

CONQUERING: JOURNEYING WITH JOSHUA

Lesson #3

JOSHUA, THE MANDATE - ORDERS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Joshua chapter 1

Upon the death of Moses the Lord spoke to Joshua and outlined the mission that was before him. God Gave Joshua His Orders:

- (1) Be going – Josh. 1:2 “*Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan...*”
- (2) Be governing – Josh. 1:6 “*to this people you shall divide the land.*”
- (3) Be strong – Josh. 1:7 “*be strong and very courageous*”
- (4) Be obedient – Josh. 1:7 “*observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you.....*”

The day has now come for Joshua to start the work for which God had been preparing him. Let us follow the unfolding events in the book of Joshua chapter by chapter. Some of the most interesting and amazing stories in the Bible are recorded Joshua.

I. THE COMMISSION OF JOSHUA - HIS INSTALLATION. Joshua 1:1 & 2

Joshua had come to the kingdom for such a time as this! Notice two developments regarding Joshua's commission:

A. It Commenced With An Announcement.

Joshua 1:1 “*Moses my servant is dead.*”

The book of Joshua starts with a finish but out of that finish comes a start. In the very first verse we have a career ending and a career beginning. The very first words are, “*now after the death of Moses.....*” - That is the finish. Then follows the words “*The Lord spoke unto Joshua....*” That is the start.

Illust. Over the burial place of John Wesley in Westminster Abbey in London is this inscription which I have seen on several occasions: “God buries His workmen but carries on His work.” Every servant of God is unique but no one is indispensable. Moses was dead, but God was not! The march to Canaan continues with another leader.

B. It Continued With An Assignment.

Joshua 1:2 “*Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people.*”

When a person knows that he has been called and appointed by God to a certain work, he is invincible as long as he is true to that appointment. “God’s callings are His enablers.”

If it is in God's plan that he should march through a river, or attack a walled town, or fight an army, he will simply go forward in faith and do it. Rivers will dry up, walls will fall down, and armies will be defeated. There simply is no such thing as impossibility when we are in the will of God!

The supreme question for each of us when we are faced with a new task is not whether we possess sufficient strength, qualification, ability or expertise – but is this the will of God for me? And if we are in the will of God, doing the will of God, there is no further cause for anxiety or hesitation. Meditate on the following by an unknown author:

“The will of God will never take you,
Where the grace of God cannot keep you,
Where the arms of God cannot support you,
Where the riches of God cannot supply your needs,
Where the power of God cannot endow you.

The will of God will never take you,
Where the spirit of God cannot work through you,
Where the wisdom of God cannot teach you,
Where the army of God cannot protect you,
Where the hands of God cannot mold you.

The will of God will never take you,
Where the love of God cannot enfold you,
Where the mercies of God cannot sustain you,
Where the peace of God cannot calm your fears,
Where the authority of God cannot overrule for you.

The will of God will never take you,
Where the comfort of God cannot dry your tears,
Where the Word of God cannot feed you,
Where the miracles of God cannot be done for you,
Where the omnipresence of God cannot find you.”

II. THE CONFIRMATION OF JOSHUA - *HIS INSPIRATION*. Joshua 1:3-9 God confirmed Joshua's commission in three ways:

A. CONFIRMED BY GOD'S PROMISES.

The first 9 verses of chapter one seem to throb with promises. As Joshua stood on the threshold of his great task, God gave him promise after promise to confirm his faith:

- (1) He promised him Property - 1:2-4
- (2) He promised that he would Prevail – 1:5
- (3) He promised him Prosperity - 1:8
- (4) He promised His Presence – 1:5,9

Perhaps in the years of war that lay ahead of him, Joshua would often recall God's promises and would gain inspiration to go on.

ILLUST: In answer to a letter from his mission board asking him, "What are the prospects in Burma?" Adonarim Judson wrote: "The prospects are bright as the promises of God."

B. CONFIRMED BY GOD'S PRESENCE. 1:5 & 9

He is Emmanuel, God with us! In the conscious presence of God, all life assumes a different character, takes on a new quality because the awareness of the presence of God brings confidence to His people and cowardice to their enemies. What an inspiration to Joshua was the awareness of God's presence!

C. CONFIRMED BY GOD'S PRECEPTS. 1:6-9

The Lord intended for Joshua to be a man of the Book:

- ***It is to be in his mouth*** - "*Do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth.*" Talk about it! Declare it!
- ***It is to be in his mind*** - "*meditate on it day and night*" – think about it! If any man's position might excuse him from meditating on the Word of God, it certainly would have been Joshua's with all his duties. But he is not excused, and neither are we!
- ***It is to be his mandate*** - do it! Demonstrate it. "*Do everything written in it*" then he will prosper and be successful - and I might add, so will we!

The New Testament believer has been given the same provisions:

- Promises? Yes, many more than Joshua had!
- Presence? Yes, "*I am with you always*"; "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*"
- Precepts? Yes, a complete canon of Holy Scripture that Joshua did not have! All this should be confirmation enough for anyone!

Illust: David Livingston, the great missionary to Africa, had the same confirming evidences that Joshua had, and he wrote these words:

*"Lord, send me anywhere, Only go with me;
Lay any burden on me; Only sustain me.
Sever any tie save the tie that Binds me to Thy heart,
Lord Jesus, my King,
O, consecrate my life, Lord, to Thee."*

Have you made the same consecration as Joshua and David Livingston and many another servant of God?

III. THE COMMUNICATION BY JOSHUA - HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

Notice that the Lord speaks - v.1-9; Joshua speaks -v.10-15, and then the people speak, v.16-18.

Joshua has received his commission and his confirmation, now he communicates God's message to his people:

A. THE COMMAND OF JOSHUA. 1:10-11

Joshua told the leaders to tell the people to prepare to move forward in three days.

B. THE COUNSEL OF JOSHUA. 1:12-15

The tribes of Rueben and Gad and the 1/2 tribe of Manasseh had already decided to remain on the east side of Jordan. In Israel's conquest of that area, the lush cattle country had become theirs. (See Num. 21)

The 2 1/2 tribes asked Moses to give them this land as their inheritance, see Num.32:1-5. Moses complied with their request and then set down certain conditions, see Num.32:20-32 and Deut. 3:18-20. Moses stipulated that the 2 1/2 tribes must fight alongside their brothers on the west side of the Jordan until the land was taken. So Joshua counseled the 2 1/2 tribes and later commends them, Josh. 22:1-5.

C. THE CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE. 1:16-18.

Joshua was indeed the man of the hour in the minds of the people. They had accepted him and pledged their support to him.

CONCLUSION

How would you have felt at this moment? The people have just assured you of their confidence in you and they were behind you 100%. Would you have been elated? Do you think that Joshua was?

He was not! I do not think Joshua put any confidence in what the people said. His confidence was in the Lord. For Joshua remembered vividly the times the children of Israel rose up against Moses, even threatening to kill him when he did not allow them to return to Egypt.

And how could he forget his own personal involvement when he returned from the spying of the land of Canaan and faced those who refused to go in and take the land? There is no way that Joshua could forget the many, many occasions when the unbelief of Israel had plunged to unbelievable depths! And even though they meant well here, his confidence and faith was not in the fickle people, but in the faithful God.

Joshua was God's "Man Of The Hour." You and I could be God's man or woman of the hour in the location where we find ourselves right now. Regardless of what capacity in which you serve God, you will need to rely upon the faithfulness of God.

William Runyan's famous hymn "*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*" needs to be the conviction of all who serve the Lord:

*"Great is Thy faithfulness, Oh, God my Father!
There is no shadow of turning with thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not:
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be."*

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