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Joshua, The Servant Of God
Selected Scriptures

Joshua is one of the most interesting characters in the Bible, he is presented as available, obedient, trusting God and full of faith.

One author put it succinctly as he calls Joshua a prosaic man, “The prosaic man is the subordinate man, the man who obeys orders, It matters very little what sphere these orders are received. He is from beginning to end the satellite, of the men who follow. (George Matheson, Portraits of Bible Men:228, 30)

We want to begin our studies in the book of Joshua by looking at Joshua prior to his official call by God to lead to people of God, in order to recognize that promotion by the Lord does not come overnight and when it does it is based on our past and consistent faithful service to God by having the heart of a servant.

This is important for everyone of us as Christians to understand, if we want to be used by God.

The servant heart of Joshua served as the foundation for his official call, in other words, he did not become the leader of Israel overnight!

To gain the benefit of Joshua’s life we want to consider him prior to his official call from four vantage points:

- I.** Joshua the man of God.
- II.** Joshua the instrument of God.
- III.** Joshua the servant of Moses.
- IV.** Joshua the visionary man of faith.

I. Joshua the man of God.

- A.** The man of God Joshua was the son of Nun. Ex. 33:11, Num. 11:28, etc.
 - 1.** The name of his father, Nun means prosperity.
 - 2.** The name of his mother is unknown to us but if we had to judge her character as a mother and godly woman from the outcome of her son Joshua, she would have to rank high on our list of virtuous women.
 - 3.** The man Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim. Num. 13:8
 - 4.** He was born in captivity and a slave in Egypt, therefore a partaker of the whip of the taskmasters and the deliverance of God.
- B.** The name of the man of God Joshua, is very meaningful.

1. Joshua's name originally in Hebrew was "Hoshea", which means "salvation".
Num. 13:8, 16
2. Moses changed his name to Joshua when he sent out the spies into Canaan according to Numbers. Num. 13:16
3. The name Joshua in Hebrew is a contraction of Jehovah or Yahweh-shua which means Yahweh is salvation.
4. The Hebrew name Joshua translated into the Greek is Jesus, who is Yahweh is salvation.

C. The man of God Joshua serves a two-fold type.

1. He is a type of man, like any other who is ever born with sin nature and imperfect.
2. He is a type of man who can be used by God by simply being available, selfless, faithful and obedient.
3. He is a type of one of God's choice men for service.
4. He is a beautiful type of Jesus Christ.

Illustration

A person asked George Muller the secret of his service one day, to which he replied, "There came a day when I died, utterly died", and , as he spoke , he bent lower and lower until he almost touched the floor--"died to George Muller, his opinions, preferences, tastes, and will --died to the

world, its approval or censure--died to the approval or blame even of my brethren and friends--and since then I have studied only to show myself approved unto God." #6102

* D. L Moody said that the world had yet to see what God can do with a man who entirely yields himself to God and I want to be that man. ???

Application

1. To be a man or woman of God, a person must know God, this may seem basic to you and I as Christians but the unbeliever doesn't recognize this simple principle.
 - a. One must be born-again or you do not nor can a person know anything about God in a personal way. Tit. 3:5
 - b. One must study and learn the word of God as a believer to know the truth about God. 2Tim. 2:15
 - c. One must grow, develop and mature in faith, so as to be used of God and please Him. 1Jn. 2:12-14
2. To be a man or woman of God does not mean perfection.
 - a. We examine ourselves to the Scriptures lest we disqualify ourselves. 2Cor. 13:5
 - b. We keep our account short by admitting our sins and faults, confessing them to the Father in the name of Jesus. 1Jn. 2:1
 - c. We keep our accounts short with people also by asking forgiveness or exercising Matthew

18 when someone sins against us or has something against us. Matt. 18:15-17

3. To be a man or woman of God means you are a person of character.

- a. Your life is a true witness.
- b. Your word is your bond.
- c. Your motives are constantly checked.

* “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Joshua was a man of God, evident by his integrity!

II. Joshua the instrument of God.

- A. The occasion was when Amalek came out to fight against Israel. Ex. 17:8
 - 1. Amalek is a type of the flesh in Scripture.
 - 2. Later in their history Saul would compromise with his flesh and saved King Agag the Amalekite costing him his Kingdom and ultimately his life. 2Sam. 15
 - 3. The flesh hates the advances of God in life and will be there to not yield.
 - 4. The place is called Rephidim which means “rests”, “stays” or “resting places”.

* The man or woman of God must rest in the power and sufficiency of God not themselves.

B. The command to fight came from Moses.

Ex. 17:9-10

- 1. Joshua was to choose out some men and go out to fight against Amalek. Vs. 8
 - * Joshua became the captain of the army of Israel.
- 2. Moses would go up to the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand, accompanied by Aaron and Hur. Vs. 9-10
- 3. The victory of Joshua depended on the intercession of Moses with his hands lifted to heaven. Vs. 11
 - a. When his hands were up Israel prevailed .
 - b. When his hands were down Amalek prevailed.
- 4. The arms of Moses being heavy, Aaron and Hur placed a stone under him to sit and held his hands up until the going down of the sun. Vs. 12
- 5. The outcome was the defeat of the Amalekites. Vs. 13
- 6. The Lord commanded Moses to write the account in the book as a **memorial** and to be recounted to Joshua, that God

would blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. Vs. 14

7. Moses built an alter and called it **“The Lord is my banner”**, due to the fact that the Lord would have war with Amalek from generation to generation. Vs. 15-16

C. The lesson was primarily for Joshua for his future leadership.

1. Moses had told Joshua to go while he prayed to God. Vs. 9
2. Joshua was to remember that the outcome was due to prayer, depending on the strength of God, not the power of man, “prayer” is the resting place of man, “Rephidim”. Vs. 8
3. Joshua was to know that he was a mere instrument in order that God might accomplish His will and purposes and not attribute any glory to himself. Vs. 14-15
4. Joshua was to know that Amalek, the type of the flesh, sin nature or the Old Man would always oppose God. Vs. 16
* I have to know, that only my dependency on God will ever reckon my flesh dead!

Illustration

No man is greater than his prayer life. The pastor who is not praying is playing; the people

who are not praying are straying. The pulpit can be a shop-window to display one's talents; the prayer closet allows no showing off.

Poverty-stricken as the church is today in many things, she is most stricken here, in the place of prayer. We have many organizers, but few agonizers; many players and payers, few pray-ers; many singers, few clingers; lots of pastors, few wrestlers; many fears, few tears; much fashion, little passion; many interferers, few intercessors; many writers, but few fighters. Failing here we fail everywhere. (Leonard Raven Hill, Why Revival Tarries, chapter two)

• E.M. Bounds said, "He who does not pray, therefore, robs himself of God's help and places God where He can not help man".

Application

1. The flesh or sin nature is ever present till the day we die.
 - a. It is reckoned dead by faith at salvation. Rom. 6:6
 - b. It must be reckoned dead daily. Rom. 6:11
 - c. It must not be made provision for. Rom. 13:14
2. The man or woman who is going to be the instrument of God must depend on God.
 - a. God speaks and gives directions through prayer and His word, that is why the early church gave them priority. Acts 6:4

- b. Paul, Silas and Luke had come to Mysia, and they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”, leading them to Philippi to speak to Lydia, the demon possessed girl and the jailor and his family. Acts 16:7-9
- c. Paul says, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.” 2Cor. 4:7

Joshua was the instrument of God by choice!

III. Joshua the servant of Moses.

- A. Joshua was Moses assistant and he went up to the mountain with Moses. Ex. 24:9-18
 - 1. The word assistant “sharath” means one who serves or ministers. Vs. 13
 - a. The word is found in the Hebrew Old Testament just under 100 times, we find the same word in the first verse of the book of Joshua. Josh. 1:1
 - b. The word is used for a royal household workers, public servants and court officials and the most frequent for service in worship of the

Levitical priests. 2Sam. 13:17, 1Chron. 27:1, 28:1, Esther 1:10, 1kings 19:21, Is. 60:10, Num. 16:9

- c. The first times it is used is in the story of Joseph as he became the slave of Potiphar and served him. Gen. 39:4
- d. The word “sharath” should be distinguished form the term for menial serving “abad”.
- 2. The seventy elder, Aaron and his sons saw a theophany of God and they ate and drank. Vs. 9-11
- 3. The Lord told Moses to come up the mount so He could give him the tables of stone, Moses with his assistant Joshua went up to the mountain. Vs. 12-13
- 4. The elders waited in a lower place. Vs. 14
- 5. Moses alone went up to God. Vs. 15
- B. Joshua, the assistant of Moses became jealous for Moses. Num. 11:24-30
 - 1. Moses gathered the seventy elder to the tabernacle to take some of the Spirit that was upon Moses to put it in the elder to help him rule the people. Vs.. 24
 - 2. The men prophesied when the Spirit came upon them. Vs. 25
 - 3. Two of these men, Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp, as the Spirit rested on them, not having come to the

tabernacle and Joshua told Moses his lord, “forbid them”. Vs. 26-28

4. Moses asked Joshua if he was jealous for him and then declared that he hoped all the people of God were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them. Vs. 29
5. Joshua was to know that no one could take the place of Moses and that God’s gifts are severally dispersed, as He wills and there should be no fear of competition.

Illustration

A person once asked the president of the Navigators who are well known for their emphasis on having an attitude of servant hood, how he could know when he had a servant like attitude. The answer was, “By how you act when you are treated like one.”

* D. L. Moody once said, “The measure of a man is not how many servants he has, but how many men he serves.”

Application

1. The secret of greatness is in serving and none of us is a servant by nature, we like to be served, as is evident by the twelve apostles. Mk. 10:35-45
2. The pattern is after our Lord as He washed the disciples feet the night before went to the cross. Jn. 13

3. When we are serving others, we are doing it as unto the Lord, therefore the one who serves is not looking for promotion but to be obedient, faithful and pleasing to His Lord. 1Cor. 4:2

4. Jesus declared John the Baptist a true servant.
* When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written: ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.’ For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” Lk. 7:24-28

Joshua was the servant of Moses without ulterior motives!

IV. Joshua the visionary man of faith.

- A. Moses sent out twelve men to spy out the land. Num. 13:16-20
 1. Deuteronomy tells us that the request came from not from God but from the people. Vs. 16, Deut. 1:22

- * Joshua was one of the twelve being the captain of the army!
- 2. The objectives were clear to see the kind of land, people, the cities, camps, the fruitfulness, etc. Vs. 17-20
 - a. They were to be courageous and bring back some of the fruit of the land.
 - b. The time was of first ripe grapes, May-June, perhaps mid June.
- B.** The spies returned from their spying of the land. Num. 13: 24-33, 14:1-10
 - 1. The ten confirmed the fruitfulness of the land of milk and honey and brought back a cluster of grapes but they were discouraged by the strength of the people and the fortified cities. Vs. 24-29
 - 2. Caleb quieted the people and told them that they were able to possess the land but the ten declared that they were as grasshoppers in the sight of the descendants of Anak. Vs. 30-33
 - * The ten were responsible for their discouragement of over two million people. Deut. 1:28-33
 - 3. The people decided to select a leader to lead them back to Egypt and Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb fell on the faces and tore their clothes, pleading that they not rebel against the Lord and being

- ready to stone them the Lord appeared at the tabernacle. Num. 14:1-10
- C.** The outcome of trusting God was significant. Num. 14:11-45
 - 1. The Lord heard the intercession of Moses and spared the people but promised that none over the age of twenty would ever see the land, except for Caleb and Joshua. Vs. 11-25, 26:63-65
 - 2. The sentence was the greatest death march Israel ever experienced through the remaining 38 years in the wilderness. Vs. 26-38
 - * Their children who they feared for would be the ones to inherit the land!
 - 3. Their futile attempt to go up presumptuously on their own caused them to be defeated by the Amalekites. Vs. 39-45
 - * Remember the Amalekites are a type of the flesh and our flesh will always slay us if we are not willing to obey God by faith!
 - 4. The only thing God honors is His word and faith in His word, Joshua and Caleb were able to believe God and trust God by two basic things.
 - a. They remembered what God had done in the past for them.

- b. They remembered that it was God who had spoken.

Illustration

Doubt sees the obstacles,

Faith sees the way!

Doubt sees the darkest night,

Faith see the day!

Doubt dreads to take a step,

Faith soars on high!

Doubt questions, “Who believes?”

Faith answers, “I”! #1496

* One day Dr. Arthur Pierson was alone in the study of George Muller and he thought to look through his Bible and at Psalms 37:23 which reads, “The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord.”, there was a note, “Mr. Muller had written, “And the stops, too”. #7126

Application

1. To be a visionary man or woman I must walk daily with God.

* Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17

2. To be a visionary man or woman we must not be presumptuous but believe only what God reveals in His word or speaks to me personally, confirmed by His word.

* Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen...but without faith, it is impossible to please God and those who come to

God, must believe that He is and the at He is the rewarded of those who diligently seek Him. Heb. 11:1, 6

3. To be a visionary man or woman I must do certain things.

- a. Draw from my past history with God and remember all He has done for me regardless of the difficulties and obstacles.

* “Oh, **taste** and **see** that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!”

Ps. 34:8

- b. Trust Him for what He want to do in the present and the future by remaining flexible and not concluding that He will work the same as He did in the past!

* The promise is that, “Eye has not seen, ear has not heard the things that God has prepared for those who love him”, this is for here and now, not when we get to heaven and God reveals them to us by His Holy Spirit, through His word. 1Cor. 2:9-10

Joshua the visionary man of faith believed and trusted God despite the seeming obstacles!

Conclusion

This is Joshua from these four perspectives which are foundational for every person who wants to be used by God.

- I.** Joshua was a man of God, evident by his integrity!
- II.** Joshua was the instrument of God by choice!
- III.** Joshua was the servant of Moses without ulterior motives!
- IV.** Joshua the visionary man of faith believed and trusted God despite the seeming obstacles!