over and erect a memorial to God (3:7-4:24).

D. The people are circumcised and celebrate the Passover at Gilgal (5:1-12).

1. The circumcision of the people (5:1-9).

Israel keeps the Passover in the land (5:10-12).

E. The appearance of the captain of the Lord's host and the capture of Jericho

(5:13-6:27).

1. The appearance of the prince of the host of heaven (5:13-15).

2. The prince of God's army gives instructions for the capture of Jericho (6:1-5).

3. Jericho is captured (6:6-27).

F. The trespass and punishment of Achan (7:1-26).

G. Ai destroyed and law read to the people (8:1-35).

1. The destruction of Ai (8:1-29).

- 2. The law read (8:30-35).
- H. The craftiness of the Gibeonites (9:1-27).
 - 1. The kings of Canaan band together against Israel (9:1,2).
 - 2. The Gibeonites approach Joshua and deceive him into making a covenant with them (9:3-35).
 - 3. Discovery and punishment for the fraud (9:16-27).
- I. The great victory at Gibeon (10:1-27).
 - 1. The alarm of the king of Jerusalem (10:1-5).
 - 2. The slaughter at Gibeon (10:6-15).
 - 3. The flight and death of the five kings (10:16-27).
- J. The conquest of Southern Palestine (10:28-43).
 - 1. Destruction of the fortified town (10:28-39).
 - 2. Summary of the conquest (10:40-43).
- K. The victory over the Northern Canaanites (11:1-23).
 - 1. The war (11:1-15).
 - 2. General retrospect of the conquest of West Palestine (11:16-23).
- L. Catalogue of the vanquished kings of Canaan (12:1-23).
 - 1. A summary of the defeated kings east of Jordan (12:1-6).
 - 2. A list of kings defeated west of Jordan (12:7-24).
- II. THE DIVISION OF CANAAN (13:1-24:33).
 - A. Division of land east of Jordan (13:1-33).
 - 1. The instructions of God to divide the land (13:1-7).
 - 2. The boundaries of the land to be divided (13:8-14).
 - 3. The inheritance of Reuben (13:15-23).
 - 4. The possession of Gad (13:24-28).
 - 5. The possession of the half tribe of Manasseh (13:29-33).
 - B. The inheritance of Caleb (14:1-5).
 - 1. Introduction to division of Canaan (14:1-5).
 - 2. Caleb is rewarded for his faithfulness to God (14:6-15).
 - C. The inheritance of Judah (15:1-63).
 - 1. The boundaries of Judah (15:1-12).
 - 2. The conquest of the inheritance of Caleb (15:13-19).
 - 3. A list of towns of Judah (15:20-63).
 - D. The inheritance of Ephraim (16:1-17:18).
 - 1. The boundaries (16:1-4).
 - 2. The portion of Ephraim (16:5-10).
 - 3. The inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh (17:1- 13).
 - 4. Complaint of descendants of Joseph (17:14-18).
 - E. The inheritance of the seven remaining tribes and of Joshua (18:1-19:51).
 - 1. The tabernacle at Shiloh (18:1-10).
 - 2. The inheritance of Benjamin (18:1-28).
 - 3. Inheritance of Simeon (19:1-9).
 - 4. Inheritance of Zebulon (19:10-16).
 - 5. Inheritance of Issachar (19:17-23).
 - 6. Inheritance of Asher (19:24-31).
 - 7. Inheritance of Naphtali (19:32-39).
 - 8. Inheritance of Dan (19:40-48).
 - 9. Inheritance of Joshua (19:49,50).
 - 10. Conclusion (19:51).
 - F. Cities of refuge appointed (20:1-9).

1. The command of God to Joshua (20:1-6).
2. The command obeyed (20:7-9).
- G. Cities appointed for the priests and Levites (21:1-45).
 1. The Levites demand their cities (21:1-3).
 2. A general account of Levitical cities (21:4-8).
 3. Cities of Aaron (21:9-19).
 4. Cities of the Kohathites (21:20-26).
 5. Cities of the Gershonites (21:27-33).
 6. Cities of the Merarites (21:34-42).
 7. Conclusion to division of the land (21:43-45).
- H. The two and a half transjordanic tribes return to their inheritance (22:1-34).
 1. Joshua's parting address to them (22:1-8).
 2. The tribes return and build an altar on Jordan (22:9, 10).
 3. Israel sends men to investigate (22:11-20).
 4. The two and a half tribes reassure their brethren (22:21-29).
 5. The delegation returned home (22:30-34).
- I. Joshua's farewell and death (23:1-24:33).
 1. The first parting address (23:1-16).
 2. The second parting address and renewal of the covenant (24:1-33).
- J. Sidlow Baxter in his book entitled, Explore The Book, has some statements that are worth repeating concerning the book of Joshua. Joshua is complementary to the five books of Moses and introductory to the new historical group of twelve books (Joshua-Esther). The five books of Moses lead Israel up to Canaan. Joshua complements these by leading Israel into Canaan. The rest of the historical books covers Israel's history in the land of Canaan. The book of Joshua covers about twenty-five years. Jewish tradition supports that Joshua is the author of this book. The key thought of the book is victory of faith. Joshua stands in sharp contrast to what is found in Numbers 13,14. In Joshua the reader learns what it means to live by faith and what rewards are waiting for those who follow by faith. Each victory was an exhibit that victory was due to faith in God, not in the arm of man.
- F. God gives Joshua some charges in this book:
 1. God charged him to lead His people.
 2. God charged him to have courage.
 3. God charged him to enter the land.
 4. God charged him to spy and take Jericho.
 5. God charged him to discipline the person who took the spoils when they conquered the city of Jericho.

There are some great lessons we can learn from Joshua. The writer is sure that some great things could be discussed within the book and we shall note some of them. It shall be our main purpose of this lesson to focus on Joshua (the person). We shall discuss:

 1. Joshua the slave.
 2. Joshua the soldier.
 3. Joshua the servant.
 4. Joshua the spy.
 5. Joshua the successor.

DISCUSSION:

I. JOSHUA THE SLAVE.

- A. There is little doubt that Joshua was a slave in Egypt.
 - 1. Exodus 17:8,9.
 - 2. Exodus 1:10-14.
 - 3. Exodus 5:1-14.
- B. Slave defined.
- C. Slavery has little freedoms.
- D. Spiritual slavery.
 - 1. Romans 6:1-19.
 - 2. When a person commits sin, he becomes the servant or slave to the devil.
 - 3. Satan uses three main avenues to get people to be his slaves (I John 2:15-17).
 - 4. John 8:33-35.

II. JOSHUA THE SOLDIER.

- A. The first time we learn of the position of Joshua as a soldier is in the book of Exodus.
 - 1. Exodus 17:7-9.
 - 2. Joshua led the battle against Amalek.
- B. Brother J. A. McNutt said concerning Joshua as a soldier, "Thus, Joshua learned an important lesson in the beginning of his military career, namely, you cannot win without invoking God's help. He could not expect to win by his own strength alone. He could not depend upon the size of the army or upon human ingenuity; the military strategy that he devised would only be vain unless the Lord was fighting on his side" (Great Lessons from " Old Testament Characters; 1990 Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, p. 288).
- C. In battle against Amalek (Exodus 17:8-14).
- D. Christians are soldiers of Christ.
 - 1. II Timothy 2:3.
 - 2. II Corinthians 10:4,5.
 - 3. Ephesians 6:10-18.
 - 4. Christian soldiers are to fight against all evil (Ephesians 5:11).

III. JOSHUA THE SERVANT.

- A. Joshua was the servant of God and Moses.
- B. When Moses went into the mount of God (Exodus 24:13).
- C. When he heard the noise of the camp (Exodus 32:17).
- D. Joshua in the tabernacle with Moses (Exodus 33:4-11).
- E. Joshua served by going into the land to spy it out (Numbers 13,14).
- F. The New Testament teaches us that Christians are servants of God.
 - 1. Romans 6:1-19.
 - 2. II Corinthians 4:5.
 - 3. Ephesians 6:5,6.

4. I Peter 2:16.
 5. I Corinthians 3:16,17.
 6. I Corinthians 6:19,20.
- G. Elders are servants of God and the church (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:3-11; I Peter 5:1-5).
- H. Deacons are servants (Acts 6:1-6; I Timothy 3:8-13).
- I. Teachers are servants (James 3:1,2; Ephesians 4:11-16).
- J. Philippians 2:1-9 teaches us that Jesus came to earth to serve mankind, and Christians are to do the same (Matthew 25:31-46; 20:20-29; John 13:1-17).

IV. JOSHUA THE SPY.

A. Joshua was one of the twelve spies that went to get a report of the land (Numbers 13:1-33).

1. Only he and Caleb brought back a good report (Numbers 13:30; 14:6).

2. Only he and Caleb thought they could take the land.

3. He and Caleb had their faith in God and not in self.

B. Warren W. Wiersbe said concerning Joshua, "This crisis revealed some fine leadership qualities in Joshua. He was not blind to the realities of the situation, but he didn't allow the problem and difficulties to rob him of his faith in God. The ten spies looked at God through the difficulties, while Joshua and Caleb looked at the difficulties through what they knew about God. Their God was big enough for the battles that lay ahead" (Be Strong by Warren W. Wiersbe, p. 13).

1. When people have faith like Joshua, the challenges will not matter.

2. We are to walk by faith (II Corinthians 5:7).

V. JOSHUA THE SUCCESSOR.

A. Joshua was chosen to follow Moses as the leader of the children of Israel (Numbers 27:18-23; Deuteronomy 1:38; 3:28; Joshua 1:1-18).

B. It is clear that Joshua had leadership skills.

1. Exodus 17:7-9.

2. Joshua 1:1-18.

C. A leader must be trained, and Joshua was trained by Moses.

D. A leader must meet certain qualifications (Exodus 18:20,21; I Timothy 3:1-8).

E. J. J. Turner lists "Some Positive Reasons" for being a leader.

1. God's cause needs good leaders.

2. The work cannot be left to chance.

3. The Lord expects you to lead.

4. Because of the results.

5. Because of the times. No other generation can do the leading for the next.

F. Brother Turner lists some things that it takes to be a leader.

1. A leader is a real, live human being.

2. A leader is made--not born.

3. A leader is a Christian.
 4. A leader is dedicated.
 5. A leader has a deep sense of responsibility.
 6. A leader feels a sense of responsibility.
 7. A leader is a finisher.
 8. A leader is a person of convictions.
 9. A leader is an out front man.
 10. A leader is a man with a positive attitude.
 11. A leader is a lover of people.
 12. A leader is full of desires.
 13. A leader is a person of self-control.
 14. A leader is a teachable person.
 15. A leader is a patient person.
 16. A leader is a man of the Book.
 17. A leader is a forgiving man.
 18. A leader knows how to delegate.
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19. A leader is a planner and goal setter.
 20. A leader is a man of faith.
 21. A leader is a man who listens.
 22. A leader recognizes the importance of every member.
 23. A leader is a good manager.
 24. A leader is a man of prayer.
 25. Qualities of a good leader.
 - a. Slow to suspect--quick to trust.
 - b. Slow to condemn--quick to justify.
 - c. Slow to offend--quick to defend.
 - d. Slow to expose--quick to shield.
 - e. Slow to reprimand--quick to forbear.
 - f. Slow to belittle--quick to appreciate.
 - g. Slow to demand--quick to give.
 - h. Slow to provoke--quick to help.
 - i. Slow to resent--quick to forgive.

CONCLUSION:

A. Review.

1. Joshua the slave.
2. Joshua the soldier.
3. Joshua to servant.
4. Joshua the spy.
5. Joshua the successor.

B. Joshua was a great man of God and one for an example for us today.

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