

## LESSON TWO

# JOSHUA

### A. THE SUCCESSOR TO MOSES:

When Moses came to the end of his life, someone had to be selected to take the place of Moses. This would be a very important decision for the successor would be the one to lead Israel across the Jordan to possess Canaan. God's choice was Joshua, which certainly was a logical choice.

#### 1. HIS NAME:

The meaning of the name "Joshua" is "Jehovah is Salvation." It may be written as Hoshea, Oshea, Jehoshua, Jeshua, and in the New Testament, Jesus.

#### 2. HIS FAMILY:

He was the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim (Numbers 13:8,16).

#### 3. HIS EXPERIENCE:

- a. He led Israel in the battle against the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-14).
- b. He had accompanied Moses part way up Mt. Sinai when Moses received the Mosaic Law (Exodus 24:13).
- c. He had assisted Moses and ministered to him following Israel's repentance regarding the sin of the golden calf (Exodus 33:11).
- d. He went as one of the twelve spies representing the tribe of Ephraim. He brought back a good report and along with Caleb urged Israel to occupy the land (Numbers 13:8 & 14:6-9).
- e. He along with Caleb was one of the older men who would be permitted to enter Canaan. He was probably about ninety years of age.

#### 4. HIS CHARACTER:

Throughout his life Joshua always acquitted himself well, demonstrating responsibility and leadership. He assumed the tremendous task of leading the Israelites into Canaan without making a single excuse.

He showed his humility in his service to Moses.

Throughout his life no sins are recorded against him. The record of his life is faultless. In the conquest of Canaan Joshua meets with only one reverse, the defeat of Ai, showing the necessity of absolute obedience to God's commands.

Some of the greatest characteristics possessed by Joshua are faith, obedience, and courage.

### B. JOSHUA - A TYPE OF CHRIST:

Apart from bearing the same name as Jesus and leaving a sinless record, Joshua was a type of Jesus in the following ways:

1. He was the Captain of the armies of the Lord;
2. He followed after Moses, (the Law);
3. He led his people through to victory;
4. He was their advocate;
5. He allotted the portions due the people.

### **C. GOD'S MESSAGE TO JOSHUA: (Joshua 1:1-9).**

After the death of Moses, the Lord appeared to Joshua with a message of encouragement. This is one of the outstanding selections in the book of Joshua. This message may be divided into five main points.

#### **1. STATEMENT CONCERNING THE DEATH OF MOSES:**

Since no man was with Moses when he died, it was necessary for Joshua to be certain that Moses had died. God did not leave Joshua in doubt.

#### **2. THE COVENANT OF ABRAHAM CONFIRMED ONCE AGAIN:**

Here God clearly defined the borders of the Promised Land as had previously been promised to the Patriarchs and to Moses. The borders were to be the wilderness, the River Euphrates in the north, and the Mediterranean Sea on the west.

#### **3. GOD'S MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT:**

God made several promises to Joshua to encourage him. The promises were:

- a. God will give him every place that the sole of his feet shall walk upon (verse 3);
- b. No man shall be able to stand before him all his life (verse 5);
- c. God will be with him even as He was with Moses (verse 5);
- d. God will not fail him nor forsake him (verse 5);
- e. God will be with him wherever he goes (verse 9).

#### **4. GOD'S EXHORTATION:**

Three times God exhorted Joshua to be strong and of good courage. He also was exhorted not to turn from the Law of Moses, neither to the right hand nor to the left.

#### **5. GOD PLACED EMPHASIS UPON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LAW:**

Joshua was exhorted to meditate upon the law day and night and not let it depart out of his mouth. He was told that he must observe it just as it was written. The promise of prosperity and success would be conditional upon this factor of his observing the law.

It is evident that Joshua remembered God's message to him throughout the years of conquest and undoubtedly his success was greatly dependent upon this fact.

### **D. RAHAB AND THE SPIES (Joshua 2:1-24).**

Joshua recognized that the city of Jericho was a strong city and to be the first objective. He desired more knowledge of the city and sent out two spies.

A harlot, Rahab, whose house was located on the city wall, protected these spies. When the men were detected, she hid them beneath drying stalks of flax on the roof. She was convinced that Jericho would be taken by the Israelites and requested safety for herself and family in return for saving the lives of the spies. The men promised and with her help escaped back to Joshua. They did not learn too much about the city but they did learn that the people of Jericho greatly feared Israel. Because of this they brought back a good report.

Rahab tied a scarlet line in her window, which like the blood applied to the doors of the Israelites at the time of the Passover became the means of her salvation. This scarlet line is a type of the crimson line of blood, which runs throughout the Bible.

As a result Rahab and her family were saved and she came to be included in the ancestral line of David and also of Christ (Matthew 1:5).

#### **E. CROSSING THE JORDAN: (Joshua Chapters 3 & 4).**

The next morning after the return of the spies, Joshua ordered the people to move to the bank of the Jordan. Here they camped for three days while they received final instructions. The river was at flood stage when it would be the most difficult to cross. When all was ready, the Ark, carried by the Levites went ahead. Two thousand cubits (3,000 feet) separated the people from the Ark. This permitted a large number of people to see the Ark going ahead. As soon as the feet of the priest touched the water of Jordan a great miracle took place. Every drop of water at a given point quit flowing and banked up in a great heap while the water below flowed on toward the Dead Sea. God's invisible dam was stronger than any built by man.

The priest halted midway. Here they stood holding the Ark of the Lord until all the people had passed over. The Lord's Name was in His Ark (I Chronicles 13:6). Here the new generation born in the wilderness was baptized. Like the older generation baptized by the crossing of the Red Sea, this younger generation had to go through the water (in the name of the Lord).

Two memorials of this crossing were created—one in the Jordan and one across at Gilgal where the people encamped (Joshua 4:1-24). Twelve men, one from each tribe, took a stone each from the Jordan, near where the priests stood, and carried them to the place of encampment. Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the river at the spot from which the other stones had been taken.

The priests bearing the Ark now moved across the river to the bank and the river once again flowed downstream. When all the people had arrived at Gilgal, Joshua made the second pillar from the stones carried from the river.

#### **F. CIRCUMCISION:**

The generation that had been born in the wilderness had not been circumcised, but at Gilgal, after the Jordan had been crossed, Joshua commanded that they all should be. This rite had been given to Abraham and now was commanded as a sign of separation between the Israelites and their new neighbors. It also symbolized the removal of Israel's reproach.

It should be noted that in this church dispensation the rite of circumcision is not enjoined but rather the Holy Spirit operates on one's heart and the body is immersed in water in the name of the Lord (Philippians 3:3; Colossians 2:11-13).

