

THE CONQUEST OF PROMISE

Text: Joshua 1:3-5

Key Word: Conquest

Key Thought: We Often Have to Conquer Something to Receive God's Promises

The book of Joshua is a book of conquest. Webster's dictionary defines "*conquest*" as "*the act or process of conquering.*" Funk & Wagnall's dictionary goes on to describe it as "*the thing conquered.*" The book of Joshua describes the fulfilment of God's promise. **The land was promised to the nation of Israel but they had to conquer it.**

This is what is often described by scholars as the "**already-not yet**" irony. **God has already given us His promises but we haven't seen their complete fulfilment in our lives.** It's there but we are not yet experiencing it to its fullness. None of us can claim that we have gained everything God has promised us. We are like the children of Israel at the brink of the Jordan River ready to conquer the promises of God.

There is a vast army gathering in anticipation to receive the promises of God for their generation. A Joshua generation is rising up in Canada. We are at the water's edge waiting for the final signal for **God's priests** to step forth in faith **with God's presence.**

Isaiah said,

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him (put him to flight)."

Isaiah 59:19

"For he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the LORD drives along."

Isaiah 59:19 NIV

God has an army that is flooding this land with His presence. The heat of the battle is always just prior to the victory. The children of Israel were summoned to the Jordan River at the time it was overflowing its banks. Places that would normally be only 80-100 feet wide were swelling to a mile in width. It would have been treacherous to cross at this time. But God said, it was time to cross.

How Did Joshua Convince the People to Cross over the Jordan River after 40 Years of Wandering in the Wilderness?

I. BY STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD - (Joshua 1:2-3)

II. BY SURVEYING THE PRECISE BOUNDARIES OF GOD - (Joshua 1:4)

III. BY SECURING THE PRESENCE OF GOD - (Joshua 1:5)

I. BY STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD - (Joshua 1:2-3)

We must understand that not every promise in the Bible is ours to claim. Some promises were given to **specific people** at **specific times**. Some promises were of **limited duration**. After a period of time these promises were of no effect. Some of God's promises were **conditional** while others were **unconditional**. God's promises are NOT our wishes coming to life.

****** A man and his wife were standing in front of a wishing well one day. The wife fell in. The husband commented to a passer by, *"I didn't know these things worked."*

A man and his wife were thinking back over the years of their marriage when the wife commented to her husband, *"When we were younger, you used to nibble on my ear."*

The husband got up to leave the room so the wife asked him, *"Where are you going?"*

"I'm going to get my teeth" he replied. ******

The church must go beyond the **WISHING STAGE** to enter the place where we stand on God's promises to us. It's not a **"hope so"** or a **"guess so"** but rather a **"know so"** stage.

Our text makes it clear that Joshua heard from God.

"The LORD said to Joshua . . ."

Joshua 1:1

God spoke to Joshua the same way He spoke to Moses. It was an audible voice. There was no place given to chance. **It's so important that leaders hear from God and not what they try to make Him say.** Once they hear from God they must not sway from what is said even though the hosts of hell battle against them.

The early church did not try to go ahead of God. Jesus told them,

"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about."

Acts 1:4

I. BY STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD - (Joshua 1:2-3) (Contd.)

God makes a promise - faith believes it, hope anticipates it, patience receives it.

"Promises are only as dependable as the individuals who make them."

"No matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ."

I Corinthians 1:20

Joshua knew that he could stand on "**terra firma**" when it came to the promises of God. Are we that convinced today? Do our actions prove it?

If God says it, I believe it - that settles it.

*** An elderly saint in Newfoundland at the turn of last century had a large goitre on her neck. She prayed to God to remove it from her many times. One day God said to her, *"It is done. Your prayer has been answered my daughter."*

She went to the next church service to stand and testify about what God had done. There was a problem though. Her goitre could still be seen by everyone. It hadn't got any smaller. Every time she attended the services she would testify of what God spoke into her heart. It became embarrassing to the whole congregation.

One day the pastor felt he had to speak to this woman. She took his rebuke with grace and fell on her knees before God that afternoon. God spoke a word into her heart. Her prayer changed. The words were directed by the Holy Spirit. She prayed ***"Open their eyes so they can see the miracle of healing that has taken place."***

As she stood to testify once again of the healing power of God, the eyes of the people were opened and they saw the miracle. Her neck was as normal as could be. God rewarded her for standing on His promise to her. **When God speaks - we need to stand upon the truth no matter how foolish it seems!** ***

II. BY SURVEYING THE PRECISE BOUNDARIES OF GOD - (Joshua 1:4)

The boundaries for the promised land that are spoken of here are the largest ones listed in Scripture. Some listings are a little less than this description. Although this is not detailed, it does let us know that the boundaries are from:

1. The Syrian Desert to the South-East
2. The Euphrates to the East
3. The Hittite Country (Turkey) to the North
4. The Mediterranean Sea to the West

This is the land that God said His people would obtain through conquest. It would NOT be simply dropped into their laps. **God would go before them but they had to follow God.** If they did not walk after Him they would not have acquired the land in front of them..

No pain - no gain.

Moses had earlier been given an opportunity to see the land.

*"Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him the whole land - from Gilead to Dan,
2. all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea,
3. the Negev and the whole region from the valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar.
4. Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants,' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it."*

Deuteronomy 34:1-4

It's important not to attempt to increase or decrease the boundaries of God. Some well-meaning Christians have made statements that prove they were outside of God's will. It gives cause for our enemy to blaspheme God. It also places doubt in the heart of God's people. We need to be careful to understand God's boundaries for our lives.

II. BY SURVEYING THE PRECISE BOUNDARIES OF GOD - (Joshua 1:4) (Contd.)

"Judah's leaders are like those who move boundary stones. I will pour out my wrath on them like a flood of water."

Hosea 5:10

God has boundaries! Lets not be foolish enough to try to move them because of disbelief. Joshua knew the precise boundaries of God's promise. He never added to them. In fact, it would take most of his faith to receive all that God had set aside for his people. **God is not honoured when we make statements that He has not prompted us to make.** Keep within the protection of His boundaries.

*** God has made our natural eyes with extreme care. The eye has been designed in such a way that it protects itself. It would be very susceptible to damage if God had not designed them the way He has.

The Iris of our eyes is a tiny muscle that adjusts to allow the proper amount of light through for us to see clearly. Without the Iris we would suffer pain from bright lights and would not be able to see in dark places. When we move from a bright light to a dim area it takes a few moments for the Iris to adjust. **It sets the boundaries of light.** We can see only what God has designed our eyes to see. Anyone who foolishly looks into the sun's eclipse will damage their eyes. So the Iris does have its limitations. So does God with us. ***

I've had people ask me to believe with them for "a Word that God has given them." I never feel comfortable doing it. **If God has placed something in your heart, you don't need me to fulfil it or assure you of its fulfilment.** God's Word will come to pass. God and you are a majority. Why do we think we need an army to accomplish God's will. **God IS an army!** If God has given you some boundaries, He must feel that it is time for you to walk out the extent of what He has given you.

III. BY SECURING THE PRESENCE OF GOD - (Joshua 1:5)

It is utter foolishness to attempt to do something great without knowing that God is with you. **If He hasn't sent us, we shouldn't go.** Joshua was given an assurance that God would be with him.

"As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Joshua 1:5

*** A mother and her little four-year-old daughter were preparing for bedtime. The child was afraid of the dark, and the mother, on this occasion being alone with the child, also felt fearful.

When the light was out, the child caught a glimpse of the moon outside the window.

"Mother," she asked, "is the moon God's light?"

"Yes." said the mother.

The next question was, "Will God put out his light and go to sleep?"

The mother replied, "No, my child, God never goes to sleep."

Then out of the simplicity of a child's mind came the assurance that both of them needed,

"Well, as long as God is awake, there is no sense of both of us staying up." ***

Joshua could rest his weary soul because God said that He would never leave him or forsake him. The word "**forsake**" has many rich meanings including "**to depart, to abandon, to loosen.**" God therefore was saying that He would not depart, abandon or loosen Himself from Joshua. This re-emphasized the words of Moses to Joshua and the people in Deuteronomy 31:6.

David proved these words many years later when he wrote,

"I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread."

Psalm 37:25

III. BY SECURING THE PRESENCE OF GOD - (Joshua 1:5) (Contd.)

We can all take THE CONQUEST OF PROMISE when we know the security of God's presence. God is not a respecter of persons. He will be faithful to those who put their trust in Him. He will not disappoint His people. God is not only with His people, He also guarantees our success AS we walk with Him. Our Lord is unfailing in His presence and daily help.

Joshua was able to walk into an unknown land because He knew that God would be with him. He had waited 40 years to see this day. That time was used to build his faith in God. It was also used to learn how to be sensitive to the presence of God.

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Date: Sept 26/21

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: But Thou Oh Lord (Art a Shield for Me) - Am, Bm

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