

The Faithfulness of Joshua and the Faithfulness of the Lord

Good morning brothers and sisters, I have an initial opening verse, and then I will open the time with prayer.

Joshua 24:29-31, "It came about after all these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being one hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of Mount Gaash. Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the LORD which He had done for Israel."

Lord, thank You for the testimony of Your people throughout the ages. Thank You for the testimony of Joshua. Lord, thank You that this does not need to be the testimony of the past. Lord, thank You that You call each of us to be Joshuas today. Lord, I ask that You just anoint the time, both me and my brother Ryan. Lord, would You just fill us with Your Spirit during this time. In Your name. Amen.

Introduction

When I was asked to share a couple of months back, the life of Joshua had already been on my heart for a while. What really was on my heart was these final verses at the end of Joshua's life. Joshua was 110 and he had lived a long life. As I reread Exodus and Joshua, I found that Joshua's life could be broken up into three stages of his life, and Joshua was faithful to the Lord throughout all three of them. As I was thinking and meditating, I thought my title and the focus would be "Joshua was faithful to the Lord." But the more I read his story, and the more I read what the Lord had done, I realized that it was the Lord who was faithful to Joshua, and that is what I want to focus on this morning. In going through a couple of sections of Joshua's life, there are some cool lessons that I learned, and I am hoping to be able to appropriately relay these lessons to you, and they will be a blessing to the Lord.

As I said, Joshua's life is kind of broken up into three sections. The Lord used Joshua in very different and unexpected ways in all three sections of his life. Just to put something in the back of your mind, I have broken it up into "Joshua as a young man," "Joshua during the 40 years in the wilderness," and then "Joshua when he entered the promised land to capture and conquer."

Joshua as a Young Man

I apologize in advance; there are lots of verses and lots of references. But I found that if I read the verses and I let the Lord and the living Word speak, then I do not need to use my earthly words because the Lord has already done the speaking for me.

The Importance of Mentorship in Faith

Exodus 17:8-10: "Then the Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight Amalek. Tomorrow I

will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand. So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.”

I am sure you are all very familiar with the story, and I am sure you all remember that it was Moses who had to raise his hands for Joshua to be victorious. Now this is what spoke to me during this time. Joshua was a young man during this time, maybe 20 to 30 years old. While it is unclear his exact age, he is considered a young man, and during this young man's stage, he does not yet have this relationship with the Lord nor does he quite have the faith within to win in battle. However, Moses DID have that faith in the Lord. And Joshua, as a young man, could look to Moses and say, “I see Moses' faith, but I do not have that faith. However, I want that faith, and I will trust Moses and I will trust the Lord. In trusting the Lord, Joshua was able to have faith as well, which is just such a beautiful thing. It is such a reminder to us today.

Joshua is only Joshua because of Moses. I know that I for one want to think of myself as a Joshua, but am I neglecting Joshua if I am Moses? Am I neglecting sharing the Word of the Lord with those younger than me? Am I investing in the next generation? Or am I trying to be Joshua and not even thinking about investing?

The Dual Responsibility of Faith

As we go into the next portion of the scripture, this is the other beauty of it.

Exodus 17: 13-14: “So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword. Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven.’”

In the same situation, Joshua heard the voice of the Lord through Moses. It is such a wonderful picture of Joshua as a young man, choosing to listen to Moses. There are two parts here that I found. There is the responsibility of Moses. Maybe some of the older saints, who have experience and faith of their own, it is our responsibility to show that faith to the next generation. Then like Joshua, as a young man, it is our responsibility to listen. You need both things in order for the Lord to be revealed and the Lord to be glorified.

The Call to Faithfulness in Youth

There is another lesson to be learned from Joshua's youth. Exodus 33:7-9-11: “Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the “tent of meeting.” Anyone inquiring of the Lord would go to the tent of meeting outside the camp. And whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood at the entrances to their tents, watching Moses until he entered the tent. As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke to Moses. Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to their tent. The Lord would

speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide, Joshua, son of Nun did not leave the tent.”

The point here is that Joshua did not waste his time as a youth. It is so easy for me, and it is so easy for each of us to dwell in our own tents and look afar at the Lord doing a great work “over there”. Meanwhile I am invested in my own tent, caring about my own career, my own family, my own future, my own social status, all these things. It is so easy to get bogged down because there are so many things in our own tent. But praise God, that Joshua, a young man, did not leave the tent of the Lord. It is a good reminder to me and every one of us who are called to the tent of the Lord. We all have access, which is a beautiful, wonderful thing. Are we using it? Are we wasting our youth? Am I wasting my youth? But praise God that Joshua was faithful to the Lord, and praise God that God was faithful to Joshua.

Joshua During the 40 Years in the Wilderness

The Value of Faithfulness in Our Prime

Moving on to the time that I call Joshua a “middle-aged man.” Specifically, Joshua is now in his prime. This was when he and Caleb went to spy out the land. This is right after ten of the twelve spies grumbled and made a false statement, a false report that the Promise Land was dangerous; we cannot do it.

Numbers 14:5-9: “Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in the presence of all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel. And Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh [Jafana], of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, ‘The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection is gone from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them.’”

When I was reading this, Joshua was roughly in his early 40’s at the time. That should be Joshua’s prime. When I was a kid, that is how I used to think of Joshua entering the promised land. Joshua was in his prime, and he was a victor over everything he set his heart against, which is beautiful and wonderful. But the Lord did not use Joshua in his prime to enter the Promise Land. We all know the story that Israel sinned against the Lord, and because of that they had to wander the desert for 40 years.

In reading this, I was thinking, Joshua wasted his prime. That is to say, in man's eyes, Joshua wasted his prime. Yet he learned two things during this time. He learned that the Lord delights in us, which is powerful and is so important. Joshua was not bitter towards the Lord, nor was he bitter towards what the Lord had promised them or what the Lord had given him. He was faithful, and He continued to hold fast in his faith.

Another thing that happened was that he experienced a lot of things when the Israelites wandered the desert. Although there are 40 years’ worth of stories I will just

name a few. Korah's Rebellion, the Sin of Peor, the Bronze Serpent, and Joshua was there for all of them. He may not necessarily have been mentioned, but he references them later in the Scriptures. We know that he was alive when they entered the desert, and he was alive when they left the desert; so logically he was there and experienced it.

The picture I saw here was that sometimes, and more often than not, the Lord uses our prime to support and benefit others. However, it is so easy to be caught up in our own things. How often do we pray “Lord, this is my prime, I am fresh. I feel like I have a good relationship with You, and I want to be used. I want to be a vessel for You, and I want to do these great things.” Yet the Lord may quietly put in our hearts: “Have you reached out to your brother or sister? Have you reached out to the saints? Have you focused on your own prime, your own success, and your own good deeds? Have you paused to reach out to those around you?” I know I am guilty of it, and I am sure we are all guilty of it. But the Lord used Joshua's prime to be there for others. It is such a testimony of Joshua's faithfulness to the Lord not to be bitter, not to be disdainful of what the Lord has done, but instead to be faithful and continue serving him these 40 years.

The True Measure of Success: Being Full of the Spirit

Numbers 27:15-18: “Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, ‘May the Lord, the God of the spirits of humanity, anoint a man over the congregation, who will go out and come in before them, and lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep that have no shepherd.’ So, the Lord said to Moses, ‘Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hands on him.’”

During the peak of Joshua's life, his best years, 40 years of what would have been the best captain, the best military leader, he did not conquer anything! He did not do any great deeds; he did not topple the walls of Jericho. But it says here it describes Joshua as “a man in whom is the Spirit.” Is that our focus? Is that my focus? Is that each of our focuses in the prime of life? Are we focused on victories? Are we focused on our worldly success? Are we focused on our religious success or are we being full of the Spirit? That is what the Lord calls us to. And the blessing and the wonderful thing of it is that if we have 40 years of prime, and we do not conquer anything, we are no one special, but we are full of the Spirit, and not a moment is wasted. This has become my prayer, and I hope it will be all of our prayers. Are we focused on being full of the Spirit? Are we focused on what the Lord has for us? Are we focused on the Lord using our prime days? When I say prime days, I mean good days, walking with the Lord, with a good, strong relationship with Him and protecting ourselves from sin; all these things. Are we using it? Are we taking advantage of it? The Lord gives us prime to support those who are not at their prime. It is so easy for me to end my night by saying, “Thank You, Lord that You have blessed me, You have done so many wonderful things for me;” and that's it. But the Lord only makes you strong so that you can support those who are weak. May we all remember that. May the Lord remind us to be full of His Spirit.

Joshua in the Promised Land

Embracing Heavenly Confidence

The last section is Joshua in the promised land. At this point in Joshua's life he is an older man. Joshua is an older man who has passed his prime, at least in man's eyes. He must be thinking, "Man, that is it, I do not have my youthful strength; I do not have my youthful fervor nor my youthful energy. When I say youthful, I do not really mean physically; I mean spiritually. As a personally example, I have sometimes thought "Man, the Lord did wonderful things at the 2022 CFC conference, and that was strong, but now it is 2025, and it is rough." But the Lord meets Joshua during this stage of his life.

Joshua, 1:1-11: "Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, "Moses My servant is dead; so now arise, cross the Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. Every place on which the sole of your footsteps, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory. No one will be able to oppose you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not desert you nor abandon you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the Law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may achieve success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will achieve success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be terrified nor dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

As we all know, when the Lord says something, it is because the people hearing it are not thinking about it and are not feeling it. And here is Joshua, past his prime, in his potentially early eighties, and the Lord is encouraging him because Joshua has run out of himself. I believe that Joshua, similarly to Moses, had run out of his physical confidence, and he had run out of his earthly confidence in himself: "Lord, I am eighty, I am past my prime. I cannot do it anymore." But the Lord met Joshua and said, "You have come to the end of your physical confidence, now I can fill you with my heavenly confidence." It is something that we all need to meet, and it is something that we all need to come to, because we all have our earthly confidence. I have confidence in the strength of my youth and my success and all these things, but the Lord calls us to run out of our earthly confidence and to be filled with his heavenly confidence.

Praise God that Joshua took hold of that and embraced in faith that the Lord would give him the victory all the same. When we let go of our earthly confidence, the Lord has room to fill us with his heavenly confidence and trust in him. And once we have been emptied of our earthly confidence, the Lord's encouragement to Joshua is the same as

our encouragement today—be strong and courageous; He has won the victory. Therefore, we do not need to be confident in our earthly selves because the Lord has won the victory, and he will fill us with his confidence.

Setting Reminders of God's Blessings

There was another victory when they crossed over to the Jordan. The Lord had performed the same wonderful miracle that he had when the Israelites exited Egypt. This is right after that.

Joshua 4:21-24: “He said to the Israelites, ‘In the future when your descendants ask their parents, What do these stones mean?’ Tell them, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan on dry land.’ Or the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan as he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed. He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God.”

We see two wonderful things here. Or I see two, and I am hoping that the Lord will encourage all of us in the same way. Joshua knew to set the stones as a reminder, which is so beautiful and so wonderful—and so easy to forget. Have we experienced this crossing of the Jordan, big or small? Has the Lord blessed you? Has the Lord blessed, provided for you, saved you, rescued you and healed you? Has the Lord done something wonderful in your life? Have you set the stones up? I know I am guilty of this. I know I have not. Many times, I cross over the Jordan and I am like, “Yep, thank You, Lord. This is between You and me, and that is it. But the Lord does not do works in our lives for our benefit alone. He does works in our lives to edify the saints and to edify the youth and to edify the next generation and edify the ones older and younger than you are. Do we remember to set these stones as a reminder? Or are we taking it for granted? Are we forgetting it?

The Unchanging God Through Generations

Another thing we see, and it goes back to Joshua, past his prime, and he must have been pretty nervous. Here is Joshua again, past his prime, preparing to enter the Promise Land, but he needs to cross the Jordan. And the Lord performed the same miracle when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea out of Egypt. Praise God for that! The God who brought the Israelites out of Egypt is the same God who brought them over the Jordan, and in the same way in our lives going back to the 2022 CFC experience example, the God who saved you when you were young, the God who blessed you, provided for you, healed you, captured your heart, He is the same God today! The God of yesterday is the God of today. Oftentimes, I know, in my life, many, many times, the Lord performs the same miracle over and over and over again to remind us constantly, that He is the same. Maybe you are 40 years different, and you are past your prime. You may not have the same walk you had when you were younger, but He is the same. The Lord was able to remind Joshua of that.

The Importance of Returning Blessings to the Lord

Joshua 6:16, 18-19: This is when they were conquering Jericho. Verse 16, “The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, ‘Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!’”

Verse 18-19, “But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them. Otherwise you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble upon it. All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury.”

We know the story. A certain Israelite did not do what the Lord had commanded. He took some of the treasure, which I have come to understand, he took some of the blessings and hid them in his own tent. He kept them for himself and stored up his own riches. We know what happened. I will not go into the story, but they tried to conquer a city with a couple of men in it, and they lost.

The reminder is this: have we returned the blessings of the Lord? The love of the Lord, which He has given us, have we returned it to His treasury? And I am the first one to be guilty of it. The Lord blesses me financially, and my first thought is, I am blessed financially; I can depend on myself now. Or the Lord has blessed me with a free day, whatever. And I am thinking, “Thank You for blessing me. Now I am going to use it for myself. I am going to waste it; I am not going to give that time back to the Lord.”

The Lord calls us, the Lord blesses us. The Lord gives us all these physical things of the world, but he asks that we return them to his treasury. Are we returning them? Are we taking the blessings of the Lord and storing them for ourselves? Are we taking the blessing of time, of family, of money, of physical resources for ourselves? They are blessings from the Lord, and they are wonderful things. They are not bad things, but the Lord calls us to return them.

We see a picture of what happens when we take what the Lord has given us and store them for ourselves. We begin to trust in ourselves, trust in our chariots, trust in our horses. The Lord, by the grace of God, is very quick to remind us that we are only strong in what He gives us strength in. The blessings that He gives us are meant to be returned.

As a reminder for each of us today, have we committed the blessings back to him? Have we been blessed? Have we had a great victory? Has the Lord done a wonderful victory in our lives? Has He given us wonderful things? If so, have we committed them back to the Lord? May we all do so!

Conclusion

Joshua 24:14-15: This is when Joshua was on his deathbed. “Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods of your ancestors, who worshipped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the

gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Then back to Joshua 24:31: “Israel served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had experienced everything the Lord had done for Israel.”

Brothers and sisters, there is a point in our Christian lives; there is a purpose. We are not called to live a portion of our lives and then waste the rest. Joshua was faithful to the Lord throughout his whole life, all 110 years of it. He was faithful as a young man, he was faithful in his prime, and he was faithful as an old man. “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” And the Lord was faithful to Joshua. We are not called to be faithful to Him, to serve Him for no purpose. The Lord has a purpose for His kingdom. The Lord has a purpose for the next generation. The Lord has a purpose for the older generation, and for all of us. Joshua was faithful, and the Lord was faithful to Joshua.

I just want to remind each of us, as my prayer goes back to the Lord, “Lord, we need to be faithful.” Would we be faithful? Because the Lord will be faithful to us.

Lord, thank You for these many, many wonderful pictures and stories of faith found in Joshua. Lord, thank You that this is not something in the past that cannot happen today. Lord, thank You that You are the same God who brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Lord, thank You that You are the same God who allowed the Israelites to cross the Jordan. Thank You that You are the same God who loves us today. Thank You that You love us. Thank You that You call us to be faithful. Lord, I ask that in each of these situations we would commit the wonderful things that You have done to us back to You that we may have faith in You and serve You. Amen.

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