

Joshua – The Man

Description

This was the man that replaced Moses as leader of the children of Israel. He was the man that had a whole book dedicated to him, a book that details the highs and lows of the people that he was charged with bringing into the –promised land–.

Joshua 1:2 –Moses my servant is dead, arise and go over this Jordan–!– The language used here in the KJV (King James Version) is very definite and descriptive, –now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people –!– When it is God–s time, God–s Word will always come with great authority, clarity and urgency.

Just as an aside the name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua. They both mean –Jehovah my Saviour– or –Jehovah Saves–. Before we start, it is important to state that I am not saying that Joshua replaces Jesus but that it is interesting to note that the children of Israel, or the congregation, as they are referred to in the old testament, required leadership. They required both practical and spiritual leadership. This is true for all of God–s people, His congregation, His followers here on earth.

As we saw in our study on [Abram](#), there is always a desire in any Christian believer to –look for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God– Hebrews 11:10. The same is true here of Joshua. He was a man with spirit and a man in the Spirit and he was intent on finding and cultivating a living relationship with God.

Joshua – The Man with Spirit

We read in Numbers 27:15-22 the account where Moses recognised that Israel, the congregation, required a Man. We read that Moses spoke to the Lord (the Hebrew word used here for Lord is the word ELOHIM – The Godhead plural not singular) saying –Set a MAN over the congregation, one who may go out before them and one who may come in before them and one who will lead them out and bring them in.– This was not just any man, this was a man who would and could intercede on behalf of the people, a man who had full access to the trinity. Even before Christ appeared as a man we have this picture that God intended that someone needed to stand in the gap between God Himself and those who He had created. He needed an intercessor, one who could access the heavenly Father on their behalf. Joshua was a man who had a shepherd heart, he was anointed to lead this congregation but he was a man who also displayed natural ability which God was able to use for His purpose.

Joshua – The good shepherd

Joshua was the man ordained to –go out, to come in, to lead out and lead in–. A good shepherd will always know when and where to lead his flock, he will instinctively know when to lead out to new pastures and he will instinctively know when to lead the flock in when there is imminent danger. We see a parallel here with Jesus in John 10. Jesus says He is the door, He will lead out and lead in, He is the good shepherd. Joshua was a shepherd, a man who demonstrated he cared and could lead the congregation into all that God had planned for them as His chosen people.

Joshua – The soldier/commander

Joshua was a man who demonstrated that he could lead and also that he understood what it meant to be under authority. For anyone to be a good leader they need to know how to take instruction in order to deliver instruction. They also need to recognise when God speaks through His nominated oracle. In Exodus 17:8-15 we read an account where Moses, the oracle and mouth-piece of God, instructed Joshua to – ‘choose men.’ • Joshua’s command was to choose fighting men, men who understood what it meant to be under authority, men who demonstrated they had commitment to fight the Amalekites. Joshua, the soldier, fought and prevailed because Moses interceded on his behalf. Joshua knew that this battle was God’s battle not his or Moses’s, all he had to do was to choose the right men and lead them into battle. It is important to say that the word used in the Hebrew text for – ‘men’ is the word – ‘Anashim’, a noun which describes masculine in the plural. This word is the plural form of the Hebrew word – ‘ENOSH’ which is the word used to describe man as frail, incurable and mortal. So in choosing men who could fight, Joshua is restricted to fit, strong, probably young men, but who are nevertheless frail, mortal and incurable in God’s eyes. Moses knew, as God’s oracle, that without God’s intervention Joshua and his frail, mortal, incurable fighting men would perish. What we see here is that Joshua recognised that victory comes through those who hear the Word of God and trust in His providence. Victory came because God ordained it and because a man had been obedient and followed through. Jesus was the man who was obedient to the point of death, he followed through so that you and I could enjoy freedom from (and I quote) – ‘especially the sin that so easily trips us up’ • Hebrews 12:1-4. Joshua demonstrated that he could be a soldier and a commander who was prepared to fight on behalf of the God of Israel, a God who cares for and uses frail, mortal, incurable men to accomplish His will.

Joshua – The Companion

Joshua also demonstrated that he was a companion. In Exodus 24 we have the account where Moses and his chosen leaders are called up into the mountain to meet God. We are told in Exodus 24:10 that – ‘they saw the God of Israel and under His feet was a paved work of sapphire stone’. These people must have been awe struck and overwhelmed by God’s presence. We read in Exodus 24:12 that God speaks directly with Moses and says – ‘come to me in the mountain’ • in other words, Moses I want you to come up higher than the others and I will give you Tablets of stone that I have written a law and commandments on so that you may teach the people My ways.

What I want to say here is that God chooses people (men and women, I believe women are included in our day and age, this is adequately supported elsewhere in scripture) who have demonstrated that they will – ‘come up higher’, people with character and substance.

We can gain an insight into what kind of men the 70 were that went up into the mountain with Moses through the counsel that Jethro, his Father in law, gave him in Exodus 18:17-23 especially in Exodus 18:21.

They had the following qualities:-

- Able men that fear God
- Men of truth (truthful)
- Men who hate covetousness
 - Avoid men who are desiring other people’s things
 - Avoid men who show a wrong desire of wealth or possession

There is a sense here that if we ever want to lead people into all that God has for them then we need to ensure that we acquire these qualities (as well as others listed in the new testament) through the

graciousness and goodness of God through Jesus. We need to be prepared to come up into the mountain into the presence of God on the mountain and to be awe struck by that presence.

Joshua was one of these men chosen and we read in Exodus 24:13 that Moses got up, with his minister, Joshua, and went into the mountain. It is interesting to note here in this verse that Joshua was not asked to go, it would appear that he instinctively knew that he had to go and accompany Moses as his companion.

Joshua – The Minister and Servant

Before Joshua was entrusted by God to lead the people of Israel from a lifetime of wandering, he had to demonstrate and prove that he could serve. As we saw in Joshua – The companion, he was the man that Moses trusted. He was the man who had been set apart from an early age. In fact he was one of only two people, (over the age of 20 years old) Caleb being the other, who left Egypt and entered the promised land. Joshua had embraced something that the other 70 elders who had been baptised in the spirit in Numbers 11:25 had not fully embraced. Joshua had not only been filled with the Spirit on that day he had also embraced and understood humility. He probably learnt that lesson, when in Numbers 11:28, he implored Moses to forbid Eldad and Medad to stop prophesying inside the camp. I guess Joshua was young, naive and under the impression that only the 70 elders with Moses were eligible to receive God's blessing, but Moses in his wisdom, saw a bigger picture, a picture where all people would prophesy, in other words all people filled with the Spirit. A theme that continues throughout the Hebrew scriptures that would be encapsulated in the passage in Joel 2:28-29 where God speaks through Joel who prophesies and says "I will POUR OUT MY SPIRIT upon all flesh And your sons and your daughters will prophesy" and where, in Acts 2:17-22, Peter quotes the prophet Joel that reinforces this great theme of "being filled with God", on the day of Pentecost, the theme that Moses had foreseen right back in Numbers 11.

Joshua was learning humility and wisdom from a man who had found God. A man who had been filled with the Spirit of God and a man who had learnt humility at the hands of Pharaoh. Joshua had absorbed and learnt humility and had committed his life into God's hands. Joshua 1:7 speaks about being strong and very courageous. In Psalms 37:5 we read these words "commit your way unto the Lord; trust also in Him". At the end of Joshua's life we read that "Joshua the servant of the Lord died" Joshua 24:29. Joshua had moved from being a servant and minister of Moses to being a servant and minister of God, what an epitaph.

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Category

1. Characters
2. Joshua

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Author

cowmansteve