



take it by force

a study on the book of Joshua

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Forward

The Lord brought me to the book of Joshua after spending a few days soaked in His presence at a Ladies Retreat. As the Lord moved through our meetings I began to see things in the spirit, I was reminded of the very real power and authority that rests in the very voice of our King Jesus, and our God who formed the literal heavens. It fueled a fire in me, a desire to take back everything that the enemy had stolen, everything that was mine - and to help you get everything that is yours.

Service after service, day after day, the Lord is reminding me of the purpose He has for each one of His children. When I pray, it's almost as if I can see the road laid out before God's children, the one he wants them to take. The enemy is doing his best to hold us back from walking this road to destiny. How? By weighing us down with anxiety, depression, unworthiness, distraction, "busyness", the list goes on and on.


While I could spend the rest of my days writing about the distractions and detours that the enemy throws onto our path to destiny, hoping to cause us to trip and fall and simply give up, we are going to talk about how to be a wise and determined soldier of God. Together we will step through main points in the book of Joshua and understand how this old testament victory is applicable to our spiritual warfare of today.

"...the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, but the violent take it by force"

-Matthew 11:12

We are the violent. You are to take it by force. Sometimes the Lord gives land, and it is up to us to possess it. To walk out the promise and claim the land.

Are you ready to take it back? Grab your sword, Let's Go.



"Sometimes God gives you land before you possess it. You have to go into the enemy's territory and take what is rightfully yours."

The Backstory (CKV)

Let's set the scene. Aaron was the main sidekick for a man named Moses. Moses was called by God to lead His people out of captivity in Egypt, and take them into the land that He had promised them generations ago. Now, before we go any further this simple backstory shows us that it is possible for God to have something for us, to have promised us something, and yet we are still living in bondage - despite the promise! (go ahead, read that last sentence again..) Okay, back to the story. Moses leads Gods people out of bondage with Gods direction and his miraculous interventions, through signs and wonders. At one point Moses was facing a literal sea, with an entire race of people behind him. God split the sea wide open and allowed His people to walk through the sea to get to their promised land. And what makes this even better, is that the army chasing down these people who were escaping - they were swallowed up in the waters of the sea. The Lord only made the provision for His kids (now that'll preach its self right there!) and the enemy was destroyed. While the "Israelites" (this is the name for the chosen people that God led out of captivity and into the promised land) saw multiple miracles with their own eyes, they continued to complain. So much so that the Lord became annoyed, and declared that the generation of complainers wouldn't make it to the promised land. A two week journey took 40 years, and the only "original Israelites" who were able to step into the promised land were Joshua and Aaron. This shows us that just because God desires it, doesn't guarantee that it will happen - it is up to us to come into agreement with His plan, and walk it out.. without complaining! It is easy to think "Well, if God wants it to happen it will happen.." well, yes and no. If we submit to His will and direction, yes. If we continue to try to do things our own way then we likely will not see His plans come to pass. As many of you know, my Dad is preacher who has pastored a church the majority of my life. After I gave my life back to Christ, after I met my now husband, I would tell my Dad "Well, it must have been God's will for me to rebel and fall into sin because now I can relate and I am stronger because of it" ... Well, I only got away with saying that

one time. My Dad whipped his head around so fast and said "absolutely not Crystal. It was never the will of God for you to fall into sin, that was a result of your own decisions. Is God going to use it for His good? Yes. But did He intend that for you? No. Don't blame God for your own mess." well... if that ain't the truth I don't know what is. What I didn't realize at the time was that God desired for me to stay under His covering, to experience his "keeping power", to walk with the light of His word and instruction. Instead, I decided to "do it my own way" and make my own path. I firmly believe that God would have used me in the ministry as He is now, much sooner if I would have submitted my life to Him earlier. Just like the journey of the Israelite. The promise would have manifested in two weeks, but because their flesh got in the way, it took FORTY YEARS. Now, I don't know about you but I want to get to my promised land as quickly as possible, so that I leave nothing undone in the plan that God has for me. And I believe that if you are joining with me in this study your prayer is the same. You're ready to take it back.

The Promise

Let's talk about the land that God promised to His people. This land was the best of the best, and because of that it was already inhabited. Just like so much of our spiritual victories - God has them ready for us, but because of our lacadizical attitude the enemy has claimed his territory all over our promise. You see, sometimes God will tell you that He is going to give you a breakthrough, that your healing is coming, or He will show you your ministry. When this happens it doesn't just fall into our lap. Just as when God promised the land to His people, it was up to them to **posses** the land. **In this same manner it is up to us to posses the promise, the calling, the healing, the victory, etc.** Whatever it is that God is speaking to you in this study, this is what you need to begin believing Him for, and determine within yourself that you are going to posess it. And since we are a visual people, i want you to write this very thing below;

"My prayer is to leave nothing undone. I want to experience all that God has for me, and do all he's called me to do - before He calls me home."

Now that you have written down the Promise it's time to zero in your target. You aren't combating in the natural my friend. You are strictly in a spiritual battle. If you are a child of God, you are living in a war zone. The enemy and his little minions are working night and day to try and derail you from walking in the calling / healing / victory that Christ has for you. Not too long ago I was in prayer while I was doing laundry in my home. I was simply chatting with God about how tired I was feeling, and How I needed Him to give me strength. I lifted up my friends who were feeling the same way, and the Lord dropped this into my heart - "He is trying to wear out the saints". Let that sink in... The enemy is trying to WEAR you OUT friend. HE is trying to get you so worn down, so beat up that you don't even have the strength that you need to make it into the promised land. Don't believe me? Check out Daniel 7:25. So, the enemy is looking to steal your promise, and totally wear you out from even considering going all in. Can I step on my soapbox for just a moment? Working in the ministry is hard. People are petty by nature (sorry - but you know it's true..) and if you don't have a strong sense of who you are and what God has called you to do, you will crack under the pressure. So, don't think that once you get TO the entrance of your promise, it will be smooth sailing. No my love, this is where the battle begins.

The Call

When the Lord told Joshua to take His people into possess the land that He promised to them, Joshua did a few things I think are significant;

1. **Joshua told the people to wait on God before moving. (Joshua 3:3)** It would have been so easy for the people to have heard that God was going to give them the land and charge the city gates. But - Joshua instructed them to wait until they saw the Arc of the Covenant (which represented the spirit of God in that day) and then to follow it. God's timing is essential. It was in the Old Testament, and it still rings true today. We must seek God's face before anything, and in doing that we must submit to His timing. If you read on into verse 4 you can see that Joshua tells the people to stay a distance back from the Arc (because it was Holy and our flesh cannot touch God and live) and said that they needed to watch the Arc move, and follow it, because they had never been that way before. Sometimes God wants to move us from one place to the next, and it is essential to keep our eyes on Him because He wants to do a new thing in you. You cannot see the "new thing" if you are focusing on patterning yourself after this person, or that ministry. God has enough creativity and power to show himself mighty through each person - but we must follow His lead.
2. **Joshua instructed the people to sanctify themselves before the journey.** When God desires to move, and show himself mighty

it has to come through a person with clean hands and a pure heart. It has to come through a vessel that has been forged under fire in such a way that it is able to allow the fire of God to flow through it. We must desire holiness. Our standards, values and "measuring stick" must come from the word and not from the world. The Word tell us to be holy, because He is holy. Holiness is not a hot topic in the church today because it often causes the body of Christ to go through a season of pruning. But, a pruning, the cutting away of dead things, is necessary for a tree to be fruitful and multiply. The same goes for us. In order to possess the promise of God, in order to take the land, we must sanctify ourselves. What area of your life do you feel like God is perfecting through a season of pruning? Maybe you just finished a season like this, what did you learn from this painful, yet necessary time?

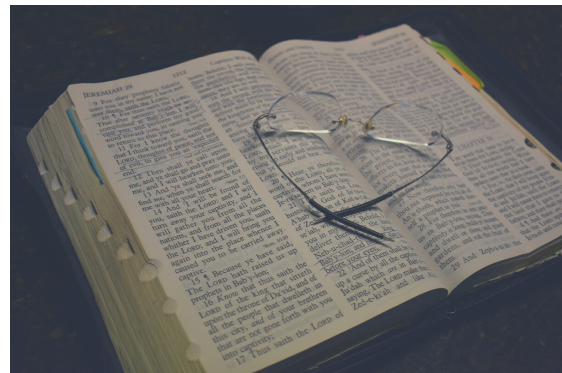
Signs & Wonders

Just like the story of Moses, Joshua too faced a situation that looked impossible to man. While Moses faced the Red Sea leading the people from bondage, Joshua faced the Jordan River. If you read verse 9-13 in chapter 3 you will learn that God desired to show himself mighty for His children. He desired to show them that just as He moved for Moses, He can move for Joshua. The word "heap" used in verse 13 to describe the parting of the waters of the Jordan River is the same greek word used to describe the rolling back of the waters in regards to the Red Sea miracle. You see, God has enough miracle working power to meet and exceed the needs, and deliver the promises to His children for every generation. We must stop living on the stories of yesterday when we tell of miracles that happened in generations past. Yes, it is important to keep these testimonies alive, but we need to seek God daily for a fresh outpouring of miracle working power. When I read over this and noticed that the same word was used to describe both miracles the Lord whispered to me *"I have enough of my power for every generation. Do not cling to the miracles of yesterday, I desire to move each day. There is still miracle working power in my hands"* Shew! I don't know about you but I almost shouted myself happy! The Lord is desiring to show himself mighty, His blood still works, His hands still heal, He still provides for His children, He still sets the captive free and fills His kids with overwhelming joy. His Blood still works! And He wants to work through you.

The Preparation

By the time we get to Chapter 5 word is spreading of the mighty acts of the Lord, and how He is fighting for His people. In fact, the amplified version talks of the discouragement from their enemy in verse 1 saying "...and there was no [fighting] spirit in them any longer because of the Israelites [and what God had done for them]." In the verses to follow we learn that Joshua circumsised the men who were born in the wilderness. While we may shudder at that word today, I believe this symbolizes the Lord's desire for us to be set apart. For our flesh to be cut away, and for our lives to appear so different from others of this world that it demands an explanation. Remember earlier how we read of Joshua's command to the people, to refrain from touching the arc? Both the regard for God's holiness and the consecration from the men seem to exhibit qualities that are rather taboo in the church today - holiness & consecration. We don't like to be told that the things we do eternally matter, but when we are really searching for God to move, and when we feel the pull to walk on the promised land that God has for us, I believe we need to search ourselves and ask the Lord to reveal any area that needs cleaned up, and any spot that needs a holiness spit shine. Don't get too old school on me, Holiness is not about how tall your bun is, or how long your skirt is - it is a matter of the heart. And God still desires for His people to live a life that is set apart. I do not believe that God desires to move among a people that cannot be bothered to clean their temple out. You are a vessel for the holy spirit to dwell in, but He cannot dwell in the common, unclean and unsanctified.

In the last couple verses of chapter 5 a Captain of the Army of the Lord appears before Joshua. We aren't given much detail surrounding this encounter, however I find it interesting that just before Joshua and the people attempt to conquer Jericho, this Captain comes to visit. *I dare say that this encounter with Heaven is necessary before we attempt to do spiritual battle.*



Instruction

As Chapter 6 begins the Lord gives Joshua His instruction for taking the land. To those of us familiar with this story we may not bat an eye at the method God gave to Joshua. But, if we place ourselves in Joshua's shoes we can see that He may have been asking God for a "Plan B". To refresh your memory God told Joshua to march around the city of Jericho once each day, for 6 days. And then on day 7, march around the city 7 times. On the 7th and final march they were to shout with a victory shout, and blow the trumpet. The Lord told Joshua that once this had happened, the walls would tumble down and they would be able to walk into the promised land.

It is also important to note what Joshua told the people in Chapter 5 and verse 10 - Do not talk, shout or make any noise at all while we march around the city (Crystal Komala version).

I think we can learn quite a bit from God's instruction, Joshua's leadership and the follow-through of the people.

1. Those marching were not just soldiers, **everyone marched**. This shows us that everyone is capable of fulfilling the commands of God, and has the ability to possess the promise.
2. **Sometimes God's instruction doesn't look like you think it should**. Often times I have found that God's methods differ from my logic. In the kingdom if you want to be financially blessed, you are to give. In the natural we would think that in order to gain wealth we must save our money. However the Word tells us in multiple places that as we GIVE God will provide our increase. I wonder if Joshua thought He would need some kind of natural force, or tool, in order to breakthrough the heavily fortified walls of Jericho. What He likely didn't expect is that God would use his march, and his shout. However through this we can see that God used commitment, praise and obedience to destroy the stronghold of the enemy on their promised land. And this same battle plan works today. If we **seek** the Lord for his **instruction** and walk it out in **obedience** no matter what it looks like, for however long it takes I believe this is when we will see spiritual breakthrough.
3. **Put a guard over your mouth**. Joshua, the leader of this great victory instructed his people to "zip it" until it was time for the victory shout. Now, I don't know about you but I think that in itself could

preach an entire message. There is power in our words, the Bible tells us that our words bring forth blessing or cursing, life or death. (Side note- in fact, there are scientific studies that prove this in the natural. Plants have even been proven to grow and thrive in an environment where positive words of affirmation are spoken over it, in comparison to plants attempting to grow under negative talk. The world is constantly proving the Bible to be accurate and full of truth!) When you are in a battle, you must keep your mind protected, and your heart filled with the word of God. Your mouth should only speak promising words of victory and not defeat, and if the Holy Spirit is nudging you to keep it quiet, fall in line soldier. Keep those lips zipped until it's time to proclaim your victory.

4. **They followed the instruction of God, and submitted to the leadership of Joshua in order to possess the promise**. They did not march around the wall 2 times on day three, or sit down half way through and take a break. They did not do as they wished. They respected and honored the leadership of Joshua because they knew he was receiving his instruction from God, and they followed without causing drama. (now that'll preach!) How many times have you been in a situation where you didn't quite agree with leadership? But you knew this person was selected for their leadership position by God? These are times when we must take the back seat, submit to authority and pray for your leader. Do not cause division by spreading your opinion, but give honor where honor is due.

Sanctification

Once the trumpets blew and the people shouted on the seventh day, the walls fell and the people entered the promised land. Notice though that the city was not empty. Just as the promises, ministries, restored marriages, etc. and things that the lord has for you, **they have been taken captive by the enemy even though they are rightfully yours.** When the people went in to "take the land back" they were instructed to kill the enemy and all the livestock, to only spare Rahab and her house (as she provided a place of refuge and safety for the messengers). I think this is extremely symbolic in regards to our Christian walk. **It is impossible to possess the promises of God when you are holding hands with the enemy.** The word tells us that to be a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God, and that we cannot love sin and love God. We must love one and hate the other. It also goes on to tell us that sweet and bitter water cannot come from the same spout, meaning that it is literally impossible (in the eyes of God) to be a Christian who rides the fence, who tip toes on the line of what is acceptable and what isn't. In order to fully reach max capacity and accomplish all that God has for you to accomplish you have to totally cut off anything that even smells like the enemy. In fact, in Joshua 5:18 he reminds the people, all that belonged to Jericho's inhabitants before the takeover must never be mixed with God's people. In specific he tells them that taking anything from those who lived there before would bring a curse upon them, and cause trouble for their land.

If that doesn't speak volumes I don't know what does. Sanctification is critical when it comes to being a soldier in God's army - if you want everything He has for you that is.

Verse 24 states that they burned everything with fire.

In order to be able to walk your calling, you must be filled with the Holy Spirit and fire. I hate to break it to you friend, but you simply will not last without it. Remember Acts Chapter 2? The Upper Room? If they needed it then, imagine how much more we need it today. I have heard an old preacher say he was once asked if we need the Holy Spirit to get to heaven, His response seemed right on. He said, I told them "I need the Holy Spirit just to walk to my mailbox".

And in a day filled with spiritual warfare at every turn, I think that old preacher was onto something!

Let us not try to think of how little protection and armor we can wear into battle, but rather let's ask the Lord how we can be fully dressed and effective in the army of God!

I believe there is so much in this old testament story that is applicable to our lives today. We must understand the importance of relationship with our Father. This is where all of this starts. The instruction, the call, and the faith to move forward comes from an intimate relationship with the Father.



Take it back.

I have found that with relationship comes conversation. Conversation opens the door for dreams and aspirations to be shared. When I find myself in conversation with the Lord, I find Him dropping bits and pieces of His purpose for me into my spirit. While these things for me are finished and settled in the spirit realm, it is up to me to grab onto them and settle in myself that I will see it come to pass. I will share with you a learning moment I had not too long ago, as it directly correlates here. God was dropping vision after vision into my heart in regards to His purpose for me. I was humbled and overwhelmed. But rather than "calling it done" and "praying it down" I set it on the shelf of my heart and would day dream about it. Until the day the Lord got firm with me, and told me to stop "hiding behind humbleness" and to TAKE my calling BY FORCE! You see, because I had spent so long dreaming over the visions God had given to me regarding my calling, the enemy had stolen those years from me, because of my lack of boldness. My lack of walking in the authority that was mine, through Jesus Christ.

I hope that makes sense friend. I hope you are able to line this up with situations in your life and you are able to read this and say - I have one of those dreams, I have a purpose, and I am calling it down from Heaven because if God said it's mine, I can take it to the bank!

We must stop the enemy from taking our territory because we are too lazy to tell him to get lost. Its Ours! It's time we take it back! It is time to possess the promise.

It is time to enlarge our territory. It is time that God's people walk in the authority that they've been given, and take back everything that God has set aside for his children.

He calls you blessed. He calls you the head and not the tail, the lender and not the borrower, above and not beneath. He came to give you an abundant life, to see you saved, set free, delivered! To see his kids walking around in wholeness, influencing the culture, not the other way around! The kingdom suffers violence, but the violent take it by force.

We have the creator of the universe on our side. If God be for us, who can be against us?

**Go ahead friend - take a praise break!
Thank Him in advance for the victory, ask Him what land he has for you that you haven't possessed, and take it back!**

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for salvation and for victory. Lord I know you didn't die in vain, and I ask you to show me what land that you have for me right now, that I have not possessed. What have I allowed the enemy to take from me? Lord, I know that through your spirit and authority, and thru the example of Joshua I can take it back. Lord have your way, use me for everything that you've planned. In Jesus Name, -Amen