

Lessons from the Life of Joshua

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Date: 15 November 2009

[0 : 00] I'm talking about Joshua. Joshua the man in the book. Really the life of Joshua is packed with many spiritual truths.

! The life of Joshua had a life of conflict and conquest. Our battles are there in the Bible, in Joshua's life, in the book of Joshua and in the other references to Joshua.

As we face the world, the flesh and the devil, there's a conflict, there's a combat, a battle going on. And through the Word of God we see pictured for us, through Joshua's life, this battle, this life that he lived, we can find spiritual truth for our lives.

For example, when we see Canaan, the land of Canaan, the promised land, in God's Word, the promised land, Canaan, pictures for us the abundant life, the spirit-filled life, the life for every Christian to live.

As distinct from where they came from, Egypt, which pictures the bondage of sin, of the world, and of the wilderness in between time, of carnal Christianity.

[1 : 17] As they wandered aimless and disobediently in rebellion, you can see their wandering time in the wilderness as kind of a picture of carnal Christianity.

Of a Christianity that's not really dedicated to Christ. And Canaan land is that picture of the promised land. As we see that land that's described in Exodus 3 verse 8.

As a land flowing with milk and honey. A land, a good land and large. A land flowing with milk and honey. That's Exodus 3 verse 8.

A land of bouncy, of cleansing. And God wants that for our lives as believers in Christ. That we can have an abundant life. He has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

The Canaan life, the abundant life. And the Canaanites, those who were there, the lost, the unbelieving, the godless of the day, of the age, of the land, of Canaan, represent for us our spiritual enemies.

[2 : 20] As we see in Ephesians 6. That there's spiritual wickedness in high places. And we are combating that. Not flesh and blood now. Not a physical enemy of Canaan, of the Canaanites.

But of spiritual powers of wickedness in high places. And the book of Joshua, in God's book, the Bible, shows to us the warfare. The warfare that you're engaged in as God's men and women tonight.

The good fight of the faith, of the overcoming life, of the victory you can claim as God's people. As Joshua led God's people from that place of wandering, of that dry place, of that wilderness place, and into the promised land.

It's a wonderful spiritual picture for us. Not just the practical, real history of Joshua's book and of these accounts, but of the spiritual truths we can apply from that.

And God carries his people through. God carries us through to victory. He leads his people from stagnation to refreshing. From bondage to abundance.

[3 : 28] From death to life. We see that as God's people were led through that time of the wilderness. And the people of Israel, they had their struggles. They had their struggles just like you do.

Just like I do. And that we can apply those spiritual battles that they had in our own life of faith. So Joshua is a story of conquest and of fulfillment for the people of God.

After many years of slavery. We know that they lived in Egypt's slavery. For many years in Egypt's bondage. And then after 40 years in the desert. Finally, they get to enter the promised land.

And Joshua. Who is he? What's it all about? What does the very name Joshua mean? The name Joshua means the Lord is our salvation. The Lord saves.

God saves. Really, in the Greek, the name for Joshua is Jesus. Jesus. Joshua in the Greek is Jesus. So Joshua is a model.

[4 : 27] A type of Christ. Very real type for us of Christ. And a man of character. Of conviction. Of courage. Of vision. Of integrity.

Joshua was a number of things. Look at a number of things that Joshua was. And learn from that, I pray, together. Together. So Joshua, one of the Bible heroes.

One of our heroes of the faith. A warrior. A general. A soldier. He was a soldier. In Exodus 17, verse 9. We see there that Moses said unto Joshua.

Exodus 17, verse 9. Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men. And go out. Fight with Amalek. Tomorrow, I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand.

And we know that as Moses was there on the top of the mount, as Aaron and Hur helped him hold that rod high, that Joshua and the fighting men had victory.

[5 : 36] Go and fight. Moses says to Joshua. Joshua was a fighter. And Joshua's various battles are recorded through the book there of Joshua and other places.

His victories there. And his defeat. It was a time when someone had concealed something. There was sin in the camp. Achan had sinned and was disobedient.

And God's people were not victorious at that time. So it tells the warts and all, doesn't it? God's word to Joshua. He wasn't always victorious. But he was...

As God helped him, he was obedient to fight. And in verse 13 of Exodus 17, it says that Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Joshua defeated him. He wasted him. He discomfited him. He destroyed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And God's people, you as one of God's people, we as God's people, are called to conquest.

[6 : 44] We're called to fight some fights. Life isn't always a bed of roses. Life can be a challenge and a conflict. And especially as we know, a raid against us, the enemy's forces of those spiritual wickedness in high places.

And we're called to fight. To fight the good fight of the faith. To fight on to victory. Yet often, how true it is that we sometimes, all of us can be subject to defeat.

We can give ground. We can give place to the devil. We must not do that, brother and sister. Don't give ground. Don't give place to the devil. Fight and keep on fighting. Realising that the victory has been promised to us.

The victory came as the rod of God was held high. It was as God was revered and honoured as they placed their trust in God and his overcoming power as it was represented there as Moses held the rod high.

So Joshua, he was a soldier and so should we be. He was a soldier. Secondly, he was a servant. He was a servant. In Exodus 33 verse 11 we see that Joshua was a servant.

[8 : 00] A servant. He was a servant. A servant. One who showed humility and like that too, as every one of us, as God helps us to, seeks to serve, we will learn and we will grow as we find that place of service.

Exodus 33 verse 11 it says, And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp.

But his servant, Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. Moses was there ministering in the tabernacle. In that place of holiness.

In that place of worship. A holy place. And who was there? Alongside him, Joshua was there. At his side. Joshua was there. As his servant.

And it says there, Exodus 3, 33, 11. It says there that Joshua was a young man. A young man. And we know the word of God exhorts us.

[9 : 01] It says to seek your creator in the days of your youth. It's good to find Christ at a young age. I know I was just 15 when I trusted Christ.

And if we can have that faith in that time of youth, it's such a blessing. And even for, it doesn't matter how old we are though, how old you might be today, that you can put your trust in Christ and follow him.

And make the most of those days he gives to you. To count those days, to apply them unto wisdom. And for 40 years, for 40 years, Joshua was Moses' right hand man.

He was there at his bidding, at his call, a servant. Someone who would come and fetch and go and do at the bidding of the master.

And what a picture. What a model. As I say, Joshua is a model, a type of Christ. And we can learn from his example. And Joshua 5, verse 14 to 15.

[10:05] We see again how he is described as a servant. Joshua 5, verse 14 to 15. It says that he worshipped the Saviour.

He worshipped the Saviour. There was a theophany or a Christophany. There was an appearance here of Christ prior to Bethlehem.

Christ came here. We would see certainly the angel of the Lord and we could see, pictured here, that this could be a reference to an appearance of Christ prior to his coming in the flesh, born of Mary, made of a woman.

Before he came, there's some accounts where we could see this picture. For example, in this account of Joshua 5, 14, in the context here, verse 13, he lifted up his eyes and there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand.

And Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? Verse 14, And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord, am I now come?

[11:25] Of course, we know the Saviour, our Saviour, the Lord Jesus, is referred to as the Captain, the Captain of our salvation. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant?

And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.

And Joshua did so. The angel of the Lord, the captain of the Lord's host, we could see a reference to our Saviour, was worshipped there. Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship.

We know that, of course, an angel is not to be worshipped and where angels were worshipped, that worship was refused because it was not to be so. But whenever our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, received worship, he accepted that worship.

As we see, for example, through the Gospel of Matthew, there's many references to that and that's the same Gospel that our Saviour says, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.

[12:35] And yet we have lepers worshipping, we have blind men healed worshipping, we have all manner of men and women worshipping the Saviour, the disciples, it says that they worshipped Him.

And yet we see that Joshua worshipped the Saviour here. And he described himself as the servant of the Lord. Joshua was pleased to be called a servant of the Lord.

And in Joshua 8 verse 13, it says he built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel. He was pleased to worship the Saviour. He was pleased to be a servant of the Saviour.

He was pleased to build an altar of worship to the Saviour. And what an example, what a testimony for you, for me, that we can be a servant of the Lord. That's what we must be.

That is what we must aspire to be. To aspire to be that. To be a soldier, to be a servant. And we see another feature of Joshua's life in Numbers 27 verse 18.

[13:37] Numbers 27 verse 18, that he was a spiritual man. A spiritual man. A spirit-filled man. Joshua was a spirit-filled man.

Numbers 27 verse 18, it says of him there, And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him.

Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit. The Spirit of God was in Joshua. He had faith in God. He was full of the Holy Spirit.

And Joshua was one of the twelve men that were sent by Moses to spy out the land. They got close to the border and the spies were sent there to go and spy out the land.

To do a reconnoiter, to do a reconnaissance mission, to spy out the land that awaited them, the land that the Lord had promised to them, to give to them.

[14:40] Twelve men were sent by Moses to spy out the land. And the spies told of the land's bounty. They said it was flowing, overflowing with milk and honey and such bounty.

And they described the fruit and the abundance of the land. Again, a picture of heaven for us, the land of Canaan. But they also spoke of the difficulty in possessing it.

But unlike the rest, Caleb and Joshua trusted God's Word. They believed God's Word. They believed God's promise. They believed God's provision.

They trusted it was God's will. It was God's will for them to enter into the land. And in Numbers 13, from 30 to 31, we see there, the context there is of the spies coming back and of the evil report, the report that was not of faith, the evil report, and then we see the good report, the report that was of faith.

Numbers 13, from verse 30, And Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it.

[16:00] They were saying, Joshua and Caleb were saying, We are well able to go and possess the land. But the men that went up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.

And they called them as if they were giants to a grasshopper. They said, Look, it's just impossible. It's just out of the question. There's no way that we can even consider going up against these people.

We're just totally outnumbered and outarmed and inadequate, unable. But really it was unbelief, wasn't it? It was unbelief that filled them.

In Numbers 14, Numbers 14, it says all the people were filled with unbelief. And they wanted to go back to Egypt. As you head down to Numbers 14, from verse 6, just the context before then, it says the people were just totally full of despair and doubt and discouragement and just unbelief was just saturating the camp.

So that it says that all the people were filled with unbelief. They wanted to go back to Egypt. Here was Joshua and Caleb. They brought back the good report, the report of faith.

[17:09] They had the faith, the courage to recommend and advance, to go and attack, to go and enter the land that God had promised to them, that God had said that they could enter. Because of their faith, they were the only ones that then, God said, would survive the 40 years of wandering to enter the land.

God blessed their faith and promised them the victory. And when the people in unbelief heard these accounts, they wanted to return to Egypt.

Imagine that. They'd just come out of Egypt. They'd seen the despair and the bondage, the slavery, the hard taskmasters, the picture for us, the slave master of sin, of Satan.

They wanted to go back to Egypt. What a ridiculous thing. The unbelief. They wanted to return to that slavery, to that bondage.

And Joshua and Caleb, when they heard this, they tore their clothes. They tore their clothes. They tore their garments as a sign of despair, of grief, of repentance, of frustration, of the witness of their heart's grief for the rebellion of God's people, for the blasphemy of God's people against their God and His Word, against Moses.

[18:31] And in fear of God's judgment, they tore their garments. It was a sign of blasphemy, of weeping, of grief. And Numbers 14, 6, Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land.

They rent their clothes, and they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land which we pass through to search is an exceeding good land.

If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which floweth with milk and honey.

Even though that all the people were despairing and doubting, Joshua and Caleb, they stood up and said, We can, because God is with us. God has promised it to us.

If the Lord delights in us, if it's God's pleasure, if it's God's desire, He will bring us into this land. They're not going to stop us, no matter how many giants are in the land.

[19:33] Nobody can stop us. If God delights to give it to us, there's no stopping us. He will give it to us, this land which floweth with milk and honey. So they exhorted the people, Joshua and Caleb, they exhorted the people not to fear, but to have faith.

Really, fear is the opposite of faith, isn't it? And faith is the absence of fear. Other than the fear of our Lord, it's not a fear of anything other than pleasing our Saviour.

He exhorted them not to fear the people, not to fear the giants, not to fear the opposition or the conflict and the challenges of those giants, but to have faith and to trust the Lord.

And Hebrews 11, 6, it says, but without faith it is impossible to please Him. But he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

He that cometh to God must believe that He is. People, believe Him today, believe Him today, trust Him today. He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

[20 : 43] We can trust His word, we can trust His promise as Caleb and Joshua did. They challenged the doubt and the fear of the godless age, of the godless crowd.

And Numbers 14, 9, it goes on, Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land, for they are bred for us their defences departed from them and the Lord is with us.

The Lord is with us, fear them not. What a stirring exaltation of faith. The Lord is with you, fear them not. But, verse 10, but all the congregation made stone them with stones.

All the congregation said, stone them with stones. the people didn't like the sermon that day. They didn't like the message, they didn't like the challenge because it was personal, because it meant that they had to get out of their comfort zone, get out of their comfy pews and go and do something for the Saviour, go and enter into the land and face the giants, go and enter that place of fear, that place of challenge, that place of stepping outside of their comfort zone of being an out and out Christian.

They took offence, they wanted to stone the preachers with stones. But, God intervened in his glory. Verse 10, the middle part, it says, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

[22 : 20] God intervened, the glory cloud came down into the tabernacle. God prevented the unbelieving from entering the promised land. And we know that Joshua and Caleb were confirmed that they were with the Lord and God blessed and confirmed the word that they had given.

Caleb and Joshua were allowed of all that great multitude of that age that God set. Only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to enter the land.

Numbers 32, 12, the reason why was for they have wholly followed the Lord. Numbers 32, 12, that Caleb and Joshua were allowed for they have wholly followed the Lord.

Do you wholly follow the Lord? Do you completely follow the Lord? That's what it's saying there. Not in part, not in a component or a partial following of the Saviour, but to follow Him wholly, completely. They were sold out. Will you be like Joshua? I trust brother, sister tonight that we can be challenged by Joshua's life. Challenged to think, do we completely follow the Lord?

[23 : 33] Do we completely follow Him? If we're not completely following Him, then really we're not following Him. We need to repent. We need to ask His forgiveness. We need to ask His grace to help us to live, to walk in truth.

We need to, I need to. Will we be like Joshua? Joshua. Deuteronomy 34, 9. It says, Joshua, as I say, he was a spirit-filled man. He was filled with the Spirit of God.

Deuteronomy 34, 9. It says, And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the Spirit of wisdom. He was full of the Spirit of wisdom. Moses had laid his hands on him.

The children of Israel hearkened unto him and did as the Lord commanded Moses. Do we have this kind of spirit? The kind of spirit that Joshua had? Or will we be like those ten other spies and like the multitude who'd listen to the doubt, listen to the defeat, to the disappointing message, to the message of give up, quit, go take your bag and go back to Egypt, take your bat and ball and go home to Egypt.

Do we listen to that kind of message? Or do we listen to the message of faith? Do we listen to the message of Joshua and Caleb? We are well able to go and possess the land. Because if God delights to give it to us, that's all that matters.

[24 : 51] They wholly followed the Lord. They didn't have the spirit of unbelief and fear. They had the spirit of faith, the spirit of wisdom. And we can have that too. Maybe you're facing some battles ahead.

You're not yet, we're not yet in Canaan. Amen? We're not yet in that land, that promised land of heaven, of yet to come, that promised land for us. Yet we know that faith will give the victory that overcomes the world.

And so we see Joshua was a soldier. He was spirit-filled. He was a servant. And he was strong. He was strong and courageous.

Deuteronomy 31, verse 7 to 8. Just flick there if you can. In the time Moses commissioned Joshua to take his place, Moses himself couldn't enter in the promised land.

Joshua took his place. He took over the reins. And he was exhorted by Moses to be strong, to have courage, to trust in God's unfailing power, to have faith. Deuteronomy 31, from verse 7.

[25 : 55] It says there, And Moses called unto Joshua and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage, for thou must go with his people unto the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them.

And thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee. He will be with thee. He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee.

Fear not, neither be dismayed. Again, Moses, that's an exaltation we can take to heart too. Moses' words to Joshua, he says, Be strong and of a good courage.

He says, The Lord, he's going before you. He will be with you. He will not fail you. He will not forsake you. Fear not, neither be dismayed. Be strong. That's an exaltation that we all need to take to heart.

All of us need to be strong. These are days when it's easy to be weak. It's days when it's easy to be weak. Perilous times. These are days when it's easy to give ground, to give up, to give away to the world, the flesh, the devil.

[27 : 04] But God says, Be strong, be courageous, live a life with character, like Joshua did. A life with character, with courage, with conviction, to stand up, even if it costs you.

Even though the whole multitude of Israel are against you, like it's, I guess it's three to the rest of the nation, Moses, Joshua, and Caleb, against the multitude, even though the odds are against you, stand with God's promise, stand with God's word, depend on God to redeem, to deliver.

And your steadfast faith will see you through. Brothers and sisters, just like the victory was won for Joshua, he won through in those times of conflict. And what got Joshua through?

What was it that Joshua had that we can grasp today and apply today? Those truths, those secrets, those principles that Joshua had, what can we find in the account of his life?

Just to make it personal now, to apply it as best we can, Joshua, what we can learn from him, where can we find this strength, where can we find this courage? It's faith.

[28 : 15] It's faith in God's promises, faith in God's presence with us. For example, Joshua 1, 7 to 9, it's really lovely scriptures here from Joshua 1, 7 to 9.

Words that you can take personally today. Words that you can apply to your life today. Words that you can apply to your conflict, to your challenge of faith today, as Joshua did.

Joshua 1, 7 to 9, Only be thou strong and very courageous that thou mayst observe to do according to all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded thee.

Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayst prosper with us soever thou goest.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night that thou mayst observe to do according to all that is written therein.

For then shalt thou make thy way prosperous and then shalt thou have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage.

[29 : 26] Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed. For the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. It says, Be strong, be courageous, observe the book, meditate in the book, apply the book, have I not commanded thee?

Be strong and of good courage. God says, Be strong, be strong, be of good courage, obey the book, meditate in it. That's the victory.

The victory is faith. We see that in Joshua's obedience. For example, in the battle of Jericho, we see that Joshua's name is synonymous with Jericho.

Joshua fit the battle of Jericho as the song goes, but really he didn't fight it, did he? He just walked around it a few times in obedience to God's word and God brought the victory, God brought the blessing.

As we see in Joshua 6, the account there of the battle of Jericho, Joshua 6 verse 2, it says there that the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho and the king thereof and the mighty men of valor.

[30 : 34] See,