

God's Plan and Promise for Joshua

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning again. So glad that we're here together today, and we are going to be in the book of Joshua this morning. And we're going to be in the first few verses of the book of Joshua, speaking a little bit on God's plan that he had for Joshua and the promise that he had for Joshua.

But also, I believe it's something that we can take from this experience, this account of God speaking to Joshua. And I believe we can also see that God has a plan for our life and that we can live our life based on the promises of God.

So God's plan and promise for Joshua. What is Joshua known for? Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. Everyone who's been through Sunday school knows that children's song.

And so Joshua is known for fighting the battle of Jericho. But there's a whole lot more history concerning Joshua. He was Moses' assistant and even accompanied Moses to Mount Sinai. He was one of the twelve chosen to spy out the promised land, the land of Canaan. And by the way, his name is the same as Jesus.

[1 : 22] Joshua is the Old Testament Hebrew equivalent of the New Testament name Jesus. Joshua. Yeshua. And it means God's salvation.

And as we look into the life of Joshua, there's a secret to the success of Joshua. Well, really not a secret. It's simply God's plan and the program that God had and the promise that God had for him that he made known to him.

So let's take a look and see what that plan and that promise was. We begin in Joshua chapter number one, and we're going to go through verse nine this morning.

We begin reading with verse one. After the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, Moses, my servant is dead.

Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people to the land which I am giving to them, the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given you, as I said to Moses, from the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the great sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory.

[2 : 50] No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life as I was with Moses. So I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

Only be strong and very courageous that you may observe to do all according to all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded you.

Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do all according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. And verse number nine, Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage.

[3 : 56] Do not be afraid nor be dismayed. Your God is with you wherever you go. So we see here a couple of things in the life of Joshua.

Number one, that God had a plan for the life of Joshua. We see that in verse number two. Moses, my servant, is dead.

And here he goes. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, the children of Israel. When Joshua's mother held him as a baby in

Egypt, he was one of a family of slaves.

His future seemed to be that of slavery. Likewise, you and I, we are born to the slavery of sin. We are born with not only the propensity to sin, but we really have no choice.

We are slaves to our sin nature. We know that as growing up. We didn't have to teach our children how to disobey, how to lie, how to do evil, because that comes naturally to us as human beings.

[5 : 11] And it's not until we have a changed nature when we trust Christ as our Savior, and the Holy Spirit comes in and redeems us and provides a brand new nature, the Holy Spirit comes to reside within us, that we are no longer slaves to sin.

Now God's plan for Joshua is revealed. He says, I have a plan for you. I have a job for you. Moses has died, and now Joshua becomes the leader.

I can imagine that Joshua never figured he would be in such a position. He was the second. He was the second. He was the one who was there.

He was the servant. But little did he imagine, I am sure, that one day he would be responsible for the entire nation of Israel. He would be the one responsible for leading the children of God into the promised land, the promised land that God had promised Moses.

But Moses was not able to go into because of his disobedience, that Joshua now is the one that has given this plan for his life.

[6 : 22] And we also know from Scripture, from the New Testament, that God has a plan for our life as well. We also have learned a few weeks ago through our series of messages, that no matter where we are, if we have trusted Christ as our Savior, we are always part of the plan of God.

We see, rather, in Jesus' high priestly prayer, before he was going to be arrested and brought before the magistrates, that he was praying for his disciples.

But he also prayed for those who would come after them, those who would believe, which would be us. He prayed that God would keep us from the evil one.

He prayed that God would put us in this world, place us in this world, would protect us while we are in this world, and would give us the power to accomplish his plan for us.

And his plan is carrying on the kingdom of God and sharing the gospel with those who have yet to hear the good news that Jesus Christ died on the cross in their place because God loves us and he wants to have a relationship with us.

[7 : 43] God has a plan for our life beyond what we think we can attain, even like Joshua. It's a good plan. It's a good plan because we know that we are part of his family.

We have good things prepared or planned for our family. So does God. It's also a plan that we can know. God has given us his promises and God has given us his plan.

Throughout the New Testament, whether it's from the Gospel of Matthew all the way to the book of the Revelation, do you want to know God's plan for your life and what plan to follow?

Read Scripture. He gives it out in his word. It's also a plan we get into or we can get in on by total and complete surrender.

Be part of God's plan. Surrender to his will and allow him to lead and guide as he teaches and as he unfolds his plan before your very eyes.

[8 : 39] And it's also, it's a plan that's available immediately. I know there are those of us who think that we have to get everything in order before we can get something done.

I believe that imperfect action will always beat perfect inaction.

Think about that. Imperfect action will always beat out perfect inaction. So those of us who are perfectionists and we have to think, well, you know what, I have to wait till I get it just right before I can do it.

God's plan is, just like Nike's, just do it. Because God will give us the words. God will give us the ability. And so imperfect action always beats perfect inaction.

There are so many Christians who are waiting to be perfect or waiting till they think they know more or know enough so they can go share the gospel with someone.

[9 : 46] And there's a fear. There's always that fear. Well, I need to know more. I need to have the plan of salvation. I need to know what to say.

What if someone asks me a question I can't answer? Or some will say, well, I can't really serve God until I go to Bible college. I can't really get in on God's plan until I do whatever it is.

Well, the thing is, God's plan is available immediately the moment we trust Christ and we surrender our lives to Him.

He says, go therefore, and we can win our first. We can share the gospel with someone the moment after we trust Christ as our Savior.

Savior is just like finding something that you weren't looking for and all of a sudden you're excited about it and you go tell everyone, look at what I found.

[10 : 44] And that's all being a Christian is. It's like one beggar telling another person where to find bread. Oh, look, I found the greatest thing there is, Jesus Christ.

You need to trust Him too. Well, how do I do it? Well, I just know that I trust in Him and I gave my life to Him. That's all I know. Well, that's all we need to know. And so it's available to us immediately.

It's a plan that He has for our life. Secondly, God had a plan for Joshua, but also God gave a promise to Joshua that would fit every situation.

So that was the secret of his success. God gave him the promise that would take him through all of the difficult situations that was there in the life of Joshua.

Verse 5, No man, here's what He tells Joshua, No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Can you imagine being given that promise?

[11 : 47] Especially as a soldier, especially as a captain over the army, especially as the one who is told that you need to go into this land, and if you want to live there, and if you want to have a house, you've got to drive out the inhabitants, which means you've got to fight for your property.

And so, No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life, just like I was with Moses. So I will be with you. I will not leave you, nor forsake you.

What a promise! What a promise! I will not leave. Let's say it together. I will not leave you, nor forsake you. Now that's a promise that he gave to Joshua, but it's also a promise that he's given to us.

It's reiterated in the New Testament. Jesus, to his disciples, before he went up to be with God in heaven, he says, Lo, I will be with you always, even to the end of the age.

And so, until Jesus Christ comes back, Jesus is going to be here with us, through his Holy Spirit, empowering us, giving us the words to say, I will never leave you, nor forsake you.

[13 : 03] There would come some days where Joshua would need that promise. Joshua chapter 7, the defeat at Ai. They went out, they numbered the people, they said, no, we don't need everybody, because, man, look what happened at Jericho.

And so they went out to Ai, and they came back with their tails between their legs, because they were defeated. And Joshua needed that promise from God. You know, we'll have down days, but that promise has never changed, because what a great God we serve.

His love is constant. His love is unconditional, no matter what. We were reading this morning in Sunday school about one of the stories that was given by Charles Spurgeon, one of the great preachers of many, many years ago, was talking about, he had a garden, he had a neighbor that had a dog, and the dog would come to his garden and would just do mischief.

So he said there was one day that the dog came, and he said he never left my garden in better condition. And so the dog came in, and he was angry at the dog, and he took a stick, and he threw the stick at the dog.

Well, what did the dog do? The dog, with his tail wagging, went up, picked the stick, brought it, he said he brought it to my feet, and dropped it at my feet.

[14 : 33] He said, I'm no monster. What kind of person would I be that would not tell him, you can come back to my garden anytime you wish.

Our God is like that. He loves us unconditionally. He loves us false and all. And so he says, I will never leave you. I will never forsake you.

And we can always come to God and know that God will love us. He will care for us. He will never be upset.

He will never be frustrated with our failures and our foibles. He is always going to be there for us. His presence is never removed.

Let's look at the New Testament promise in Hebrews 13, 6. So we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper. I will not fear.

[15 : 28] What can man do to me? What are your fears? What is our fear that might keep us from accomplishing the will of God in our life?

Whatever that is, going out to a foreign land to share the gospel, going into an area of town that we may not feel comfortable with, but we feel God has sent us there. Or going to that person at work or going to that person in the neighborhood that might be the mean person on the block and start a conversation with them and share the gospel with them.

Or the person that we think would not welcome the presence of God from our lives into their life. What is it that we are afraid of?

The New Testament reiterates, the Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What can man do to me? Do you remember what God said to Joshua at least three times here in this, the promise that he gave? Don't fear. Be very courageous. Be not afraid.

[16:38] Be courageous. Be very courageous. Don't fear. Don't be afraid. So he repeats that. And obviously it must have been important. And it must have been something that God wanted Joshua to remember when the times went sideways or when things went sideways and times were bad.

Don't be afraid, but rather be very courageous. Going out in the face of fear and continuing to do what we know is right or know that we're called to do.

What can man do to me? So what was as well the success or what led to Joshua's success?

I think we see this in verse number eight. The third thing is God's word. God's word was to be the secret of his success.

Let's take a look in verse number eight. What did God say? He said, this is my plan. Moses is dead. You're going to be the new leader. I am going to be calling you to go into the promised land and lead my people into the promised land and you will divide out the land.

[17:54] Don't be afraid. He said, you won't have to worry about anyone. No one will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Don't be afraid. Be very courageous.

So what was going to keep him going? Number five, excuse me, verse eight. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth.

The word of God at the time that had been written, but you shall meditate in it day and night that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success. So what was the secret of Joshua's success?

We know that God told him his plan. We know that God gave him the promises for every promise for every occasion. I will be with you. I will never leave you.

[18:52] I will never forsake you. I will never leave you in a lurch. I will always be there for you. But then God says, but this is what I want you to do. I want you to study my word every day.

I want you to mull over it. I want you to think about it. I want it to become part of your life. I want it to become part of the fabric of your life, whether it's in the morning, whether it's noonday, whether it's in the evening.

I want my word to be part of your life. And I want you to make sure that you observe to do everything that you read in my word. That was the secret to his success.

He says, because God says, then, what is the then conditional upon? What we previously read. The book of the law, not departing from his mouth, meditating in it day and night, observing to do all that's written in it, because God says it's for then that you will, then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success.

So what about us? By the same token, we are to be in the word of God. You know, there are so many books that are written. Ecclesiastes 12, 12.

[20:11] Solomon said, you know, of the writing of books, there is no end. You just go to, you go to the library, you search Amazon, you look at the Library of Congress.

There are books that are being written every day. There are probably books that should not be written, but nonetheless, there are books that are written. Now it's so much easier to get over the hurdle of writing. If you've got a few books, you can be self-published.

There are probably some books that would be a waste of time reading. So Solomon knew what he was talking about when he said, of the writing of books, there is no end.

There is understanding and knowledge that we can get that is totally beyond us, but it's available out there.

But think about it. What is the one book that we can read that will be the answer to life's problems that are simply part of human nature?

[21 : 13] It's God's Word. God's Word is the owner's manual for our life. God's Word is what he's given us to help us navigate this life.

It's our GPS. It's our dictionary. It's our encyclopedia. Are there other books that are good and that are important? Yes, I think so. There are plenty of writings that I believe that would be good for us to read.

I think there are classics that everyone should probably read to get a better understanding of life, to get a better understanding of the philosophy of life. And there are some that are just fun to read. But God told Joshua, this book of my law, don't let it depart out of your mouth. Meditate in it day and night. Observe to do all that is written therein.

There are some books that we read that are some that are drab. There are some that are delightful. There are some beautiful. There are some boring. But in this one book, God reveals himself to mankind.

[22 : 24] So as we think about, do we seek the God of the Bible? Do we seek the will of God?

It's in the Bible. Do we seek the guidance of God? It's in God's Word. And as we wind this down, God, know that God has a plan for your life.

We know that it is part of God's will. We know that in God's Word, He will reveal to us His plan for our life.

His Word can be our food. His Word can be our foundation. When we walk with God, we will never, ever be alone.

God's plan and God's promise was given to Joshua by God. The secret to his success was the Word of God. So let's spend some time.

[23 : 29] Each day, it might begin, you may begin with five minutes, ten minutes, fifteen minutes, whatever it is. But whatever it is, we need to begin, we need to continue putting God's Word at the forefront of our lives.

Spend time with Him in His Word. Make an appointment with God. And spend time with Him each day.

Let's pray. Precious Father, we're so thankful for the plan You have for our lives. The promise that You've given us that You will always be with us even to the end of this age.

And we know that You will never leave us. You will never forsake us. We thank You for what You are doing in our lives. I pray for each one here this morning.

May we accomplish Your will this week. We pray this in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.■■■
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