

Joshua

“The Faithful”



“There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life . . . I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them.” Joshua 1:5-6

Many of us have heard the story of how Joshua marched around the city of Jericho and the walls fell down. We may have a hard time believing that they did not use any force to do this. But, if we study the story of Joshua in the Bible we know that he and Caleb were told they would be blessed and they would win because of their great faith. Their names are not given as the ones that led the Israelites into the Promised Land, but they did it. The glory is often given to Moses, but it takes the other people working behind the scenes. No one can do it alone.

But Joshua was a loyal and faithful follower long before the battle of Jericho. When Joshua was still a young man, following Moses and the teachings of God, he along with Caleb and ten other men was chosen to scout the land of Canaan to see if they could conquer it as they had been told to do by God. Ten of the men brought back reports that the people were giants, and they knew that it was an impossible task. Joshua and Caleb were positive and told Moses, “The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.” Numbers 14:7-8. Their positive attitude encouraged the people and they were able to succeed.

Then there is the march around the city of Jericho. It was the most important Canaanite fortress city in the Jordan valley, and it stood in the path of Joshua leading the people into the Promised Land. The Lord told Joshua to take his men and march around the city for six days. He will have seven priests with trumpets. On the seventh day the priests will make a long blast with their trumpets and all the people will shout, and the walls of the city will fall down. Joshua did as he was told and it worked. He didn’t fight and refuse to do this thing which doesn’t make much sense to us today. He followed as he was told.

After the death of Moses, Joshua was assigned as leader of the Israelites. He was chosen by God to take the people into the Promised Land and he knew that God would be with him all the way. Joshua, not Moses, was the one that would lead his people and fulfill the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

We, like Joshua, are also working on this earth. Sometimes we pray and want a result, but the result that we have imagined in our mind is right away. But, God doesn’t always answer right away. Sometimes it takes years. I can’t imagine marching around a city for seven days thinking the walls were just going to tumble down. We know that God will answer. If things do not happen in the way and on the time schedule that we have planned, we sometimes lose faith and try to do it our way.

We would like to think, like Peter, that we have enough faith to walk on water. But when we get there, we sometimes don’t have the trust we thought we had. We want to see things happen NOW. We have not seen God’s overall picture. We can, like the Israelites, lose the biggest blessing of our life because we are too impatient. We can’t see the big picture.

Many people think they know what will happen and write lengthy, supposed scholarly dissertations on what is going to happen, but then it doesn’t and they get upset. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth and teach us all things. God is our personal Guide and Teacher in this life. If God puts a call on our life, and we don’t follow the specific instructions and leadings on how to get there, we will never succeed. We have our own ideas many times. But if God calls us to do something, He will be there. I heard a minister tell a story about how a man thought a minister should do a certain thing and kept pressuring the minister to do it because he thought it was a good idea. The minister asked the man if he was going to pay for the entire project he was proposing. The man said “No, I can’t.” Then the minister said “Then I guess it won’t be done. When God calls me to do something He pays the pay entirely.” Joshua followed the plan set out for him by God and he succeeded. God led him all the way.

In a well-known play, *The Sound of Music*, a line is given by Maria when she is trying to solve her dilemma, “Reverend Mother always says when the Lord closes a door, and somewhere he opens a window.” He always opens a window. If God is calling us to go through a door or window, we can be sure that we will have the full power of God operating through us to achieve total victory just like Joshua did! It may not be the window we choose, but He will be there if we only look. We just need

to keep looking for God's plan and allow God to reveal it to us in his time. What he did for Joshua, he will do for us.

Prayer: Dear Lord, you have offered us so much and we don't know how to handle it. We have become greedy in our desire to get more, not realizing that the more earthly power we get, the less we rely on God's power to help us lead a really prosperous life. Help us to be like Joshua and rely on God's love each day and know that we will have a rich and complete life like we could never have bought with earthly treasures. Amen.

1. Do you believe that God makes the same promise to you for a rich and full life that was made to Joshua?
2. How can we go about finding the plan set for our lives?
3. What are the obstacles that keep us from depending fully on God's grace? Can we search for them through prayer and receive blessings?
4. Does God punish us for not seeking the plan made for us? How?
5. Explain the phrase that God is just?

© Gail Kennedy Keffer