



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

KEEP CALM AND MARCH ON!

Marching through the Book of Joshua: Lesson 4

We've all heard the saying, "A friend is the first person who comes in when the whole world has gone out." (Did Mr. Hallmark say that?) In last week's lesson, God told Joshua that He would never leave or forsake him. Jesus tells us that He will be with us always (Matthew 28:20). Our God is that friend who comes in when the whole goes out. He is the friend that sticks closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24). What an encouragement it must have been for Joshua to know that God was going into the battle with him. God's words caused Joshua to "spring into action." This week we'll see how quickly Joshua responded in faith to the call of God. Don't forget to start your study with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to open your heart and reveal His truths to you.

First Day

- 1 Read Joshua 1:1-18. Read Joshua 1 again, concentrating on verses 10-18. List any questions you have upon first reading.
2. Are there any repeated phrases or words? What would you say is the key verse in this section?
3. List any facts you find. (i.e.: Who are the main characters? Who is Joshua speaking to?)
4. Did Joshua receive the encouragement that God gave him in the previous verses? How do we know?

Joshua definitely “sprang into action.” He didn’t move forward without his marching orders, but once he received him ... “Forward, March!”

5. A Christian's life is like that of a soldier (2 Timothy 2:3). Compare the two ... What are the similarities? What are the differences? Give Scriptures to support your answer.

6. Read Ephesians 6:10-20 and answer the following questions:

- a. Who are we fighting against?
- b. Where do we get the strength for the battle?
- c. How are we able to stand against the enemy?

7. From Ephesians 6:14-18, name each piece of armor and what it’s supposed to be used for.

Equipment

Purpose

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

8. What would happen if a soldier didn't have every piece of his gear on?

9. Look at your life for a moment. Do you live your Christian life like a soldier? Are you disciplined? Are you obedient to your orders? Are you protected? Do you live like you're on a battlefield or a playground? In what ways can your spiritual life resemble that of a soldier more completely?

10. Is there any piece of the armor that you've been neglecting to put on lately? Is the helmet protecting your thought life? Have you been protecting your heart with His breastplate? What about the belt of truth? Have you been doubting His truth and believing a lie?

11. Read Paul's exhortation to us in 1 Timothy 6:11-12. What 4 action verbs do you find that tell us what to "do" in our Christian life?

12. Are you striving to do all four?

Joshua was a man who was prepared for battle. He was a good soldier and he was "armed and ready." I pray that we can also live our life "armed and ready" to move forward when we receive our marching orders. Let's "rejoice" in His strength and power. Keep Calm and March On Ladies!

Memory Verse of the Week: "Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess." Joshua 1:11

Second Day

Review this week's memory verse. Are you preparing for battle?

1 Read Joshua 1:10-18. What did Joshua tell the people to do? Where were they going?

God commanded Joshua, then Joshua commanded the people to do what God had commanded him, and they were to go command the others. (Did you get that?) Joshua was clearly accepting the authority and responsibility that had been given to him. Joshua responded in faith to the call of God. He didn't ask for the people's advice, not their support. When he knew God's will, he proceeded with confidence. He could say, like Paul, "I did not confer with flesh and blood" (Galatians 1:16). Sometimes we need to seek counsel or advice, but when we hear directly from God, we better move!

2. What did David say about obedience in Psalm 119:60?

3. Did Joshua seem sacred to cross the Jordan? Why or why not?

4. Did Joshua wait to obey when it would be convenient? Did he dwell on the difficulties that may lie ahead? Did he ask any "what if's"?

5. Has God specifically spoken to your heart on some issue and have you been waiting to obey when its convenient? Have you been asking, but ... "what if"?

Spurgeon said, "We are too often in haste to sin; Oh what we may be in a greater hurry to obey God."

The people had 3 days to prepare themselves. (Three days is often used in Scripture in connection with death and resurrection.) This involved gathering provisions, tents, cattle, and picking fruits and grains from the fields of Moab. Daily manna was still being given to them until they were in the land (Exodus 16, Joshua 5:1-12), but they were not forbidden to eat of the fruit of Moab. Their cattle also needed to be tended to. (Irving Jensen, Rest-Land Won)

It would be quite a task for Joshua to move that many people. Jensen tells us that "The number of Israelite male warriors reaching the plains of Moab was 601,730 (Numbers 26:51). Assuming the number of all other males to be about the same, and the total of females to equal the total number of males, the total population must have been approximately two million. Can you imagine organizing all those people? But Moses had taught Joshua to maneuver many people using discipline and order. He has ordered the people well (Deuteronomy 1:15)."

The children of Israel were always on the move. They moved from one place to another, and always had to be in a state of readiness. This is why rest in the

land was so appealing and exciting to them. They would finally be able to settle down.

We are also pilgrims and sojourners in this life (1 Peter 1:17, 2:11). We are not to be settled here in this world because this is not our home. We have a new citizenship in Heaven, a new home to live forever (Philippians 3:20). We are on a journey to that home and we are called to live like a traveler, always ready to move where and when God tells us. It's dangerous to become too settled and too comfortable. Our hearts need to be "set on a pilgrimage" (Psalm 84:5). We can't plant our roots too deep in this world. We need to plant our roots deep in Jesus Christ, allowing Him to direct us as He wills (Psalm 1:1-3).

6. How settled are you? Meditate on this question. How attached are you to the things of the world? Your possessions? Your job? Even your children? How willing are you to release those things to the Lord, if He requires them of you?

7. We are called to "be ready." What things are we supposed to be ready for, or ready to do?

- a. Matthew 24:42-44
- b. Matthew 25:1-13
- c. Mark 14:37-38
- d. 1 Timothy 6:18-19
- e. 2 Timothy 4:6
- f. Titus 3:1-2
- g. 1 Peter 3:15
- h. Revelation 19:7

8. What does it mean to "be ready for the Lord's return"? How do we ready ourselves? Give verses to support your answer. (Hint: Read 2 Peter 3:14 and Philippians 2:15.)

9. Are you ready for Jesus to return for you? What areas would you "clean up" if you knew He was coming back tomorrow? Why doesn't He tell us when He's returning?

We, as believers, are anxiously awaiting the return of Christ. Paul talks about that in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58. This is called the "rapture" of the church. The word "rapture" means to be carried away or the state of being carried away with joy, love, or ecstasy (Daniel Webster). 1 Thessalonians 4:17 says that we shall be "caught up in the clouds with Him." This word is from the Greek word "harpazo," meaning to be "snatched away." The verb conveys the idea of very sudden, or quickly! This is why the church refers to the return of Christ for His church as the "rapture."

Just as the Israelites were ready to respond in faith, we also are supposed to respond in faith to the call of God in our lives. Let's spend some time this week in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to us ways that we can better prepare ourselves for His return. After all, isn't that what our life is all about? Remember, it's not about us ... it's all about God!

Third Day

What's your memory verse?

- 1 Read Joshua 1:12-15. Also read Numbers 32 to understand what Joshua is referring to.
2. Why did the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, want to stay in the land of Gilead? Why didn't they want to cross over the Jordan into the Promised Land with the others? (Numbers 32:1-5)
3. Why wasn't Moses happy about the idea at first? (32:6-15)
4. What previous event did their request remind Moses of? (32:8-15)

5. Moses agreed to their proposal under what condition?

After Israel's conquest of the kingdoms of the Amorites and Bashan (Numbers 32:33), the 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ tribes asked for their portion of the land early. The land was very rich with fertile soil. These tribes cared a lot about their livestock and this land was very pleasing to their eyes. They chose to follow their desires rather than cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land. They wanted the land now. They compromised what they could have had by settling for second best. Later, these tribes were the first to be attacked from enemies outside the camp. This was a consequence of living "east of the Jordan," or on the edge of the Promised Land. These tribes are often pictured as an example of those who want to follow God, but also want the comforts of the world.

How often we make decisions based on what's pleasing to our flesh. We miss out on much of what God has for us because we simply can't wait ... we want it now! We end up compromising because our flesh desires what is beautiful and comfortable. We want to follow God but the world has some pretty exciting things to offer, or so it seems.

6. Can you find an example in Scripture of someone who compromised their faith for the things of the world?

7. Where are you living? Are you living on the "east side of Jordan," trying to enjoy the things of the world and the things of God? What does God say about that? Read 1 John 2:15-16 and Matthew 12:30.

8. Why does God make us choose between following Him or the world? Read Exodus 20:5, 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:24; and Joshua 24:19.

Many times those who are living "on the edge" are concerned about the extent of their abilities. They find themselves asking the question, "What can I get away with and still be called a Christian?" They should be more concerned with pleasing God by their attitudes, not looking for loopholes in the law. Arthur Pink has a list of questions that we can ask ourselves when we are called upon to make decisions concerning certain liberties or freedoms. Consider them when you are making decisions.

1. Will it help me spiritually?
 2. Will it make Christ more precious to me?
 3. Will it make me love His Word more?
 4. Will it help me triumph over sin?
9. Line up the things you do for entertainment with the above list. Consider the books you read and the things you watch on T.V. What about the conversations you have with your friends? How does "what you do" measure up? Are there any changes you need to make?

Joshua held the people accountable to the agreement that they made with Moses. They didn't argue with Joshua, they wanted to hold up their end of the bargain. Tomorrow we will see the response of the people to Joshua's orders. In the meantime, can you find one "**Reason to Rejoice**" today?

Fourth Day

Review your memory verse.

- 1 Read Joshua 1:10-18.
2. What was God going to give the Israelites that He had already given the tribes that settled east of the Jordan? (1:15)

There are different types of "**rests**" in Scripture. Genesis 2:2 tells us that God rested on the 7th day after He created the world. This wasn't because He was

tired, but to indicate completion. There is physical rest available in the Promised Land of Canaan (Deuteronomy 12:8-12, Psalm 95). There is eternal rest in Heaven (Hebrews 4:8-11), and there is the rest that we can experience daily through our relationship with Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:28-30; Hebrews 4:1,3, 8-11).

3. How would you describe what it means to "rest in Christ"? How are faith, trust, and surrender involved? Use Scripture to support your answer.

4. The Lord used the prophet Jeremiah to speak to the children of Israel and to pronounce judgement on other nations. What does Jeremiah 50:6 say that Israel was guilty of?

A resting place is somewhere that you can go to find shelter from the storm, help in your time of need, and deliverance from your fears. You feel safe in that place. You can find peace, joy, and hope. You find comfort when you're hurting, encouragement when you're down, and strength when you're weak. Everyone has a "resting place" where they go to find refuge from their troubles.

5. What, or who, is your resting place? Is your resting place in Jesus Christ or do you run somewhere else when you're in trouble? Ask yourself, where do I go to find encouragement? What do I do when I'm depressed? When you have questions, where do you go to find the answers?

Have you ever had a child fall asleep in your arms? This gives us a good picture of resting in Christ. The child can rest completely, knowing that you will take care of them. (We just had our first grandchildren, so holding sleeping babies is fresh on my mind!) They trust that when they wake up, you will be there to take care of all the needs they have. They don't worry about where their food will come from or what they'll wear the next day. They just trust that you have it all under control.

Our God is a God who never sleeps or slumbers (Psalm 121:3-4). He promises to provide the food, clothes, and everything else we need (Philippians 4:19). We

can rest, knowing that our Heavenly Father has it all under control. What a wonderful truth!

6. Is there an area in your life that you are finding it difficult to "rest"? What should you do?

7. Physical rest is essential to our physical well-being (Mark 6:30-32). How can our lack of physical rest affect our ability to rest spiritually?

8. What other "things" affect our ability (or choice) to rest in Christ?

The tribes that had settled east of the Jordan couldn't fully rest until they helped Israel conquer the Promised Land.

9. Why was it so important for Israel to be united in the conquering of the Promised Land?

We'll end our lesson here for today. Think about the rest that God wants us to have. Are you experiencing it? I hope so, because that is a **"Reason to Rejoice."**

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. How did God use this verse to minister to you this week?

- 1 Read Joshua 1:12-18. How did the people respond to Joshua's orders? Were they supportive?

2. What three "I will" statements did they make?

God told Moses to encourage Joshua (Deuteronomy 1:38, 3:28), and then Joshua was encouraged by God Himself. Now the people he was about to lead were encouraging him. They offered their support (we will), and their prayers (The Lord be with you as He was with Moses). Encouragement from God is all we need, but encouragement from others sure is encouraging!

3. How do you think their encouragement affected Joshua? How could it have affected him if the people were not supportive?

4 What did the people say should happen to those who didn't obey Joshua?

God believes in doing things decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). He sets up order in the house of God (Hebrews 13:17, 1 Timothy 3:1-13), order pertaining to civil government (Romans 13), an order of authority within the institution of marriage (Ephesians 5:22), and between parents and children (Ephesians 6:1). The children of Israel chose to obey the person of authority that God had put over them.

5. Are you supporting those who are in authority over you? (Church, government, home, work, etc.) Do you struggle with being in submission to them?

6. Why is it so important to let those who are over you know that you support them? Name some ways that you can show your support.

7. Does supporting them always mean that you will agree with their decisions? What should you do if you disagree? Is grumbling and complaining the right course of action?
8. Are you praying for the leaders in your church? Are you praying for the leaders whom God has placed in your government? Why are your prayers for them so important?

This chapter was packed with many nuggets. Answer the following questions, reflecting on the lessons that we've learned from this chapter.

9. How did this chapter challenge you?
- a. As a wife?
 - b. As a single?
 - c. As a mom?
10. How did this chapter encourage you:
- a. To be obedient?
 - b. To face a challenge?
 - c. To read God's Word?

Ask the Lord this week to give you a heart that's willing to obey. Ask Him to make you **"willing to do, willing to go, and willing to heed."** God is a jealous God ... He wants your whole heart. Thank Him for loving you in such an incredible way.

"Joy always grows best in the soil of thankfulness."