

Digging Deeper Joshua Week 7

We will be covering a lot of material this week as we dive into Joshua 10-21. While we will be hitting on some of the highlights and summarizing parts of these chapters, I highly encourage you to read all of it – even the difficult names and places. If these details were important enough to the Lord to include in His Word then they are important enough for us to take the time to read them.

Last week we ended with Joshua and Israel's success against the 5 kings of southern Canaan and the miracle of the Lord having the sun stand still. We will look at what happened to the kings of these kingdoms today as we examine the end of Joshua 10.

Joshua 10:16-18 These five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah. ¹⁷ And it was told to Joshua, "The five kings have been found, hidden in the cave at Makkedah." ¹⁸ And Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave and set men by it to guard them,

The first thing I want you to take note of is the fact that these leaders fled and hid. They did not stick by their people, but instead to flee and hid themselves in order to protect themselves.

Have you ever fled and hid from someone or something you have done? I think there are times when we are walking in the ways of the world and we think we can 'hid' it from the Lord.

How do we handle difficulties – especially failures? Do we admit them and face them or do we want to run and hide?

Joshua deals with the kings by having the leaders put their feet on the necks of the kings.

Joshua 10:24 And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, "Come near; put your feet on the necks of these kings." Then they came near and put their feet on their necks.

We talked briefly in the previous weeks that our battles are not against people or circumstances but against the enemy.

Ephesians 6: 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

In order for us to be fully armed for battle against the enemy we must put on the full armor of God.

Ephesians 6:11 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.*

What does putting on the full armor of God entail?

Ephesians 6:13-17 *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,*

Which part of the armor do you put on most often and which part is a struggle to put on regularly?

Did you notice that in this list of armor all of it is defensive except one part. Which part is offensive?

The only offensive part of the armor is the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God? The only offensive weapon we possess in fighting against the enemy is the word of God. It is why it is SO important that we know the Word of God. We must read it, study it and meditate upon it. It is the Word of God that Jesus used when battling Satan in the desert.

Matthew 4:3-4 *The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*

Jesus responds to Satan with Scripture.

Deuteronomy 8:3 *He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.*

Jesus is tempted again.

Matthew 4:5-6 *Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."*

Satan was quoting Scripture.

*Psalm 91:11-12 For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;
they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*

Did you realize that Satan quoted Scripture? What does that tell us about the enemy?

Jesus responds.

Matthew 5:7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Jesus is quoting Scripture.

Deuteronomy 6:16 Do not put the LORD your God to the test as you did at Massah.

Satan tempts Jesus a third time.

Matthew 4:8-9 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus' response.

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'

Once again Jesus is quoting the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 6:13 Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name.

Every time Jesus faced temptation from the enemy He responded with the Word of God. How do you respond to temptation? Do you know Scripture well enough to use it when the enemy comes after you? What changes do you need to make in order to be able to combat the enemy the way that Jesus did?

In Joshua 11 we see Joshua and the Israelites facing a similar situation with the northern kingdoms that they did with the southern kingdoms. The northern kingdoms formed an alliance against Joshua and the Israelites but the Lord provides encouragement.

Joshua 11:5 All these kings joined forces and made camp together at the Waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

Have you ever experienced a situation where it felt like others were ganging up on you or forming an alliance against you? Perhaps you were in a situation where everyone saw a situation from one perspective and you saw it from a different perspective kind of like Joshua and Caleb vs. the other ten spies. How did you handle these situations?

When we feel outnumbered, we need to remember that the Lord is with us like he was with Joshua. Here are the words of encouragement the Lord gave Joshua.

Joshua 11:6 And the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this time I will give over all of them, slain, to Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire."

Here are some other words of encouragement for us to claim today.

Romans 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Romans 8:38-39 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What comfort do you take from these verses?

Joshua 13 lists all the land that still needs to be conquered but the Lord will give them success.

Joshua 13:6 ...I myself will drive them out from before the people of Israel. Only allot the land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you.

The Lord God himself would drive out the enemy from the land yet to be conquered. Then He tells Joshua to allot the land to the tribes. He was to allot the land as an inheritance.

What does an inheritance mean to you?

Remember that an inheritance is not earned – it is gifted. But it must be taken – it is a choice to take the inheritance. Just as someone today has a choice to take or not take an inheritance that was the

case with the Israelites. They would have to take possession of the inheritance the Lord had already given them. The same is true of the promises of God to us today – they are free as is our salvation, but we have to take possession of them. We have to take possession of the salvation that Jesus offers us and we have to live into the promises of God.

What promises are you taking possession of? What words of encouragement are you taking possession of? What Scriptures do you cling to in times of struggle?

Caleb asks for his inheritance – for what was already promised to him by Moses. Look at how Caleb describes his walk with the Lord.

Joshua 24:8 But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the Lord my God.

What does it look like to wholly follow God? Can you describe someone you know who wholly follows the Lord? Are you wholly following God? What do you need to do in order to follow the Lord more whole-heartedly?

Look at what Caleb has to say the Lord when he was 85 years old.

Joshua 14:10-11 *And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the Lord spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. ¹¹ I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming.*

At the age of 85 Caleb is talking about his strength and desire to fight to receive his inheritance. He was willing to do whatever was necessary to take possession of what the Lord had given him. He wasn't looking forward to his retirement and a time of rest.

How does this differ from the way our society views retirement or the way you might view it personally?

Isn't this a different perspective than what we have as we get older? How many people look forward to retirement and 'enjoying their life'? I think for many of us retirement is something that we look forward to because we look forward to doing what we want and taking it easy and enjoying the fruits

of our years of labor. I am not suggesting that all of that is wrong. However, I don't think retirement and solely living for pleasure is what the Lord wants us to do. He created work for Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden when He gave them dominion over the land and animals and this was BEFORE the fall. Work was meant to be good. Perhaps we need to re-evaluate the way we view and anticipate our retirement. Perhaps our work doesn't end but changes. Instead of doing it for money, we are able to serve freely. Instead of focusing solely on seeking pleasure and enjoyment we could spend some of that time finding ways to serve the Lord. What are your thoughts about retirement?

We see that after receiving their allotment, the Ephraimites did NOT drive out all the inhabitants.

Joshua 16:10 However, they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites have lived in the midst of Ephraim to this day but have been made to do forced labor.

Why might this be problematic for the people of Ephraim?

Partial obedience is not true obedience and neither is delayed obedience. The Lord requires full and complete obedience immediately. How well are you obedient? Do you struggle with partial or delayed obedience?

We see the bold faith of some women in Joshua 17.

Joshua 17:3-4 Now Zelophehad the son of Hepher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters, and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ⁴ They approached Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the leaders and said, "The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance along with our brothers." So according to the mouth of the Lord he gave them an inheritance among the brothers of their father.

These daughters had originally gone to Moses to ask to be included in the inheritance of their father.

Numbers 27:3-7 "Our father died in the wilderness. He was not among the company of those who gathered themselves together against the Lord in the company of Korah, but died for his own sin. And he had no sons. ⁴ Why should the name of our father be taken away from his clan because he had no son? Give to us a possession among our father's brothers." ⁵ Moses brought their case before the Lord. ⁶ And the Lord said to Moses, ⁷ "The daughters of Zelophehad are right. You shall give them possession of an inheritance among their father's brothers and transfer the inheritance of their father to them.

These daughters didn't want to miss out on an inheritance and they had the boldness to ask for it. They did that with Moses and again with Joshua. What does this say about their faith in the Lord? What does this say about how the Lord feels about women?

We see the greed and laziness of Manasseh in Joshua 17.

Joshua 17:14 Then the people of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, although I am a numerous people, since all along the Lord has blessed me?"

The people of Manasseh were not satisfied with their allotment of land. How have you not been satisfied with what you had at a particular time and how did that impact you?

How have you experienced the greed of others?

Joshua 17:15-18 And Joshua said to them, "If you are a numerous people, go up by yourselves to the forest, and there clear ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you." ¹⁶ The people of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us. Yet all the Canaanites who dwell in the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel." ¹⁷ Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You are a numerous people and have great power. You shall not have one allotment only, ¹⁸ but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders. For you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong."

The people continue to complain and Joshua tells them if they want the land then they will have to work for it – they will have to drive out the Canaanites. They were being told to take responsibility for their own needs. They wanted to be given land that didn't require any work. When have you tried taking the easy way out? How did it work out for you?

When have you had to work hard for something and how did you feel after it was achieved?

The people from Manasseh just needed to step out in order for God to step in – He had already given them the land. How does their faith compare to Joshua and Caleb?
