

Joshua
Life, Faith and Leadership

Introduction – Joshua 1:1-7

1. Joshua ranks as one of most prominent figures of the Bible – most people if asked to name some of the prominent figures of the Bible, would I suppose say Joshua.
 - a. He is associated with Moses at the time of the Exodus.
 - b. He is remembered as leading the children of Israel over the Jordan River and into Canaan.
 - c. When remember him when we think of the destruction of Jericho and story of Rahab.
 - d. His name and the remembrance of Him are related in both the Old and New Testament.
2. The account of Joshua is the account of one that faced some major challenges as we have briefly mentioned, and stands as an example as to how we can face the challenges we face today.
 - a. His life, as the lives of many faithful servants of God recorded in the Bible was recorded for our instruction and encouragement, so that we do not lose heart.
 - b. "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1 NASB)
 - c. Such is the encouragement we gain from the life of Joshua. As a man of courage, faith, devotion, and leadership there is much we can learn from the life of Joshua in order to better serve our Lord and Master.

Main Body

I. The Life of Joshua – Outstanding Achievements

- A. He was a commander of the Lord's army (Ex. 17:8-13)
 1. This is first mention of Joshua in the OT, who is reckoned to have been 45yrs old at the time.
 2. His name is actually Hoshea, but renamed by Moses as Jehoshua (our Joshua) later (Num. 13:16).
 3. The account of his life this point onwards covers a period of 65 yrs – dying at the age of 110 (Jos.24:29).
- B. Selected as Moses' assistant (Ex. 24:12-13). Read
- C. One of twelve spies – among the first of God's chosen to set foot in the Promise Land (Num. 13:8, 16-25).
- D. Appointed as Moses' Successor (Num. 27:15-23).
- E. Became a great leader of God's people (Joshua 1:5; 24:31) Read
 1. "The high and commanding character of this eminent leader had given so decided a tone to the sentiments and manners of his contemporaries and the memory of his fervent piety and many virtues continued so vividly impressed on the memories of the people, that the sacred historian has recorded it to his immortal honor" (JFB).

II. The Faith of Joshua – ways in which he demonstrated his faith in God

- A. Joshua saw the great promises, as all of God's people must.
 1. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval" (Hebrews 11:1-2 NASB).
 2. Upon the death of Moses, God appoints Joshua leader assures him of success in what lay ahead of him (Jos.1:1-7)
 3. In his confidence in what God had promised, Joshua assures his men of success (Jos.1:10-11)
 4. Having witnessed all that he had in the time God had revealed Himself to Israel left Joshua in no doubt as to the certainty of the promises, as expressed by Moses:
 - a. "Hear, O Israel! You are crossing over the Jordan today to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, great cities fortified to heaven" (Deuteronomy 9:1 NASB).
 - b. "For you are about to cross the Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall possess it and live in it" (Deuteronomy 11:31 NASB).
 5. Joshua trusted in the Lord's greatness and in His promises that he would accomplish the humanly impossible.
 - a. "But He said, The things that are impossible with people are possible with God" (Luke 18:27 NASB).

6. Joshua here showed faith; yet even before that point in his life Joshua's faith shone above the rest of the people as we will see...
- B. As commander of the Lord's army (Ex. 17:8-14)
1. Israel had only recently departed Egypt and had crossed the Red Sea, when they were attacked by Amalekites.
 2. Joshua was relatively a young man, without military training and experience of war.
 3. Though never having seen war, let alone fought in one, he accepted the role of captain, leading also a whole bunch of inexperienced fighter into war.
 4. Joshua was able to fight putting his faith in the strength of God to deliver the people.
 5. While victory was only possible with the help of God, the divine record recognizes Joshua's' valor and trust in God
 6. "So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword" (Joshua 17:13).
- C. As one of the twelve spies (Num. 13:16-14:12, 20-24, 36-38)
1. Joshua was one of twelve men sent by Moses at God's instruction to spy out the Land of Canaan collecting important information about its inhabitants, their fortifications and samples of fruit.
 2. He was one of two, other being Caleb that encouraged the people to go in and take the land despite what they saw of its inhabitants.
 3. God had delivered Israel from Egypt with a mighty hand through great signs and wonders, just as He had promised (Deut. 4:34).
 - a. He had Shown Israel His glory on Mt. Sinai
 - b. He had shown them His wrath against the sins of the people when Moses came down from Sinai the first time.
 - c. Yet when the spies when into the land of Canaan and saw the greatness of the people they trembled in fear as if God had deserted the
 4. This led to their 40yr wandering in the desert; while Joshua and Caleb were commended for 'fully following the Lord' through their faith in God.
- E. As leader of God's people (Joshua 1:5-7).
1. Joshua, as a servant to God and to Moses, learned from Moses about faithful leadership (Dt. 1:37; 3:28)
 - a. "The LORD was angry with me also on your account, saying, 'Not even you shall enter there'" (Deuteronomy 1:37 NASB).
 - b. "'But charge Joshua and encourage him and strengthen him, for he shall go across at the head of this people, and he will give them as an inheritance the land which you will see.'" (Deuteronomy 3:28 NASB).
 2. In the years he spent as Moses' assistant, Joshua would learnt from Moses about faithful leadership, especially the importance of following God's instruction to the letter, which Moses for the most part did, except when sinned before the rock.
 - a. "Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink. So Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him; and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock? Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them" (Numbers 20:8-12 NASB).
 3. Thus Joshua put his faith in God as a leader for he...
 - a. Was obedient to all the commands of God,
 - b. Relied on the strength of God
 - c. Sought help from God (Joshua 7:6-9).
 - d. And with all his heart commanded all the people to do the same

Application:

1. Joshua was a man of great faith in God's promises

a. He saw the promises

- 1) "All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13 NASB).
- 2) Do we see the promises God has made to us of heaven, of being conformed to the image of Christ, of unsurpassing spiritual joy and peace:
 - a) "Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Peter 1:3-4 NASB).
 - b) "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:14-19 NASB).
- 3) We have the challenges today as God's people: raising families, staying true to God's word and His morals.
- 4) Are we daunted and intimidated by these challenges or we emboldened by an understanding that we serve a true and living God.

b. He was a man of valor, mighty in battle

- 1) Similarly we are at war not with the physical forces of this world but that in the spiritual realm.
 - a) "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:12-17 NASB).
- 2) As Joshua was commanded to be strong and courageous we are to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might... "so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil" (Ephesians 6:10-11 NASB)

c. As a leader, he learnt that true and successful leadership lay in faithfulness to God and being a servant at heart.

- 1) For all leaders must be servants at heart; serving the lord and His people with humility and obedience.
- 2) "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them" (John 13:13-17 NASB).

Conclusion

1. In Joshua's final exhortation He spoke very plainly with the people
2. His words ring ever true today. Let us therefore hear the word of the Lord spoken by Joshua and decide for ourselves: Joshua 24:14-25
3. "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15 NASB).