



Joshua fought the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho ... And the Walls Came a-tumbling Down

A few weeks ago, while before the LORD in prayer concerning this ministry, I asked my Heavenly Father *“What should this letter be about?”* Without any hesitation the LORD simply said, *“Joshua.”* The answer came just that clear, quick, and that short. As I continued in prayer, in my thoughts, I started asking myself, *“What is there to Joshua? We all know that he was victorious over Jericho. Boy, that doesn’t seem like much to write about.”* That is until I opened my spirit, mind, and vessel to the **Holy Spirit’s** leading into God’s Word.

There is more to this man called *Joshua* than is written in the Book of *Joshua*. For us to better know and understand the man in the Book titled *Joshua*, we need to first know and understand the man before the Book, or, before he crossed the Jordan River. Once we know and understand this man, we can better understand why the Book of *Joshua* is so **relevant to us** and our lives today.

Before going any further, I want to ask you a question. This simple question has been asked so many times, *“Are the teachings of the Law and the Old Testament relevant to the Church living under New Testament GRACE?”*

In examining the relevance of the Old Testament of God’s Word in today’s world, we should first look at our spiritual heritage. There we see the Love and Compassion our Father showed our forefathers and the patience He had with them as they walked in fear, weakness, and sin. We need to TRUST Him because we can see His Love for His children. We see it in both the Old and New Testament.

“Father, I ask you to use me to correctly convey and express Your thoughts and teachings concerning Your Word and the man that You chose to lead Your covenant children into the fulfillment of Your promise to Abraham, in the name of your Son Jesus, Amen.”

I wrote what I prayed to my Father because I want you to feel a sense of how important *Joshua* was to the Kingdom of God, and what an example he should be to us, in today’s hectic life and shifting world values. **God has not changed;** only the world around us has changed, sliding down hill. I love the verse that *James*, the brother of Jesus, wrote in chapter 1, verse 17, *“There is NO shadow of turning [in the Father of Lights].”* *“Thank you Father, for being the Rock on which we stand!”*

Disclaimer: Joshua’s story spans six books in the Bible and there is not enough space to connect all of the dots. However, herein is *Joshua’s* story, *a faithful steward, a gentle giant* [in that he was strong in character and humble before the LORD], *and a loving servant of God!*

As you read, watch how God, again, weaves His tapestry of humanity to accomplish His goals of Love and Salvation!

BACKGROUND: *Joshua* was born in Egypt during the captivity of the Israelites, probably about the same age as Caleb. Both young men were leaders of their families [tribes] and therefore were over the age of twenty. To be leader of his family meant that Joshua had to excel above his peers by showing qualities of wisdom, strength, leadership, boldness, and godliness. *“And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the Spirit of Wisdom,”* Deuteronomy 34:9(A).

(In broad round numbers, a family leader would be chosen from approximately 40,000 men.)

NAME GAME: (This paragraph is a little dry reading, but hopefully will clear up the “Name Game” issue of the Bible.) As with many names in our English Bibles, either the spelling, or the names themselves, can be confusing because they change within the text, are literally changed by God or by man, or vary through translations. Joshua is a prime example. You’ll find him called “Osea,” “Oshea,” “Hosea,” “Hoshea,” “Yahweh,” “Yeshua,” “Joshua,” “Jehoshua,” “The Son of Nun,” and even “Yeshua, the son of Nun” to distinguish him from “Yeshua, the Christ.” [Yeshua is also Yahweh.] Since Yahweh is Hebrew for “salvation” and was later translated as “Jesus.” In modern Greek, Joshua is called “Jehovah is salvation,” for the descendants of Israel [Jacob], because he led them into the Promised Land. Don’t let the names confuse you.

You may also read that Joshua was of the tribe of *Leah, Ephraimites, Josephites, or Manassites*. Not to be misled, they are all true for they are his lineage tribal names. *The point is that Joshua’s blood line runs from Abram through Ephraim to Joshua.* In brief, and in an effort to clear it up a little, here is a partial list of Joshua’s ancestors: *Jacob* (Israel), *Leah, Ephraim, Manasseh, Ammihud, Elishama, and Nun* (also Non).

FIRST APPEARANCE: Joshua first appears in Exodus 17. Keep in mind, the Israelites had been slaves and were not a fighting people with knowledge of warfare tactics and they were not heavily armed. They were fresh out of Egypt and probably had few weapons among them. They had never drilled in warfare, they probably had little strategy for battle, and they had never been in a skirmish. When the Egyptian army stormed after them, the Israelites saw them hot on their trail and they were filled with fear of imminent death knowing they could not defeat the Egyptians in battle.

The Israelites had just come out of Egypt by crossing the Red Sea on dry ground. They rejoiced over the power of God, through Moses. They had seen the *miracle of the bitter water made sweet, received “Bread from Heaven,” drank water from the Rock,* but then they fell under the attack by Amalek, Esau’s grandson.

The Amalekites were one the nomadic tribes of the Sinai area. With Egypt to the south and Cannanites to the north. The Amalekites knew how to fight, they had good weapons, and they were battle trained and experienced. *“Moses said unto JOSHUA, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek ... Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek ... Joshua discomfited [whipped] Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword,” Exodus 17:9-10,13.* No doubt, fear again gripped the hearts of the Israelites before going into battle. They had seen how Moses was anointed and led by God and they followed his commands and the commands of their new incumbent

general, Joshua. However, they did not know Joshua had a **warrior's heart**. Joshua knew God would defeat their enemy, so he was **fearless**. He was not **foolish**, he knew Moses would be on top of the hill with the **Rod of God** in his hand. He knew where his help would come from. He was not only fearless, but he was **faithful**.

As good as Joshua was as a tribal and military leader, it is clear that God fought the battle, Joshua was His servant. After Joshua’s victory over Amalek, the LORD told Moses, *“Write this for a memorial in a book, AND REHEARSE IT IN THE EARS OF JOSHUA,” Exodus 17:14.*

THE TWELVE SPIES: Next we see the Twelve Spies, as recorded in the Book of Numbers, one spy from each of the Twelve Tribes were dispatched by Moses to scout out the Land of Canaan for **40 days** as a future home for the Israelite people, who stayed in the wilderness. (**Numbers 13:1-33**) God had promised Abraham there would be Land for the nation that would come from his son, Isaac. The land of Canaan, which the spies were to explore, was that same Promised Land. Moses asked for *an assessment of the geographical features of the land, the strength and numbers of the population, the agricultural potential and actual performance of the land, civic organizations* (whether their cities were like camps or strongholds), *and forestry conditions*. He also asked them to be positive in their outlook and to return with samples of local produce. *“The LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ‘Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.’ And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel,” Numbers 13:1-3. “Of the tribe of Ephraim, Oshea, the son of Nun,” Numbers 13:8.*

“... Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua. And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, ‘Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land.’ Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes,” Numbers 13:16-20.

GRAPES AND HONEY: We know the story, when the spies returned to camp, ten of the spies reported of the wealth of the land, but the inhabitants were big and mighty in comparison to them. *Fear of the reported giants had, again, won over faith in God.* The ten spies convinced two million Israelites they could not win, rather than believe the truthful reports of Joshua and Caleb. The two faithful leaders pleaded with the congregation and even **rent** their

cloths in despair.

Just as the two million picked up stones to kill Joshua, Caleb, Aaron, and Moses, the **Glory of the LORD** appeared in the Tabernacle before them. *“All the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the Tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel,”* Numbers 14:10.

GOD’S ANGER AND FAITHFULNESS: It is at this point that seven things happened: (1) the Israelites had disobeyed God ten times. God told Moses that everyone over the age of 20 will die in the wilderness without seeing the Promised Land; (2) the congregation will wander in the wilderness one year [40 years] for every day the spies were in Canaan [40 days]; (3) only Joshua and Caleb would cross over; (4) again, the Israelites disobeyed God when Moses told them of their fate and they attempted to take the land by force [without God’s blessing], only to end up defeated; (5) Moses changes Joshua’s name. [Numbers 13:16]; (6) Moses confessed he would not go over into the Promised Land because of his sin; and (7) God instructed Moses to teach Joshua for he will lead the nation. *“Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, ‘Thou also shalt not go in thither. But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it,’”* Deuteronomy 1:37-38. This is when Joshua became Moses’ assistant, confidant, right-hand man, companion, minister, and protégé.

40 YEAR HIKE: The sins of the Israelites, their murmuring and their defiance against God, and His leaders is why they wandered in the desert until everyone of that generation died by disease, wars, swallowed up by the Earth, and old age. *All except those under the age of 20, plus Joshua, and Caleb.* Joshua developed and grew in the Power and Spirit of his God while serving Moses. Moses saw something special in Joshua, to select Joshua to lead the battle against the Amalekites. After the victory, Moses knew the strength of Joshua’s character and servitude. There had to be more to their relationship that bound them to each other and to the LORD than what the Bible shares with us.

A SERVANT’S HEART: *“And Moses rose up, and his minister JOSHUA: and Moses went up into the mount of God,”* Exodus 24:13. Joshua is called Moses’ servant. *One who desires to be a servant is one who is willing to be abased below his mentor.* Jesus said that *the greatest one in the Kingdom is to be the servant of all.* Joshua could have loudly proclaimed HIS victory over the Amalekites and demanded leadership. He could have entered into camp after his victory and tribal leadership to take over the nation. He had chosen handpicked men to fight. This would have been his core group of support for taking power into his hands. A servant does not even think of these things. *As a servant, Joshua quietly came from the battle back to camp as a victor, but stayed as a servant.*

MOUNT SINAI: *“Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. The Glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the Glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights,”* Ex 24:15-18.

What glories were revealed to Joshua’s soul before and after battle? *A servant spends time with the true master.* The record seems to indicate Moses ascended up the mount and into the cloud alone, but there was someone with him. *Joshua went up the mount with Moses and came down with him,* thus, Joshua was on the mount as long as Moses was on the mount. Only God knows if he accompanied Moses into the Glory cloud.

LAW GIVEN: *“And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. And when JOSHUA heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, ‘There is a noise of war in the camp.’ And [Moses] said, ‘It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear,’”* Ex 32:15-18.

Look who is with Moses when he returns, Joshua. He was there the full forty days. I believe he basked in the Glory of God as Moses received the Law. He probably served Moses there, but he tasted deeply of the Glory of the LORD. *The servant’s heart is humble, obedient, and quiet.* Joshua was all of these.

A LOVER OF GOD’S HEART: *“And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the Congregation. And it came to pass, that everyone which sought the LORD went out unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation, which was without the camp. And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the Tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the Tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshiped, every man in his tent door. And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant JOSHUA, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.”* Exodus 33:7-11

Now I have read this particular passage many times and I never noticed that phrase. I was struck by it. **Joshua had**

just come down from the mountain. When he was in the Tabernacle with Moses, he had drunk deeply of the Spirit of God and evidently loved what he tasted because **he would not leave the Tabernacle** when Moses departed.

I believe he was a lover of God at this point, **Joshua was a follower of God** in service to God's servant, Moses. All the people would stand far off at the doors of their tent, but not Joshua, he went right down to the altar, into the presence of his God. Joshua knew God loved his soul and it made him into a lover of God. The presence of God to Joshua made all that the world had to offer dark. His eyes had seen the Glory of the LORD and the tents of this world could not compare. **Joshua was attracted [drawn] to the Spirit of God!** The Tabernacle was the place where he wanted to be.

As Moses' death drew near, Joshua was chosen to be his successor. The Pentateuch ends with the Israelites on the verge of crossing the Jordan into the land of Canaan. The first book of the Prophets, which is named after Joshua, picks up where the Torah left off. Immediately, Joshua demonstrates a duality within his character that was missing from Moses. While Moses was primarily a spiritual leader, who acted as an intermediary between God and the Israelites, Joshua was a capable military commander as well as a religious leader. By capturing the city of Jericho, and, eventually, the rest of the land of Canaan, Joshua showed that his leadership was different from Moses. Indeed, his new role reflected the new reality that the Israelites encountered in their new homeland: In the desert, where their needs were provided for by God in a steady flow of miracles, a purely spiritual leader was sufficient. Now, with their destiny in their own hands, the Israelites needed a more practical, physically capable leader. There were no more free lunches falling from the sky or pools of fresh water flowing from a rock, they had to provide their own food, water, and clothing. **"Moses had laid his hands upon [Joshua]: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses," Deuteronomy 34:9.**

The Sixth Book of Moses - The Book of Joshua in its entirety is a prophecy of the spiritual conquest over sin through Jesus the Messiah. The name Joshua is formed from the Hebrew root word for "salvation." In **Nehemiah 8:17**, Joshua is written as Yeshua, the name for Jesus. Indeed, the Book of Joshua in the Greek Old Testament is entitled Jesus! Both Joshua and Jesus mean the same - **"The Lord saves."** Moses saved the Israelites from slavery. Joshua saved the nation from the curse of the sins in the desert and into freedom in the Promised Land. **The Book of Joshua marks the fulfillment of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham.** God fulfilled His covenant with Joshua, with Moses, and with Abraham by leading the remnant of Israelites into their Promised Land. **God fulfilled His Covenant with Jesus** by providing **freedom** for His Children from sin into

Eternal Life through acceptance of Jesus the Christ as LORD and Savior.

Joshua served the LORD with undoubting faith. He sought the LORD and listened to His Voice. He would stay in the presence of the LORD, just because he could.

Is the Old Testament relevant for today? We have looked at the wonderful Tapestry the Father wove over generations in the lives of John the Baptist, Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, and others, to reach the final pinnacle of blessings and Covenant Promises fulfilled. ALL for His Children, You and Me!

What would our tomorrows look like if we stayed before the LORD as Joshua did? What battle would we be victors over with the LORD as our Commander-in-Chief in total control? Imagine the blessings we would walk in if we walked in the wisdom of God, as Joshua knew. **God our Father has woven His Tapestry in your life** to bring you to this point - TODAY! He has a work for you to do for Him, for the Kingdom. **You are special**, you are a chosen child of the Father of all creation. What is His calling for you? **Moses and Joshua did not retire**, they worked until God called them home. What work is God waiting for you to finish? **"The Gifts and Calling of God are without repentance ... O the depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God [our Heavenly Father]," Romans 11:29, 33.**

In LOVE, your Covenant Brother in Jesus Christ, our LORD and Savior, of Whose I am, and of Whom I serve,

Phillip Buttram

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BOWIE COUNTY CORRECTIONAL CENTER
Texarkana, Texas

February 11, 2019

Dear Mr. Buttram,

Thank you so very much on behalf of our prison ministry for sending such a large assortment of Gospel materials. I am so pleased with the assortment. It is right on point! This is a blessing, and I am extremely grateful to you for this sampling. May God bless you abundantly.

Honestly, the majority of our inmate Bible requests are for the "large print" format. The average age of our inmates is in the 40 year old range, with far sighted vision. .

I am so grateful to God for your partnership. With my sincerest gratitude and appreciation,
Chaplain - Bowie County Correctional Center