

(Meditate Therein Day and Night)

Joshua 1:1 – 9

~ *Our Spiritual Safari* expedition through the entire Word of God continues in the Old Testament in this report, entering a new land and bringing a new theme. Our so-called safari is unique in that there is no other writing that will take the reader from the front of the Bible to the back – every chapter, almost every verse. As believers, we are promised all spiritual blessings in the Lord Jesus Christ in the Heavens; yet most self-professing believers live in abject spiritual poverty. Naturally, the question arises: why? – Well, the Lord has a very adequate answer to that for His children who take the Word of God seriously; and we're going to get that answer in the Book of Joshua. So, if you'll open your Bible to chapter one of this book and ask the Holy Spirit to be gracious to our dull hearing and hardened hearts; perhaps it will be that the Lord will open our eyes and ears of understanding and lift us up. We all really need to ask for God's grace and mercy now.

In our last report, we witnessed the death of and funeral for Moses; and many people think the last part of Deuteronomy was written by Joshua. While we don't know for certain, there is evidence of that. The very first word of the Book of Joshua is not "now" – it's "and." The word "and" is a very interesting word because the moment the word "and" is uttered, the speaker is obligated to keep talking. "And" is a conjunctive of something before with something after. It is highly likely this first chapter connects directly with the last chapter of Deuteronomy judging by that clue. The death and burial of Moses was probably recorded by Joshua. This is not an essential fact, though; and, as we said in our last report, it would have also been just as easy for Moses to write out his own requiem – as many people do. Some people make the decision about what takes place around them pre-mortem; so, Moses could have done it that way. Personally, I think the view that Joshua wrote the last part of the last chapter of Deuteronomy is the most satisfactory....

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1 And after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

~ Joshua was Moses' successor. He was mentioned about nine times in Deuteronomy. We first saw him lead the army to fight the Amalekites; and he was also one of the two spies – with Caleb – who brought back a correct report. If you grab a good concordance and look Joshua's history up, it will be a very profitable study before you continue; because you will be amazed at how prominent Joshua has already been – even though he has been silently in the background. If you put all of his information together, it will seem quite natural Joshua was selected by God to succeed Moses. You will also notice that Joshua was a very ordinary individual; there was nothing peculiar or unusual about him. He was just a normal and natural leader.

The Talmud states Joshua wrote all except for the last five verses of this book, which are purported to have been written by Phineas. Of course, this book closes with the death of Joshua; and we are presented with the same problem at the end of this book as we had at the close of Deuteronomy. It seems to be reasonable that Phineas did, in fact, author the last five verses, or so, of Joshua. As we know, these books were not separate volumes at this time; rather, they were one large scroll that was continually compiled and added onto. An unintentional division could have easily happened. Even so, we consider the Bible inspired and inerrant; so, what we have is the way we should have it. I typically don't like to get bogged down in that type of detail, because we are after the spiritual aspect on this safari - not the intellectual or doctrinal; but there are many men who have outlined the chapters and books of the Bible, and I make this preliminary statement only to acclimate you with some basic factual history. Many people want to make a big deal out of all of this, but I just don't see it as critically important.

“Joshua” means “Jehovah is salvation” – the same word in the New Testament is “Jesus.” We discover that in Hebrews chapter four verse

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eight. Joshua was born a slave in Egypt and would have been around forty years old at the time of the Exodus. We saw Joshua went with Moses into the tabernacle when God appeared to them. I'm sure that was part of the preparation for taking Moses' place. It seems Moses was twice as old as Joshua; with Moses being eighty years old when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt. Joshua will not make it to the same age as Moses, though; and will die a decade short of Moses; who was one hundred twenty years old when he passed away.

Joshua was a man of prayer, courage, dependence upon God, a man of faith, leadership, enthusiasm and fidelity. Joshua is a type of Christ; both in name and in works. Dr. Blackwood says the following "... Joshua shows that a man of average ability may become a leader in the church. He received his call not in flaming letters across the sky, but from an old man, who knew God and knew Joshua, and saw that he was fitted by God to be a leader." Quite frankly, Joshua was a very remarkable man. This book of Joshua completes the redemption out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. Our salvation is more than redemption from hell; it is our redemption INTO Heaven. Justification means more than our subtraction of sins; it means the addition of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 4:25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification ~

If the second book of the Bible can be called Exodus – then this book could be called "Isodus." That's a term made up by Dr. J Vernon McGee – but it would be a good title, nonetheless. The overall theme of this book is "possession." One interpretation of the Promised Land is that it is a type of Heaven; and Joshua led the children of Israel into said Heaven – the land of milk of honey. Well, most credible fundamental conservative scholars have abandoned that correlation. Many of our older hymns give that impression, too; and it's a nice sounding sentiment, but doesn't seem to be accurate. I feel the Promised Land represents a state of being believers are brought into in this world. See, when Israel gets into the Promised Land, there are

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battles to be fought. Conflict and conquest were constants throughout Israel's tenure in the land. They were continually fighting to stay in control of the land and protect from invasion. That just isn't true of Heaven, friends – to be sure. In Heaven there will be no conflict and there certainly won't be any conquest. Heaven is a gift of the grace of God; you and I have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in the Heavens. That's where the comparison of the book of Joshua in the Old Testament is equated to the book of Ephesians in the New Testament. This is prophetic for Israel in the future as they will come into great blessings; and it is also typical of the church. You and I can live in the wilderness, or we can enter into and occupy the spiritual land promised to us – it's totally up to us. We can only enter the land through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, though - crossing over Jordan. There is no other way....

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

~ We were told how Moses was not essential for leading Israel into the land. Moses was the lawgiver, but the law can never save us. The law is never a redeemer; it is only a revealer which shows we have all fallen short of the glory of God and that we are sinners who desperately need a Savior. Moses, of course, could not lead them into the land due to his own failures. The problem was not with the law; the problem was with Moses – just as the problem is solely with US today. Only Joshua could possibly lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land.

The land was promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and it is now physically given to Israel. Ownership is unconditional. Sustained occupancy is conditional upon obedience to God's laws and precepts. God's promise is being fulfilled. God reaffirmed His promise again and again in Genesis. Then, we saw the Palestinian Covenant in Deuteronomy, in which God also declared the land an everlasting possession of Israel's. However, their enjoyment of it and their tenure in it certainly is conditional, as we

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previously discovered in Deuteronomy, the book on love and obedience to God....

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

~ All spiritual blessings in the Heavens is our promise today in the New Testament. The church is not promised a physical land. We are strangers and pilgrims on this earth. I have to wonder how many Christians are satisfied with and truly enjoy spiritual blessings today? Most seem to think that their material possessions down here are blessings; but they are spiritually bankrupt. Very few Christians enjoy their spiritual blessings – mainly because they are utterly blinded by material stuff in covetousness. When any form of disobedience is our focus, we will never lay hold of spiritual blessings, friends.

Israel never laid hold of the full potential of their claim to the land, either. Many Christians die in the same condition. They simply refuse to lay hold of their spiritual blessings. Thank the good Lord that this book of the Bible is going to tell us how to lay hold of those possessions. There is only one way. In Ephesians, the conflict that exists in this connection today is revealed. We are instructed to put on the whole armor of God because we have an enemy that hates us; and that enemy wants to rob and steal everything you have ever learned about the Lord Jesus Christ - and then kill you. We wrestle not against flesh and blood; ours is a spiritual enemy, of course – principalities, powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age. Spiritual wickedness abounds in high places. If you want the victory, you'll be wearing the whole armor of God – or, my friends, you will NEVER – NEVER – NEVER see a victory. When we do win, the Lord Jesus gets the victory and the glory, and we reap the spiritual fruit in blessings. Of course, God gave Israel every victory they ever won; and what a perfect paradox. All I know is that both are absolutely true. Only by faith will we enter in and take possession of these righteous truths....

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4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

~ If you have a good Bible with a map you will see the land that the children of Israel possessed. What it doesn't show is the full extent of the geographical designation. Our maps typically only indicate the position of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Not a single tribe ever expanded out beyond very limited borders. As we have seen before, God designated three hundred thousand square miles, but the nation Israel never occupied more than about ten percent of that – roughly thirty thousand square miles. The best Israel ever did wasn't very well at all. But let's not be too hard on Israel - because for us today, candidly, I think that's MUCH more than the average Christian is able to lay hold of in their own life concerning spiritual possessions....

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

~ This is a great encouragement to me – and it was a great encouragement to Joshua; and Joshua needed that encouragement from the Lord Himself. This is a wonderful verse to lay hold of. God isn't going to desert you and leave you with no portion. If we will properly, correctly and completely attempt to understand God's laws and precepts in love and obedience to Him by studying His Word, He will bring us through our battle – every time. When we aren't trusting Him, we will lose every time. Those are our promises. God was with Moses all the way – and God will be with YOU all the way, too. God says be strong and of good courage....

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

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7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

~ God appeared to Moses and “this book of the law” is something entirely brand new. There was no written Scripture of any kind until Moses wrote it down for them. That's where the canons of Scripture began. Remember, God spoke to Moses face to Face, and Moses started writing. These people are no longer to be led by dreams and visions – but by the Word of God. Friends, this is CRITICAL to understand. God supplied them with all they needed to know in order to enter the Promised Land. They are commanded to NOT depart from the written word. They are to meditate on it, and they are to observe to do it....

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

~ Well, our safari ends this report with Joshua being instructed to take the Word of God in one hand, and a sword in the other. Joshua is told to move out by faith and be strong and courageous. That's the same command you and I have; we are to move out and be strong for the Lord our God. If we are going to do that, we are going to have to have the Word of God in our hands. Our “sword” is the sword of the spirit – and that is Holy Writ. This is all about the Word of God, friends – every inch of this book called the Bible is an affirmation of Itself. God commands us to step out in faith today. I hope you're praying for this poor Bible teacher to do some stepping out. Also, pray for yourself that YOU might step out with me and help take the

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entire Word of God to the entire world in the sound doctrine of the apostles. We need to move in and take possession of our own spirituality. We're pilgrims and strangers in enemy territory in this world, my beloved. I hope you will consider all of this carefully and correctly today ~



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