

Joshua Lesson 14

INTRO:

- A. Joshua's original name was Hoshea and he was the son of Nun and of the tribe of Ephraim. (Numbers 13:8)
- B. Joshua would have been born during the years of Egyptian bondage and thus would have been a slave for the early part of his life.
- C. He was a military leader before he ever lead Israel into Canaan.
 - 1. Moses commissioned him to lead the battle against Amalek. (Exodus 17:9-16)
- D. He was a servant of Moses. (Numbers 11:28)
- E. Joshua, along with eleven others, were chosen to search out the land of Canaan. (Numbers 13:1-10)
 - 1. This is when Joshua's name was changed from Hoshea (save) to Joshua (God is salvation). (v. 16)
- F. Before the start of the book of Joshua, 3 tribes (Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh) asked Moses to settle in the land east of Jordan.
 - 1. Moses charged them that when the time came to enter Canaan, they would go with the rest of the tribes and fight for the land of Canaan. (Deuteronomy 3:12-20)

I. THE EVENTS AT SHITTIM.

- A. At the opening of the book of Joshua, the people of Israel are camped on the plains of Moab (Deuteronomy 34:8) at Shittim (which means "Acacia Trees," Joshua 2:1), where they have been for a number of months.
 - 1. This will be their last camping place before crossing Jordan.
- B. At Shittim::
 - 1. They commit immorality with Moabite and Midianite women (Numbers 25:1-9) and worshipped Baal.
 - 2. Israel is numbered in a census (Numbers 26:1-4).
 - 3. Joshua is delegated authority by Moses. (Numbers 27:18-23).
 - 4. Moses reviews the history of the people and the laws of God (most of which are contained in the book of Deuteronomy).
 - 5. Moses climbs to the top of Mt. Pisgah to see (but not enter) the Promised Land, and then dies at the age of 120 (Deuteronomy 34:1-4).
 - 6. Moses is buried nearby in Moab (Deuteronomy 34:5-8).
- C. **Joshua 1:2**

II. ASSURANCES GOD GIVES TO JOSHUA (AND TO US):

- A. **Joshua 1:3-4**
 - 1. This is a reminder of what Moses said to the people in **Deuteronomy 11:24**
 - 2. Caleb remembered this promise when he was ready to battle the city of Hebron at the age of 85: (**14:9**, quoting Deuteronomy 1:36)
 - 3. This principle applies today to Christians.
 - a. Our battle is not with "*flesh and blood*" as Israel's was instead "... (**Ephesians 6:12**)
 - b. We are head to head with Satan on the battlefield of life and it's ongoing every day.

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- c. God is wanting us to take ground...to make progress.
 - 1) Satan wants us to lose ground...to be pushed backward.
 - 2) He wants us to lose territory that we and God once held.
 - d. Paul in Philippians 1:12 -
 - 1) Paul has been put in prison.
 - 2) There can be no doubt that Satan is trying to push him back.
 - 3) Paul has been gaining too much ground into Satan's territory.
 - 4) But look at what Paul said happened. *"It turned out for the furtherance of the gospel."*
 - a) *"furtherance "* is a military term. *"Advance"*. NET, RSV
 - b) Paul was advancing into ground Satan held.
 - c) Paul took it!
 - d) But it can go the other way (**Hebrews 2:1** *"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away."*).
 - e. **James 4:7**
 - f. Spiritually, we want to grow. How do we do that? Passively? No.
 - 1) We grow by believing the promises of God knowing He will give them to us, but we must have *"wholly followed the Lord"*.
 - 2) (**Hebrews 6:12**)
 - g. Joshua and his conquest of Canaan can help us to conquer things of a spiritual nature if we will let it.
- B. **Joshua 1:5b** *"I will not leave you nor forsake you."*
- 1. Of all the promises in the Bible, this is one of the most precious.
 - a. It's also found in Deuteronomy 31:6, Matthew 28:20, and Hebrews 13:5.
 - 2. God meant it to encourage Joshua on the day his leadership began with Israel.
 - 3. None of us deserves this promise. (**Romans 3:23**).
 - a. But God is willing to forgive us our sins through our obedience to Him. **Matthew 7:21**
 - 4. We may, and sometimes do, forsake the Father but He never forsakes us.
 - 5. (**2 Peter 3:9**)
- C. **JOSHUA 1:6** *"Be strong and of a good courage:..."*
- 1. What is faith? Very simply, it is believing that God will do what He says He will do.
 - 2. Faith is the key principle that underlies the book of Joshua, as well as the whole life of a Christian.
 - 3. Paul stated it like this in reference to Abraham: (**Romans 4:20-22**)
 - 4. God gave Joshua a promise:(**1:5-6**)
 - 5. Is faith believing the promise? Yes, but that is not all!

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- a. Faith is believing the promise enough that we are strong and courageous to do what the Lord commands just like Joshua, Abraham, and all others who pleased God.
6. Faith requires courage and strength because, only when we exercise courage and strength, do we maintain our faithfulness and steadfastness to God.
 - a. If at the first sign of difficulty or hardship we lose faith and become disobedient, we don't have faith, we have unbelief.
 - b. We all struggle with this. None of us is immune.
 - c. Joshua was filled with the Spirit, worked alongside Moses, and had been on the mountain with Moses but still needed encouragement and exhortation.
 - 1) It was given to him three times (vs. 6,9,18)
7. Many things can cause us to fear -- fear of people, fear that people won't approve, fear that we'll fail, fear that you aren't strong enough, fear that we don't know enough - Fear!
8. This promise has our name on it: "*I will never leave you or forsake you,* _____ (insert your name).
 - a. Therefore, "*be strong and very courageous!*"
- D. **Joshua 1:7-9** "*...observe to do according to all the law...meditate in it day and night,*"
 1. This is what will strengthen our faith and courage: attention to God's word.
 2. The Psalmist stated: (**Psalm 119:97,105**)
 3. What's the meaning of meditate? To meditate means to think about, mull over, ponder.
 - a. What we are doing at this very moment is involving ourselves in the process of meditation.
 - b. We read and think and try to understand. That is meditation.
 4. The more we meditate on God's Word, the more we begin to understand God and what His will is for us.
 5. The more we leave the mindset of this secular world, we are "*transformed by the renewing of our mind*" (**Romans 12:2**).
 - a. (**Romans 10:17**)
- E. **Joshua 1:8b** "*...For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*"
 1. The instructions in verse 8 are keys to prosperity and success: "*then you will have good success.*"
 2. In bookstores, you'll find shelves full of books on "success."
 - a. You can buy recordings designed to reprogram your mind to think successful thoughts.
 - b. Much of what they say is true -- but it is not complete!
 3. The world says Trust in yourself. Boldly strive for your dream. Think good thoughts, positive thoughts. Then you will be prosperous and successful.
 4. God says ... Trust in Me. I will never leave you.... (1:5).

Lessons From Characters In Old Testament

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Be strong and very courageous because I will be with you (1:9).

Meditate on My word (1:8a).

Then you will be prosperous and successful (1:8b).

5. Let us make sure we are aware of the differences.
6. Faith in self will ultimately disappoint us.
 - a. The Bible tells us not to do that.
 - b. **(Proverbs 3:5-6)**
7. The world says: be bold, strive for your dream, take risks.
 - a. And these things are important.
8. But our motivation to be bold must be faith in God's promises.
 - a. While positive thinking is essential to faith, it is not faith itself.
(Philippians 4:8)
 - b. Positive thinking is a partial truth, not a full truth.
 - c. The full truth is that we must meditate on God's word.
9. **(John 8:31-32)**
10. The world tempts us with the promise of prosperity and success without God.
 - a. But the truth of the matter is, that whatever measure of prosperity and success we find without God will profit us nothing in the long run.
 - b. **(Matthew 4:4, quoting Deuteronomy 8:3); Matthew 6:24; 16:26)**

CONCLUSION:

- A. In these eight verses we find several lessons that we as Christians should realize, learn, and make application of them
- B. God has promised to be with us -- "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*" (1:5)
- C. God wants us to "*be strong and very courageous*" (1:6-8) in spite of our apprehensions and fears.
- D. Meditating on God's Word helps us grow as disciples in faith and courage (1:7-8).