

SONGS: Onward Christian Soldiers; Standing of the Promises; Higher Ground (I'm pressing on the upward way) CLOSE: I Am Resolved (no longer to linger)

Victory Assured

Joshua Series: 2 of 18

TEXT: Joshua 1:1-9

AIM: To show that once saved it is going to be a spiritual battle to enter the land that God has promised every believer—it will be a battle to dislodge and overcome the enemy, and to occupy the land of spiritual maturity.

INTRODUCTION:

The book of Joshua immediately follows the Pentateuch – the 1st five books of the Bible – also called the Torah. It follows, in sequence, the history of the Torah, as well. Joshua begins the “second division” of the O. T. books – The Historical Books. BUT, as we open the book of Joshua, we are going to find *MORE than just a history book*.

- In Joshua we will find there is Encouragement and Wisdom for today's soldier of the cross of Jesus Christ!
- The Book of Joshua was to Israel what the Book of Ephesians is to the N. T. believer.
- **Ephesians 1:3** – *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:”* God wants for Israel, in the Book of Joshua, as He wants for us today to enjoy our place and blessing in our spiritual experience.
- The events recorded in Joshua cover approx. 25 yrs.
The conquest of the Promised Land of Canaan takes approx. 7 yrs.
(The clue to figuring this out is based on that age of Caleb during this time.)

Moses brought Israel out of Egypt and led them to the border of the Promised Land—He would see Canaan, **BUT** he was to die before Israel would enter into the land. God would not allow him to enter because of his angry disobedience at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh (Deut. 32:51).

Someone has once said, “God buries His workman, but His work goes on.”
Moses, the greatest human leader mankind has ever witnessed was dead, but God was alive and so were His purposes and plans.

A. Before Moses' death, God had singled out the man Joshua to be Moses' successor.

1. The idea that Joshua would be Moses' successor goes back as far as **Ex 17:8-16**. **NOTE in vs. 14** of Exodus that Moses instructed Joshua, to write in his book, that the nomadic Amalekites, the descendants of Esau, also known as Edomites (Gen. 36:1,12), who opposed Israel in Canaan, were to be *“utterly put out of remembrance”* – i.e. exterminated.
2. In **Num. 27:16-23** << **TURN**, at the time of his death, Moses requested of God that He *“set a man over the congregation.”* So they would *“be not as sheep without a shepherd.”* In response, God instructed Moses in **vs. 18-20** to lay his hand upon Joshua as a sign of “ordaining” him as the **NEW** leader of the nation.
3. In **Deut. 31:7-8, 23** Moses gave a final word of blessing and encouragement to his successor and friend. *“In the sight of all Israel”* he said to Joshua, *“Be strong and of a good courage: ... the LORD, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.”* God promised, *“for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them: and I will be with thee.”*

B. From this change of command & leadership of Israel we can see God's leaders must:

1. Have the call of God upon them;
2. Have an understanding of the will of God – They **MUST** have this understanding **BEFORE** they can do the work of God.
 - a. God chose Joshua **BECAUSE** of his track record!
 - b. He was a man of faith, courage, and obedience with a devotion to the law of God.

C. In this book, the Christian will find:

- EGYPT pictures the unsaved man / the bondage of sin / the world around him.
- MOSES represents the law, which is *unable* to bring anyone into spiritual rest.
- The WILDERNESS pictures the Christian defeated by unbelief.
- The CROSSING THE JORDAN pictures death to self and a life given to obedience.
- While CANAAN pictures the victory of faith, claiming the inheritance and spiritual maturity.

The book of Joshua represents a spiritual picture of the believer entering into spiritual rest or maturity. This book teaches us that the *victorious* Christian life is a life of battles and blessings.

Why the battles? **BECAUSE** Satan does not want you to reproduce Christ in your life or in the life of other people. He wants you to stay a harmless little babe in Jesus – who, as such, is powerless to bring about change in your life and in the lives of those around you.

You never really fought a battle until you try to occupy the land of spiritual maturity!

Why would there be a struggle of the two natures, to live the NEW LIFE as Paul describes in **Rom. 7**, if you are already living to the old nature? If the old nature is still ruling your life there is **No battle**, **No struggle** for unclaimed ground, **No warfare!**

But once you determine: 1] you are going to **die** to self; 2] **dedicate** your life to the Lord; 3] and **decide** to live for Him totally — that's when the battles really starts!

D. Illustrate by relating your (Zemeski's) personal decision to live for God as a new convert

- Folks started to resent me because of what I was standing for. They became uncomfortable in their sin with me around. They stopped inviting my wife and myself to their socials.
- Folks didn't like the things I had to say from a biblical perspective.
- Friends thought it strange that I didn't laugh at their lewd jokes and enjoy the same social improprieties.
- Folks didn't appreciate the wonderful changes occurring in my life. **I found myself in a battle!** — I wanted friends, but they were rejecting me, for whom I was becoming.
- I was having a struggle with wanting acceptance and relationships with my friends, and trying to live a godly life while developing my relationship with my LORD.
- As you know I am not perfect and still have away to go, **BUT** I have crossed the Jordan! I haven't possessed ALL the land yet, but like Paul I'm pressing on towards that mark.

Paul said in Phil. 3:13,14, *“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*

Some folks today think they have arrived at the plateau of spiritual maturity, but I’ve *never* met a person the calibre of Paul, YET this highly esteemed individual said he needed to move on in his Christian life pressing toward the prize – so do I and so do you! (Relate to song “Higher Ground”)

Being freed from the bondage of sin, as represented by Israel’s release from bondage, in EGYPT is God’s will for every person on this earth, **BUT** coming out of the WILDERNESS of a defeated or self-centred life, means a crossing of the JORDAN.

The crossing of the Jordan pictures death to self and entering into life in CANAAN—the Promised Land of maturity —**that ought to be the desired goal of every believer!**

E. Too many Christians are “in between” Egypt and Canaan in their spiritual lives.

- They have been delivered from the bondage of sin, but they have not, by faith, entered into the inheritance of rest and victory.
- They flounder about in their independence from God and their disobedience to His Word.

There is a PRINCIPLE that needs to be seen in this book and it is TWO FOLD:

FIRST >> God gives or God *provides the means* but, **SECOND >>** Man must possess!

This is True of Salvation:

- God gives it freely to whosoever will: BUT man must receive it!
- God gives the precious gift of eternal life; BUT we must possess it!

This is True of Spiritual Maturity:

- God gives the maturity; BUT we as believers must possess it!
- God gives the victory, BUT we must fight the battles to obtain the victory!

MATURITY doesn’t come automatically, it develops as you cultivate and work at it.

Salvation comes by faith, as a gift—**BUT** if you are going to be mature you are going to have to work at it!

- ➔ You’ll have to pray
- ➔ You’ll have to study your Bible
- ➔ You’ll have to be faithful
- ➔ You’ll have to fight the fight of faith and
- ➔ You’ll have to; you’ll just have to labour to reach that place that God desires for you to be!

F. In our message, let’s look at these principles in its TWO Parts:

1. As it applies to Israel taking the land of Canaan
2. As it applies to believers reaching the place of spiritual maturity or spiritual victory!

GOD’S PROVISION FOR VICTORY IS FOUND IN:

- God's **PROMISES** of Conquest – God has given promises to all believers for their possession
- God's **PRESENCE** in the Conquest – God is found in the land of Spiritual victory and maturity.
- God's **POWER** for the Conquest – enables us to perform what He asks of us.

I. GOD'S PROMISES OF CONQUEST 1:1-6

A. *The Land Was God's Gift to Israel – vs. 2-4, 6.*

1. The land was **NOT** sold for a price; **NOR** did God have to buy it – God already OWNED it!
2. No one can question God's right to give Canaan to the Israelites for He owns the whole earth – after all He made it all! (Ps. 24:1)

“The earth is the LORD'S and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein”

3. The people who were presently living on the land were squatters. **WHY??**

B. *BECAUSE the land originally was promised to Israel's Forefathers (vs. 6)*

1. Land was to be divided among the nation of Israel as an inheritance.
2. This Promise made by the Landowner and was given to Abraham (Gen. 15:18-21); Isaac (Gen. 26:3-5); Jacob (Gen. 28:13) and to the entire nation – the seed of Abraham (Ex. 6:8) – was given as an **eternal possession!**

C. *God's Command to Israel to Take the Land was accompanied by a Promise.*

1. In any given generation, the fulfilment of God's great promises depends upon the obedience of God's people.
2. **Vs. 2** – God commanded, *“Arise, go over this Jordan ... unto the land.”*
 - a. God gave His word in **vs. 5** – Joshua would be assured a lifetime of **continuous victory** over his enemies
 - 1) God also gave His word in **vs. 5** that He would be **ever present**;
 - 2) That His power was available;
 - 3) That He would not let him down!
 - b. **Vs. 6** – God said He would keep His word! – **“I swear”** = God's Oath. **If God keeps His word to the dead, why wouldn't He keep it for the living?**
3. **MARK THIS DOWN!** God never walks out on His promises – to anyone!

D. *Israel's Occupation of the Land*

1. **I must emphasise the point – God gave Israel the land!**
 - a. He said in **Vs. 2** – *“the land which I DO GIVE to them”* – i.e. all the people of Israel
 - b. **Vs. 3** – *“that I HAVE GIVEN unto you”* – to Joshua as Israel's representative
 - c. **Vs. 6** – *“unto THIS PEOPLE [i.e. Israel] shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land”*
2. What was necessary for Israel to possess the land?
 - a. Take God at His Word! – **AND by faith** — claim His Promises!
 - b. **Vs. 2** – *“Arise, go over this Jordan...”*
 - 1) Fulfilment of this promise **depended** on Israel's **OBEDIENCE**.

- 2) The Lord gave them the title to the territory, BUT they had to *possess* it by marching on every part – Vs. 3
 - 3) The land would only be conquered by hard fighting – the enemy is squatt’n on your land in “them thar hills.”
 - 4) Vs. 4 – Boundaries established by God were promised to Abraham (Gen. 15:18-21) & Moses (Deut. 1:6-8) and was to extend from:
 - a) Southern boundary – from the wilderness of Arabia to the
 - b) Northern boundary – in the Lebanon mountain range
 - c) Eastern boundary – went from the Euphrates River (Iraq)
 - d) Western boundary – of the Mediterranean Sea
 - e) *“All the land of the Hittites”* – in ancient times the whole pop. of Canaan or any part of it was called “Hittite” (Gen. 15:20).
3. Did Israel ever possess the land?
- a. YES, but only some of It! – UNFORTUNATELY they possessed nowhere near the territory promised by God—the enemy remained in the land.
 - 1) David & Solomon, in their time to come, gained more ground, but most was left unclaimed.
 - 2) When will Israel fully possess the land?
 - a) The prophets Jeremiah (16:14-16); Amos (9:11-15) and Zechariah (8:4-8) declare Israel will possess the land at the time of Christ’s return to earth—when the Lord will REGATHER the Jews and REIGN in the land over a REDEEMED Israel.
 - b) FACT IS – Israel WILL NOT possess the land *UNTIL* she is totally right with God.
 - b. Why did Israel fail to possess ALL the land?
 - Were there too many giants??
 - Was the land not worth the battle??
 - Was the terrain too difficult??
 - Did they lack the right equipment??
 - Was their army was too small??
 - c. I’ll give you three guesses, which they were. — NONE OF THE ABOVE!
 - 1) They didn’t possess all the land BECAUSE they did not believe God would fulfil His Word.
 - 2) They allowed the fear of man to be greater than the fear of God.
 - 3) They didn’t want to be bothered with the hassle of doing what was necessary to possess it!
 - d. The RESULT – **Disbelief, Disobedience, and Disaster**—
To this day they have never possessed all what God had given them!

E. Application:

1. God had given Israel the land: all they had to do was to *“Arise, go over Jordan”* by faith and claim it.
2. Sin & disobedience will prevent us from possessing all that is promised—it prevents us from obtaining spiritual maturity.

3. God has already given us *“every blessing of the Spirit”* in Christ (Eph. 1:3)!
 - a. All we need to do is **“ARISE”** by faith and claim it!
 - b. We need courage to GO OVER JORDAN stepping out on the Word of God and possess our God-given possessions!

Some will say: “ Oh, I wish I could be like that!”
 “ Oh, I wish I could be spiritual like them.”
 “ Oh, I wish my life would shine like theirs.”
 “ Oh, I wish I could be dedicated like him or her!”

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS YOU CAN!

God has given the same blessed promise of spiritual Victory to you in Christ as
 He has given to every believer since the beginning of time!

4. God promised us Spiritual maturity AND a victorious Christian life!
 - Are God’s promises any good?
 - Can God’s promises be relied upon?
 - If God says He has given it to us—
Why, Why, Why then don’t we claim it???
IT’S OURS FOR THE TAKING!

If a gift of € 1,000 were deposited in your named bank account, by another person...

...What would you have to do to avail yourself of the use of this money?

Would you not just have to go to the bank and lay claim to it—Right? RIGHT!

What is true of receiving that money is also true of receiving the gift of salvation and is also true of obtaining personal Spiritual Victory in Jesus – You’ll Have To Lay Claim To It! It is already yours!

Firstly, God’s provision for victory is found in God’s PROMISES of conquest and secondly in...

II. GOD’S PRESENCE IN THE CONQUEST AS PROMISED – VS. 5, 9

A. LORD Promised Joshua in Vs. 5 – **“I Will Be With Thee...”**

1. TURN >> Ps. 139:5-10 – **No matter** where we go; **No matter** what trials we may face; God Promises - He is with us.
2. The LORD promised in Josh. 1:9 – *“Thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest”* —knowing this Joshua was then encouraged to:
 - a. *“Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou **dismayed**”*
 - b. **“Dismayed”** = means broken down by violence, confusion, fearful, discouraged or terrified
3. Knowing God would be with him, Joshua realised this did not minimise the task he faced.
 - a. He would encounter giants and fortified cities. The people who weren’t about to roll over and play dead, BUT God’s presence would make all the difference when he came to these obstacles.
 - b. God has NOT promised us immediate spiritual maturity, OR freedom from trials, temptations, or testing’s of our faith, BUT He has promised...
 - 1) He would be with us in and through every aspect of our Christian lives

- 2) He did promise we would experience daily the spiritual victory He has already given us.

B. LORD Promised Joshua in Vs. 5 – “I Will Not Fail Thee...”

1. Someone has counted that God has promised 366 times in the Bible that He will not fail – God can do anything – but fail!
2. SAME PROMISE was later given to Solomon >> **READ 1Chron. 22:13; 28:20**
3. SAME PROMISE was given to us >> **READ Heb. 13:5-6**

Rom. 8:31 – *“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us (on our side), who can be against us?”* Men change, and times change, **BUT** our God changes not!

C. LORD Also Promised Joshua in Vs. 5 – “Nor (will I) Forsake Thee”

1. **Vs. 9** – God goes with us wherever we go, *whether we want Him to or not*, for He lives in us!
 - a. God will not leave us – nor drop us or abandon us.
 - b. In carrying out the Great Commission Jesus promised, *“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world”* – i.e. until the end of time!
When time ends we will forever be in His presence in eternity
2. How do we know God won’t leave us?
 - a. **1 Sam. 12:22** tells us *“...The LORD will not forsake his people His great name’s sake...”* – His reputation as a Holy God and character of a true God are on the line.
 - b. God will ever be faithful to His agreements and promises, even if we are not! >> **TURN >> Deut. 7:6-9**
 - 1) God’s love is expressed by His keeping His promises.
 - 2) Our love for Him is shown by our obedience >> **Deut. 10:12-13**

If God has promised us **SPIRITUAL VICTORY** in our lives:

- **SAYING** wherever we are – He’s with us;
- **SAYING** whatever we do for Him – He’ll not fail us;
- **SAYING** wherever we go for Him – He’ll not forsake us and
- **SAYING** He’ll do it for the glory, honour and reputation of who and what He is!

Then why under God’s heaven don’t we possess ALL what God has for us?!

You say, “I’m not able! I just don’t have the where withal to do it. Well, that brings us to the next point...”

III. GOD’S POWER FOR CONQUEST

God’s provision for victory is found in God’s *PROMISES* of conquest, in His *PRESENCE* in the conquest and in His sustaining *POWER*!

A. Power Is Promised In Vs. 5 –

“There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life...”

1. **BUT** God gave a **PRE-FIX** to the **PROMISE** of victory in vs. 2
It was – *“Arise, go over this Jordan...”*
2. To the **PROMISE** of Victory He promises His **PRESENCE**; to that **PROMISE** of Victory and assurance of His **PRESENCE**, He also promises His **POWER** to **PERFORM** what He asks of us.

3. TURN >> Isa. 41:8-14 where God gave the same promise of power to His people – Nation of Israel. NOTE: Vs. 10
 - a. Pre-fix – *“Fear thou not...”*
 - b. Presence – *“I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God...”*
 - c. Power – *“I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee...”*
 - d. Promise – *“I will uphold thee with the right hand of my rightness.”*
4. God’s power is available to us all the time – He guaranteed victory to Moses; He guaranteed victory to Joshua; He guaranteed victory to the Nation Of Israel – He GUARANTEES victory to you!
NOTE. Promises >> 2 Pet. 1:3-4; Phil. 1:6; 2:13

It should be obvious, that God has prepared every avenue for you to have victory over, SIN, SELF, SATAN, & SITUATIONS—are you making use of them?

B. Power Is To Be a Possession of the Christian

- Why is it that every Christian doesn’t seem to possess power in their lives??
- The Answer goes back to the principles we gave at the beginning of the message. FIRST – God *Provides*: SECOND – We must make the effort to *Possess!*
 - This is true of salvation
 - This is true of maturity
 - This is true of Victorious Living

ALL are obtained by acting with a trusting faith in God’s Word.

Let us say you own a powerful sports car.

Someone asks, “How does it drive?” Your reply, “I don’t know?” Astonished they ask, “You don’t know? Why is that?” You sheepishly say, “Well, it’s locked in the garage and I have never driven it, I’m afraid to drive it.

**For sure you will never experience the thrill of that car,
until you act upon what you possess.**

C. There is a Provision of Two Keys to Unlock Unlimited Spiritual Power

1. 1ST KEY – *FAITH* in God’s Word – SEE >> Joshua 1:8
 - a. Rom. 10:17 – *“So faith cometh by hearing, and hearing the Word of God.”*
 - b. Three things necessary for spiritual prosperity:
 - 1) First, we are NOT to forget God’s Word – the law shall not depart out of thy mouth.
 - 2) Second, we are to THINK about God’s Word – meditate therein day and night – **For it to be *in your mouth* it first has to be *in your mind!***
Ps. 119:97 – *“Oh how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”*
 - a) What do you spend most of your time meditating on? Jesus said, *“For where your treasure is there will your heart be also”* (Matt. 6:21).
 - (i) Latest Pop Music?
 - (ii) Last newspaper, book, or magazine you just read?
 - (iii) Dream about where you are going on your holiday?

- b) Do you say you lack the time to spend in God's Word?
- (i) Could you or I be busier than Joshua who had the whole nation of Israel in his care?
- (ii) The secret of his success was that he didn't forget to take time for God and His Word.
- 3) The third thing Necessary for Spiritual Prosperity –
We are to ACTIVELY OBEY ALL what God's Word Commands –
“Observe to do accordingly to ALL that is written therein.”

If Joshua was able to conquer Canaan having only the 1st five books of the Bible, how much more we ought to be overcomers now that we have a complete Bible!

2. **2ND KEY** – To unlock unlimited spiritual power is **COURAGE**
God gives 3 exhortations to Joshua to be **STRONG & COURAGEOUS**
- a. Vs. 6 – *“Be strong and of good courage”* BECAUSE of God's Promise of the land. Strength and fortitude would be required for the military campaign.
- b. Vs. 7 – *“Be thou strong and VERY COURAGEOUS.”* A stronger exhortation is given because it takes greater strength of character to obey God's Word faithfully and fully than it does to win military battles! REMEMBER, God's Power comes from God's Word.
- c. Vs. 9 – *“Be strong and of good courage.”* Knowledge of God's Presence will protect us from the enemy of fear and discouragement.

CONCLUSION

A. Things would be difficult at times for Joshua.

- He would face the fear of daunting circumstances,
- Undoubtedly feel terribly inadequate for the task,
- And even be tempted to quit, but God knows all about our feelings, weaknesses, and fears.

The real battle of faith is joined in here.
It is NOT what we are, BUT what He is.
NOT what we feel, BUT His facts!

- He asks us to 'hang in there,' trust Him, be strong, and be courageous.
- He promises that by His right arm of righteousness He will hold us up!
- Apostle Paul also gives us encouragement – *“Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not”* (Gal. 6:9).

BE STRONG! — BE COURAGEOUS!
We have God's Promises – God's Presence & God's Power!

B. How can we possess our inheritance that we have been given from God?

1. You need FAITH to realise what God has already given you because you are His child.
2. You must be OBEDIENT to do ALL that God's Word commands.
3. By God's grace have COURAGE to Rise Up and go into the Promised Land.

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