

## **MISSION POSSIBLE**

### **Learning from Joshua**

#### **I. Joshua was a student of God in his younger years and a student of Moses as his assistant in his older years.**

- A. He was born a slave in Egypt.
- B. He witnessed the signs of salvation.
- C. He learned the skills of a soldier. (Ex. 17:8-16)
- D. He was a man of faith who learned the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat!
- E. He faithfully served Moses, his leader. (Ex. 24:13).

Aristotle said: "He who never learned to obey cannot be a good commander".

**Matthew 25:21** "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

#### **II. Joshua understood his mission.**

Joshua 1:1-2 After the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, who had served Moses: (2) "Moses My servant is dead. Now you and all the people prepare to cross over the Jordan to the land I am giving the Israelites. (HCSB)

- A. Moses led them out of Egypt.
- B. Moses led them through the wilderness.

Numbers 14:2-4 (ESV) And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" And they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

- C. Moses is now dead but before he died he had an important request of God (Numbers 27:16-20).
- D. Joshua was to lead them into the Promised Land and instruct them concerning living life in Canaan.

J. Oswald Sanders: "A work originated by God and conducted on spiritual principles will surmount the shock of a leadership change and will probably indeed thrive better as a result". (SL; pg. 132)

### **III. Joshua was assured of the “musts” before engaging in the mission.**

Joshua 1:3-9 (ESV) Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. (4) From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. (5) No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. (6) Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. (7) Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. (8) This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful 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. (9) Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

#### **A. The mission is possible because of God’s Promises! (3-6)**

- *Joshua could be confident because God is competent.*
- *Joshua could be dependent because God is dependable.*
- *Joshua could trust because God is trustworthy.*

#### **B. The mission is possible because of God’s presence! (5b,9)**

- *God’s presence gives guidance and direction*
- *God’s presence gives assurance of success*
- *God’s presence gives strength and courage*

**Joshua had experienced the presence of God before:** Exodus 13:21-22 The LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people. NASU

**So the Lord reminds Joshua again:** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

**The Father knows how important it is to us all! (See Matthew 1:23; 28:20; Hebrews 13:5-6; Romans 8:31)**

#### **The Lord reaffirmed His Presence!**

Joshua 5:13-15 (ESV) When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us, or for our adversaries?" And he said, "No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, "What does my lord say to his servant?" And the commander of the

LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

**As Joshua did we are to...**

- 1) **Worship before warfare!**
- 2) **Bow before the battle!**
- 3) **Submit before serving!**

**Looking to the Lord is the only assurance:** *To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maidservant to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he has mercy upon us. (Psalm 123:1-2 ESV)*

Oswald Sanders: "When God ordains our service, He is morally obligated to see us through".

J. Hudson Taylor said we can 1) make the best plans we can and hope they succeed, 2) make our plans and ask God to bless them, 3) ask God for His plans and do what he tells us.

### **C. The Mission is possible because of God's Word!**

Joshua 1:7-8 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall *meditate* on it day and night, so that you may be careful 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.

### **D. The mission is possible because of God's people (vs. 10-18)**

Joshua 1:11 "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'"

#### **The people of God was committed to:**

- **Help the leader!**

Joshua 1:10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people

- **Follow the leader!**

Joshua 1:16 And they answered Joshua, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

- **Pray for the leader!**

Joshua 1:17 Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses!

**IV. Joshua learned that times of failure, setbacks, and defeats are opportunities to learn greater revelation from God.** (See Joshua 7 and 8- the battle against Ai).

Turn the agony of defeat into the thrill of victory!

- *Find out where you went wrong!*
- *Inquire of Him!*

[Uzziah] set himself to seek God...and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper. 2 Chronicles 26:5 (ESV)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

- *Get it corrected!*
- *Start over by obeying God!*

Alexander Whyte: "No matter what mistakes we may make, the worst mistake of all is not to try again; for the victorious Christian life is a series of new beginnings."

**V. Joshua trusted the Lord.**

Joshua 10:8, 11-14 (ESV) And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you." ...And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth-horon, the LORD threw down large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword. (12) At that time Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." (13) And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. (14) There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD obeyed the voice of a man, for the LORD fought for Israel.

**A. When you trust the Lord He will provide resources beyond your expectation (11)!**

**B. When you trust the Lord prayer is a privilege (12)!**

**C. When you trust in the Lord He will work a miracle for you if necessary (13-14)!**

**Psalms 135:6 (NLT)** The LORD does whatever pleases him throughout all heaven and earth, and on the seas and in their depths.

"The mind which asks for a non-miraculous Christianity is a mind in process of relapsing from Christianity into mere 'religion.'" [C.S. Lewis, "Miracles" p. 133]

**VI. Joshua was concerned about the future (See chaps. 23-24)! Successful leaders plant seeds that will bear fruit in years to come for the benefit of all! This is contrast to Hezekiah's attitude.**

Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days." (Isaiah 39:8 ESV)

### **VII. Joshua glorified God!**

**Joshua 3:5** Then Joshua said to the people, " Consecrate yourselves...the LORD will do wonders among you." NASU

**Joshua 21:43-45** So the LORD gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and lived in it. And the LORD gave them rest on every side, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers, and no one of all their enemies stood before them; the LORD gave all their enemies into their hand. Not one of the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass. NASU

**Joshua 23:14** "Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed. NASU