

FELLOWSHIP *Journal*

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The Labor Day
Conference -
Joshua: A Life of
Serving Jehovah

Tidings
From Uganda

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This issue contains the five messages Titus Chu shared on the serving life of Joshua in Columbus, Ohio, during the Labor Day weekend.

As Titus said, many more messages would be required to do justice to all the points touched upon, but we all felt it was a great help to be shown a number of major points regarding our service to the Lord as the One who is after His testimony and inheritance on the earth. This was not an easy matter to get into; but we are thankful Titus did not merely entertain us with the many stories that we may have enjoyed hearing, and yet which may have kept us from what really required our attention.

Joshua made his famous statement (“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!”) as someone who had the wherewithal to back it up. He had many years’ experience of learning what serving the Lord meant. He spoke that word within the framework of his long life of accompanying Moses and witnessing all that such a statement implied.

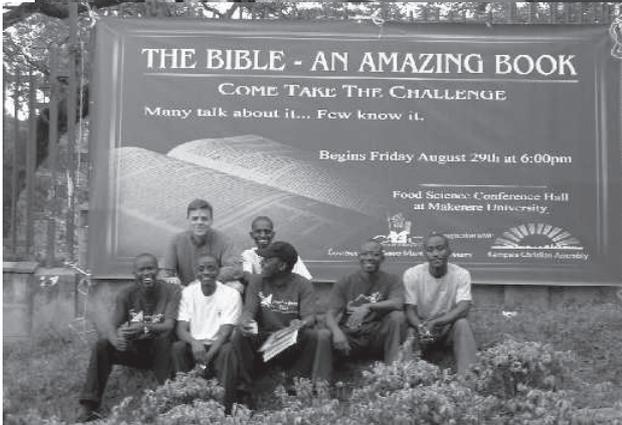
Today, we also have been granted to see much of what it is the Lord is after on the earth. We can no longer declare that we will serve the Lord as those who are naive regarding what this implies. We enter into His service realizing that, regardless how committed we are, we still have to learn much, and we still have much we may have to let go of if we are to gain what is within our grasp. And yet, in the end, the possibility is that we will stand as those who have gained what God was after. We may discover a Christ that no people of any other generation as yet has been privileged to know.

And, in the end, we may be those to whom God will be able to say in full, “I carried you on eagle’s wings.”

Therefore, let us arise, and be very courageous!

NEWS from

UGANDA



The Great Bible Challenge

To kick off a new semester and new school year we conducted a special conference at the Makerere campus community. The conference was titled *The Bible: An Amazing Book*. Our goal was to capture the heart and attention of new students for the Lord by “wowing” them with the wonders of God’s Word. We fully believe the Bible has the power to bring a person to life and turn the backslidden and apathetic into Jesus lovers.

The four-part Bible conference covered a variety of topics related to the Bible including: who wrote it, notable facts, the English Bible history, the functions and subject of the Bible, and how to read and understand it. At the end of the conference we asked the audience to register to take the “New Testament Bible Challenge”—to read the entire New Testament in just 65 days. Several of those challengers have now begun to consistently meet with the church.

Emma Lubuulwa , leader of the Kireka community, decided to open the Bible challenge to those saints involved in his weekly

service training. About twenty saints from that community are also now undertaking the Bible challenge.

Burning in Spirit, Serving the Lord

As new people come into the church and gain precious experiences of the Lord, it is not long before they come to a place where they desire to serve Him. When this happens, we discovered that as shepherds, we had better be prepared to take action and implement a practical means to foster their growth lest we miss the priceless work of Christ in them.

Trainees who finished the “20 days for Jesus” training, for example, expressed to us a desire to serve the Lord in a fuller capacity. Thankfully, many of them are now actively involved in practical church service and ministry. At present there are eight areas of service in the church. Deacons watch over each team. All of the service teams involve either direct or indirect care and shepherding of others.

In addition, there is an ongoing monthly (one evening per week) training that covers basic principles in serving. New church members who want to get more involved in the church attend one of these ongoing trainings before being placed on a service team. Service teams then function like a miniature church life. People learn valuable lessons in serving, such as coordination, recognition of others’ gifts and talents, fellowship, prayer, and faithfulness.

Changing Eternal Destiny

Every day patients are dying without Christ in Uganda. Often, the last person to see them alive is a healthcare provider. We conducted a three-evening Christian seminar at Mulago School of Nursing and invited nurses, nursing students, MD’s, and medical students from nearby Mulago hospital to attend. The seminar focused on bringing an awareness of the spiritual needs among sick and dying patients crowding Kampala’s hospitals and equipping healthcare providers to address that need. The burden was that if these healthcare providers could come to understand and appreciate the

salvation they possess in Christ and learn how to present it to their patients, then they could potentially change the eternal destiny of countless lives in Uganda.

Some 300 healthcare providers attended at least some aspect of this seminar. Let us pray that the Lord uses what they learned to lead many patients to know and love the Lord Jesus.

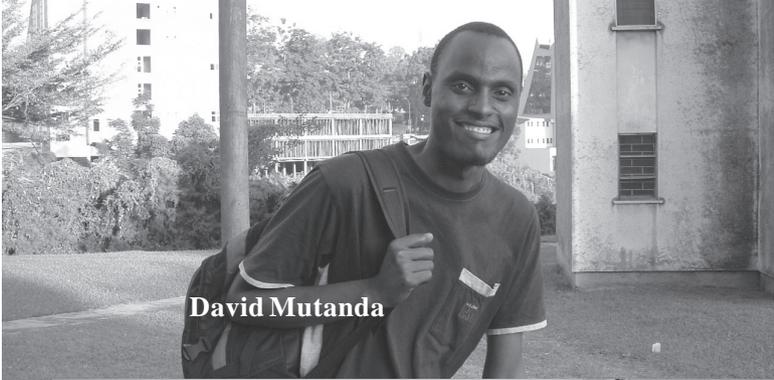
Expanding Ministry

David Mutanda was a student at Mulago Paramedical School—a medical branch of Makerere University—when we first met a few years back. During his university years, David was zealous to grow in the Lord and did his best to get as much involved in the church as his schedule permitted. His good character and reputation as a student opened the door for the administration to allow us to conduct Bible studies with students in the Paramedical School.

Last year, when David graduated as a pharmacy technician, he was offered and accepted a job with TASO, an AIDS research organization operating in Masindi, a small town some 200 km northwest of Kampala. Some of David's coworkers, after getting to know him, requested that he lead them in studying the Bible. By disposition David is shy and does not see himself as a leader. Their request drove David to seek the Lord afresh and strengthened him to stand against his natural disposition. David has now begun to conduct a Bible study among several coworkers and friends using the things he learned during the time he was with us.

A New Start

The Naguru community in Kampala is rapidly changing. The poor are gradually being pushed out by wealthy business owners to make room for newer, more modern housing. The present land lease where the Naguru meeting hall was located was expiring. The property owner let us know that this year he would not be renewing our lease, as he also wanted to develop his land. This meant that the Naguru temporary structure would need to be dismantled and the meeting place relocated.



The Lord opened a nice facility at a primary school with a two-year lease in neighboring Kololo community just about a half mile up the hill from Naguru. Initially, the news of having to move was very distressing but we soon came to realize that the forced move opened an entirely new field of labor for the saints from Naguru. The new meeting place was cleaner, more accessible, had parking, and was situated within a largely middle-class neighborhood. George Kiiza modified his labor strategy in accordance with the new circumstances and began to actively reach out to the people in the new Kololo neighborhood. Some from Kololo have now begun to meet with the church. When one door closes, the Lord opens another! Being flexible and open to an ever-changing environment keeps our experience of Christ fresh and new. Never a dull moment as a servant of Christ!

A Word of Thanks

Tina and I would like to express our heart-felt thanks to all the people who have made it possible for us to be here and have supported the ongoing and expanding work of the Lord in Uganda. And expanding it is! I know these brief newsletters do not do justice to all that the Lord is doing. Everyday it seems we witness the Lord doing something marvelous in someone's life. Let us all pray that as the Lord moves that we will be able to keep up and continue to labor alongside.





Kololo Meeting Place



JOSHUA: A LIFE OF SERVICE

MESSAGE ONE

COMMITTED TO SERVE

“AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE JEHOVAH!”

I have seen the declaration “As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah” (Josh. 24:15) hanging upon the wall in many homes. Many young people make the declaration even before they have a family! Those who have been married a while have a little more realization and may declare, “As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah somewhat.” The older you become, however, the more difficult it is to declare this, because you know what is involved. We need to realize that it was not in his younger days that Joshua declared this, and yet Joshua was not defeated as most find themselves, but instead was able to declare with substance and assurance, “As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah!”

JOSHUA’S DECLARATION WAS BACKED UP BY A LIFE

I could divert everyone’s attention from this difficult and uncomfortable matter by focusing on the uplifting and exciting things Joshua participated in. Everyone likes to hear how Israel crossed the Jordan and how the battles for the good land were won. If I were to share on this sort of thing, I believe you all would say afterwards that you felt our time together had been very uplifting and satisfying. As I was before the Lord, however, I realized I had to be honest about this matter, for if you wish to be able to declare with Joshua that you will serve Jehovah, then you need to pass through what Joshua passed through to be able to make such a declaration.

During our time together, we will consider Joshua's life in four stages. The first stage was his early commitment, the second is characterized by what he learned, the third stage is marked by his manifestation, and in the fourth and final stage he ruled for God, and thus represented Christ as Head over His Church. Needless to say, such matters are worthy of more time than we will be able to spend, but we can make a start. At the least, it is my hope that your concept will be changed regarding what it is to serve the Lord. To follow the Lord is not what many think! I know there are people who cry out in frustration, feeling they cannot make it, but when I hear them cry out in such a way, I wonder, "What is it they think they cannot make? Do they even know what it is they are off from?"

The Lord surely is with everyone who has believed in Him. Even more, He is with those who love Him. But the fact is, the Lord is on the side of everyone, regardless whether they love Him or not, for He makes the rain to fall on both the just and the unjust (Matt. 5:45). He is on everyone's side, but the issue is whether or not we know how to take Him so that He can really do what He wants to do as the One who is on our side!

THE DESIRE TO SERVE THE LORD IS OF THE LORD

This desire we have to serve the Lord is something initiated by God, just as was our desire to be saved. We also consecrated ourselves to Him due to what He initiated. If we are able to follow Him at all, it is because He initiated it. And if we are able to fight alongside God for the fulfillment of His purpose on earth, this is also due to the fact that He initiated it. God is the Initiator and God is the One who carries out what He has initiated.

TO TRULY SERVE GOD IS TO SERVE HIM ACCORDING TO HIS HEART'S DESIRE

God's desire is that the earth would be full of human beings, for human beings are needed to express His Son, Jesus Christ, on this earth. If someone is born, that person's true potential can only be realized if that person becomes a Christian. Once a person is a Christian, the highest quality of life can only be experienced if he or she *loves* Jesus. And among those who truly love and even *give* themselves to Jesus, the highest attainment will be with those who decide that they will *stand* for what God is doing upon the earth that is according to *His heart*. Before we talk about serving the Lord, we must have this basic understanding.

GOD BORE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL ON EAGLE'S WINGS

Why was it that such a person as Joshua needed to be raised up, lead the Israelites across the Jordan, and fight for the possession of the good land? It was

because God was bearing the children of Israel. In Exodus 19:4, the Lord spoke to Moses and told him that He had borne the children of Israel out of Egypt on eagle's wings. It was not that the children of Israel struggled to leave Egypt. God simply put them on His back and flew! It was not they who overcame handicaps and obstacles. We ourselves are today in the heavenlies with Christ not due to our own efforts, but because God has raised us up (Eph. 2:6). We did not climb up to this high peak; God bore us on eagle's wings. He did not bear us up so that we might be some sort of success, however. He has not brought us to this point so that our service to Him might be successful. The Lord bore us to bring us to Himself, not to bless our talent. His purpose in bringing us to the heavenly realm was to bring us to Himself.

Therefore we shouldn't be concerned about how hard we try to serve the Lord. Even if you can form a large congregation, it is of only limited value. When Watchman Nee passed away, there were perhaps sixty thousand meetings in the local churches in China. Today, however, after 36 years, there are at least six million! What was it that Watchman Nee did to nurture this? We cannot point to any particular matter. God just desires to bear us on His wings into the divine, mystical, heavenly realm so that we may focus on Christ Himself. As for His work; that it is up to Him. Those meetings today in China do not focus upon any particular practice or method. They simply stand according to the truth as it has been ministered from the Word.

GOD SEEKS TO FOCUS US ON HIMSELF

We do not reject methods, but we must realize that God has brought us out of where we were and has placed us in the heavenly realm so that our focus, enjoyment, topic, preaching, and insistence might be nothing other than Christ Himself.

The Lord told Moses that the people's responsibility was simply to keep their focus upon Him. This is why He said that if they would hear His voice and keep His commandments, they would become His treasure upon the earth (Exo. 19:5). God loves everyone around you, but if you are a part of His church, you are VERY special to Him! Among all peoples, we are His special treasure. To God, we stand out. If someone believes in Jesus, he also begins to stand out, and the more he gives himself to God, the more he becomes to God a part of His particular treasure, for those who have given themselves to bear God's testimony are that particular people whom the Lord treasures upon the earth. This is the significance of Israel becoming God's special treasure.

WE ARE BECOMING HIS TREASURE

The Lord's treasured people also become to Him a kingdom of priests (Exo. 19:6). In the Old Testament, God gained a group of priests that

functioned together as a priesthood. In the New Testament, God has gained us all to have a church life to serve Him. Today in the church, we are His priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9).

WE ARE BECOMING HIS TESTIMONY

In Exodus 19:6 the Lord also tells Moses that Israel would become to Him a holy nation. The matter of being a nation speaks of testimony. The testimony of China, for instance, was strengthened during the Olympics. For years, China had not been able to lift up its head boldly among the nations due to its experience during the Opium Wars of the 1920's. Now, however, because of all the gold medals it won, it has regained a measure of testimony. Once again, Chinese are proud to be Chinese. (Of course, there are still issues that need to be addressed.) But if China and America and all the other earthly nations need testimonies, then how about God? Do not think that God needs nothing, expect perhaps to get some people saved. No! God also needs a testimony! God raised up the nation of Israel to be a holy nation upon the earth, and He has raised us up in the local churches to be His testimony as well. How good it is if people come to our gatherings and see that God is among us!

WE ARE HIS PRIESTHOOD

Thus God told Moses He had brought the children of Israel out as His personal treasure to be a kingdom of priests (that is, to have the church life) and a holy nation (that is, to be a testimony of God, for only God is holy). These were the things God told Moses to speak to His people. In our day, these words speak that we are His treasure, that we have the church life, and that we bear a testimony of Christ.

These matters formed the basis for Joshua's existence. It was due to what God desired that Joshua came forth.

JOSHUA'S BEGINNING: IN COMMITMENT

When Moses was first called by God, Aaron was called also to act as Moses' mouthpiece (Exo. 4:14-15). This, however, never really happened, for Moses did the speaking. When and why did Joshua get involved? The Bible does not tell us. Along with someone named Hur, Joshua was picked up by Moses along the way. While Hur was from the tribe of Judah (Exo. 31:2), Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim (Exo. 13:8). Originally, his name had been Hoshea, which means *salvation*, but Moses changed it to Joshua (Num. 13:16), which means *Jehovah is salvation* or *Jehovah saves*. (In fact, *Joshua* is the Hebrew form of the name *Jesus*!) Hur was likely an older man suited to administrative duties, while Joshua was a younger and more vigorous man better suited to

warfare. Hur, along with Aaron, became involved with executive duties to aid Moses, while Joshua commanded the army of Israel. From the first time he appears, he is marked by his commitment to God.

JOSHUA'S VICTORY OVER AMALEK

The first lesson Joshua learns, according to the Bible record, took place when he won a great victory which he could not really claim as being his!

When we first love the Lord and give ourselves to the Lord, we often find ourselves in victory. When I first believed in Jesus and told others they also had to believe, they would agree with me and pray to receive the Lord. Today, if I tell people they need to believe in Jesus, they ask me to leave them alone! When I was 18, I loved the Lord like a young Joshua. I could tell the Lord, "I will fight!" Many say, "If You want me to fight, I will think about it." How I wish I could intervene in the thought process that causes people to draw back! Without commitment, there is no way a person can follow the Lord. As soldiers, we must have the attitude that we are willing to be placed at the forefront of the battle!

The children of Israel were encamped at Rephidim, a name which means *rest* (Exo. 17:1). They were in the wilderness, but they were at rest. Until we discover the Lord's sweetness, we never really know what rest is. It was here that the Lord provided water out of the smitten rock of Horeb (v. 6). We may have rest, but without experiencing Christ as our thirst-quencher, we do not have the truest rest. We must hide in the death of Christ, realizing that it is in His death that He supplies to us all His riches.

When the water came forth, Amalek also came forth (Exo. 17:8). The Amalekites were most likely ruled over by a king of some city. The Israelites, however, were a vast nation! The Amalekites saw that the Israelites had water, and this probably spurred them on. To destroy all of Israel would have been too difficult, but to cut the Israelites off from their source of water would have seemed possible. Thus, Amalek sought to cut Israel off from its life-supply. Water in that land would have been a thing to covet.

AMALEK TYPIFIES THE FLESH

According to Bible typology, Amalek represents the flesh. What Amalek represented at this point, however, was not merely the flesh, but rather the flesh seeking after the blessing of God! That water was something that came from God. Once a person begins to love the Lord and to have some blessing in his or her life, "Amalek" will try to come in and take over that supply. We may even find such a thing happening within ourselves. When you receive some blessing from the Lord, it is easy to feel as though you have finally "made it" as a Christian. You try to usurp God's blessing for your own glory.

This is why God told Moses to write a book just for Joshua after his victory (Exo. 17:14). Joshua may have defeated the Amalekites outwardly, but a greater Amalek still lurked within. It is that part of us that covets and entertains the blessing that the Lord has given us. We like to be God and tell God it that it was due to something about us that caused Him to bless us. As soon as God blesses us, our flesh seeks to rise up to take the place of God within. We may say, "We have been blessed, and it is all the Lord's mercy," but in that statement Amalek is lying in wait. Inwardly something has already begun that might supplant the work of the Spirit. Therefore, we need to be reminded that it is the Lord who is the Victor, and not we ourselves.

MOSES' INTERCESSION DETERMINED THE OUTCOME

When Joshua and his army went forth to fight the Amalekites at Rephidim, Moses went up to a high place with Aaron and Hur to stand with the staff of the Lord in his hands (Exo. 17:9). When Moses lifted up his hands, the Israelites prevailed, but when he lowered them, Amalek began to gain ground (v. 11). It was not that, as Joshua prevailed, Moses lifted up his hands in praise! And neither was it that Joshua and his army won the day through their own valiant effort. This became the first lesson impressed upon Joshua. He had committed himself to follow the Lord and went fearlessly to fight. But it was Moses who was really doing the fighting, although it was Joshua who was upon the battlefield. This is the first lesson every serving one must learn: You must fight, but you must also realize that your victory is based upon the prayer of Christ. In this portion, Moses represents the heavenly Christ praying for us as we struggle forward for Him on the earth (Heb. 2:10; 4:14; 7:25).

We should feel very free to try different things as we serve, but we cannot say any success was based upon our efforts. Thus, the first thing we must realize is how incapable we are, and how capable the Lord is!

As Moses' hands grew heavy, they placed a stone under him for him to sit upon (Exo. 17:12). We may say that stone is Christ, or we may say it is the testimony of Christ, for we are all living stones being built up into a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:5).

Joshua's job was to chop off the Amalekites' heads. Moses' prayer was what caused the Amalekites necks to become exposed to Joshua's sword! That was the nature of Joshua's fighting. This is also our experience. When I was young, as long as I preached, people got saved. Hundreds were saved in a few months time, and sixty-some were baptized. When Joshua came with his sword, it was almost as though the Amalekites lined up for slaughter when Moses was praying. When Moses' hands were no longer outstretched, however, the Israelites lost ground and were pursued by Amalek. When Moses' hands were again more lifted up, the Amalekites fell under the Israelites' sword once again. This is our initial experience of spiritual battle. When it is over, we

do not even know how it was possible that we prevailed in such a way. How was it that such a revival took place? How was it that this person was so readily brought to the Lord? How? It was because the mature ones in the church life had been lifting up their hands in prayer.

THE PRAYER OF THE MATURE ONES NEEDED

The church must stand with the young people so that when they go out in the gospel, those they meet will be ready to receive. The young people who go forth should then realize it was not they themselves who won the “battle,” but rather those who stood with their arms outstretched upon the rock of the testimony. It is the praying church that brought in the victory.

JOSHUA OFFERED HIS SWORD, MOSES OFFERED HIS PRAYER

As Moses tired, his hands were upheld and steadied by Aaron and Hur. They held up his arms until the going down of the sun (Exo. 17:12). This signifies that the victory was something to the total satisfaction of the Lord.

The Bible credits Joshua with the victory (v. 13), even though it was Moses’ prayer that assured it. Is this fair? Joshua’s army either ran away from before the Amalekites, or they did the job due to Moses’ prayer. The young people may seem prevailing as they go to raise up new churches, but it is only through the prayer of the entire church, and particularly the prayer of the older ones. Still, God says, “The young people made it!” even though the older ones insured it through their prayer. After all, without Moses, Joshua and his army may have beaten all the way back to Egypt! But because of Moses’ prayer, Joshua defeated Amalek, and was given the credit for it.

This is the first lesson you must learn as you begin to serve the Lord. Every spiritual blessing initially comes from Christ and from the older ones’ intercession as they stand with you for you to prevail. Still, the victory is yours, even though, in a good sense, it was not truly yours alone. It was the prayer of Moses and the sword of Joshua and those with him that won the victory.

JOSHUA’S BOOK: A CONTINUAL REMINDER

The Lord told Moses to write this as a memorial in a book and to recite it in the ears of Joshua (Exo. 17:14). It was uniquely for Joshua after he had experienced that triumph on the battlefield. Joshua must have returned from that battle to great fanfare. Moses then may have spoken in his ear, “Joshua, there is a book that the Lord has required that I write and rehearse in your ears. You think you won the victory? It is God who won the victory.” Joshua would have to admit that if Moses had not lifted up his hands, he would have been defeated. Due to Moses’ prayer, his sword became sharp. We must realize that

we are needed, but at the same time, our experience and labor and whatever fruit we produce are all due to Christ's heavenly intercession. Without Christ, we could do nothing. This is a lesson we must learn from the very beginning of our service, even to the end of our days.

In verse 14, the Lord also said that He would utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. Even though today the race of Amalek is gone, the inward Amalek remains. Outwardly it is over, but inwardly it continues. One day, however, it will be utterly blotted out, even within. Joshua needed to know this.

OUR VICTORY IS NOT BASED UPON WHAT WE CAN DO

During the thirty years after Watchman Nee was martyred, little was done to care for the churches he labored to establish, and yet the testimony grew. Those that labor there are strong to take the local church way and fellowship with so many churches. They care about the Lord's testimony. They are not concerned with many other things. When I saw this, I realized that, apart from the Lord's blessing, our labor really is in vain. Even if He does bless, we too easily take from Him the honor. Compared to those laboring in China, many in this country have done little, and yet even what little may have been done can cause us to feel as though we are worthy of some kind of honor.

I have raised up many saints and many churches, and yet that "book" is always there, whispering to me that Amalek has to go. Until then, Amalek is always ready to rise up and lay claim to the honor that belongs to the Lord.

JEHOVAH-NISSI: JEHOVAH IS OUR BANNER

In verse 15 of this same chapter, we are told that Moses built an altar and called it Jehovah-nissi, "Jehovah is my banner." From the day you begin to wholly pursue Christ, there will be a banner you shall be able to raise up. You will be able to declare that Christ alone is your focus and boast. He is your unique topic. Suppose we all raise up such a banner. We do not care about anything except loving Jesus, honoring Jesus, and exalting Jesus! When we exalt this name, we declare that our life from henceforth is for Christ alone.

Thus we see that Joshua had a very good beginning. He was committed to the Lord and he gave himself to fight. His victory, however, was dependent upon others fighting behind the scenes. Afterward, he further realized that he would always have to be watchful for something that might rise up to take from the Lord the honor that is rightfully His alone. That enemy, however, would not abide forever. Until that time of complete victory, the Lord would remain his banner. - *Titus Chu*

JOSHUA: A LIFE OF SERVICE

MESSAGE TWO

LEARNING TO SERVE

The first thing we see about Joshua is that he was someone totally committed to the Lord and the Lord's interest. It was because of this that he could be chosen to fight against Amalek. In the process he learned, however, that it was the prayer of Moses, representing Christ, that really brought about the victory. Our actions are needed, but apart from the intercession of Christ they are in vain. It is Christ who wins each victory. This must impress us from the very beginning of our service. As the psalmist wrote, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psalm 127:1). Even though the Lord graciously credited Joshua with the victory, Joshua was clear that he was not the one truly responsible for it. It was the Lord who gained the victory, through the prayer of Moses, with the support of Aaron and Hur.

Because God knows how easily we forget, he instructed Moses to write a book that was for Joshua alone. What was written in this book was to be recited to Joshua to remind him that, although he would surely serve the Lord and fight for the Lord's interests all his life according to his great abilities and gifts, it would be God who determined the outcome. No matter how smart or capable Joshua was in his warfare with Amalek, until Moses raised up his hands, nothing worked! We must know that if we gain a victory for the Lord, it is because the Lord is already the Victor, not because we are so wonderful! If we are able to rule over some situation, it is due to the fact that Christ is on the throne. Therefore, the first lesson we must learn as we seek to serve the Lord is that we walk and hide ourselves in the Lord.

Joshua, in this learning phase, was presented with another lesson. Moses was taking care of the children of Israel, which was a tremendous task. His father-in-law Jethro arrived, bringing with him Moses' wife and sons (Exo. 18:5). I believe that Jethro was a godly person. He rejoiced to hear what God had done in bringing the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt (vv. 9-10). But he was bothered by what he saw in the Israelite camp, for people were standing from morning to evening, waiting to speak to Moses. Therefore, according to his view and understanding, he gave Moses some advice (vv. 17-23). He said, "The thing that thou doest is not good. You shall surely wear away, for such a thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to perform it yourself alone." Isn't that logical? There were two million people, and only one judge. How could that work? Moses would surely wear himself out.

Jethro continued, "Harken now to my voice, I will give you counsel." He would tell Moses what to do. Yet we must remember that these were God's people. Many times, however, we seem to prize man's counsel above God's. Jethro said, "Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God" (v. 19). Jethro instructed Moses to teach the people ordinances and laws and to show them the way they must walk and what they must do (v. 20). Doesn't this sound like good advice?

In verse 25 we are told that "Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens." Moses followed his father-in-law's advice. He gave the people laws and ordinances and organized the people. In other words, arrangements were made to have large meetings, district meetings, and home meetings. My own feeling after reading this when I was young was that God had really given Moses a marvelous father-in-law. His suggestion to give people ordinances and organize them into various levels so that the pressure was off him seemed wise! Then one day I read a statement made by Watchman Nee that we need to consider the differences between God's way and Jethro's way. I was surprised. Wasn't that what God wanted? Hadn't Jesus also organized the five thousand people into groups when He distributed the fish and bread (Mark 6:39-40)? [*Notice that there is no indication He did. - Ed.*]

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE **GOD'S** PEOPLE

I considered this matter for years. I eventually realized that many things can be done "properly" in the church life without God. God would rather that we do things "messily" than "properly" without Him. Man's way is to organize things so that they run efficiently. The Bible reveals that everything in the church life must be initiated by God. Are we able to see the difference? There was nothing "wrong" with Jethro's way in one sense, but in another sense, it was

very wrong. The source and substance of everything in the church life must be Christ alone. Man's way, no matter how good it may seem, must not be allowed to replace Christ's headship in the church life.

Joshua had to learn the lesson that all the "right" things may not be right. God does not take delight in something just because it gives good results. A spiritual man realizes that God's view is totally different from man's.

WE MUST HAVE GOD'S VIEW FOR THE CHURCH

Joshua's first learning experience involving Amalek led him to realize he had to be careful about what he thought he could do for God. His second learning experience taught him that even the best idea of man is not God's idea. What God wants is what He wants, and God and we are in totally different realms. A co-worker may want to be fruitful. An elder may want his church to grow. Yet what God wants a co-worker to have is a ministry, and what He wants for the church is that it be filled with Christ. We are in two totally different spheres.

We may boast in all the people we have gained. God may look and say, "What people?" We may hold a certain person up before God, and yet He may say, "Oh, does such a person exist? Let Me examine him. I guess he has a little spirit." In our view, the individual may appear very good, and yet God may not appreciate him as we do. (Actually God would say, "He is a precious brother. Yet I care for what I care for, which is very different from what you care for.") God's concern is, "Where is Christ?" If you protest, "But this person loves You," God will say, "Where is the fruit of that love?"

What God has in view and what we have in view often simply do not match. Joshua had to learn this. Jethro gave Moses a lot of advice about how to handle God's people, but Jethro was not God. God's people had to be brought to God's way, so we come to Exodus 19:24, in which the Lord said to Moses, "Away, get thee down, and you shall come up, and Aaron with you." God's way is in the principle of companionship.

GOD'S WORD TO ISRAEL: NO OTHER GODS

God did two things. First, He began to speak, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exo. 20:2-3) His desire was not to give ordinances nor to organize the people, but to challenge them as to how many gods they would have. This question was not an easy one to answer.

I know a saint who loves the Lord very much. He asked how I felt about his staying a little longer at his job so he might receive a severance package before beginning to serve the Lord full-time. At the time I agreed to this, but afterwards I regretted I had. Instead, I wish I had said, "If you want to follow the Lord, then follow the Lord!" Why? Because that package was a God-replace-

ment. This is why I say I wish I could open up your heads and push around your nerves so your understanding might be straightened out! I spent a lot of time repenting before the Lord for this. We should have no other gods besides Jehovah.

We must be clear about one thing above all: that, besides God, there is no god. When you become overly concerned for your security, you violate this first principle. In our lives there should be no other god besides God!

DIRECTION FROM ANOTHER SOURCE MEANS
THERE IS ANOTHER GOD

The advice of Moses' father-in-law became his god, for once you open to or depend upon a source for your direction other than God, you violate the principle that God alone is your God. Once Moses got this idea and took it, his new way then became his god. Whenever you say "Now I see!" apart from God, that "revelation" becomes your god. You may suddenly find that your job, your career, your degree, your spiritual training, your service, your church, or the few sheep you shepherd are so many gods surrounding you. Yet the first thing the Lord makes clear is that besides Him you shall have no other gods! What Moses' father-in-law told Moses became a way for them, but what the Lord unveiled to Moses and Aaron was the secret of going on. And that is: We only have God, we only care for God, we only worship God, we only enjoy God, we only honor God, and we only follow our Lord, even Jesus Christ, who is our God.

BESIDES ACKNOWLEDGING GOD IS THEIR GOD,
THEY WERE TO FEAST BEFORE HIM

Besides the laws and ordinances, the second thing the Lord told them was that three times a year they were to keep a feast unto Him (Exo. 23:14). The church life goes through these stages. In the first stage, the church life is taken care of by the natural man. In the second stage, the church life is taken care of by God Himself as we enjoy Him in a feasting life. In such a church life, nothing else is brought in but what is of God. There is no gossip. There are no opinions. Instead, there is feasting! The entire church life must be saturated with nothing besides God. The issue then is something wonderful.

GOD SENDING HIS MESSENGER BEFORE THEM TO LEAD THEM

We may ask God, "Aren't You satisfied that we only care for and testify and taste You?" We may worship the Lord that everything is marvelous, but in Exodus 23: 20-23, God indicates there is a further requirement when He says He would send a messenger (Christ) before them to guard them and lead them into the land. Later Joshua met that Man (Josh. 5:13-15), who reminded

Joshua that Joshua was for Him. This Angel would bring them in among all the Amorites, the Jebusites, the Hittites, and all the other "ites," and the Lord would cut them off." What a dreamy church life! It would seem nothing could be better than this. But God says, "You are so happy, but how about Me? Can't you graduate from Self-Centered University?" This is basic, even though few can say they have arrived at such a level. For you to say that you only care for Christ is right, and because of that, blessings will come in, but that is still not all that God desires.

BEING SATISFIED IN GOD'S VERY PRESENCE

In Exodus 24:9-13, the leaders of Israel saw the God of Israel, saw under His feet a paved work of sapphire stone. When we come to the point we only care for Christ, we are able to see God and eat and drink in God's presence upon the mountain. Could there be a church life happier than this? They only cared for Christ, they loved one another, they feasted together, and the leading ones saw God Himself and ate and drank in His presence. They had fully made it into the second stage. This is wonderful, but something more was still needed.

TAKING ANOTHER STEP: RECEIVING THE TESTIMONY

God told Moses to come up again, and this time he took Joshua with him (Exo. 24:12-13). Up until this point, things had been easy. Now the Lord called them to another stage in which He would give the tablets of stone engraved with His laws. Something soft became something very solid, something that was a teaching became something engraved in stone, and something that was an understanding became a constitution. Moses and his attendant Joshua went up to the mountain of God.

Why was it that Joshua was taken up with Moses instead of Aaron? Aaron seems to have been too nice. He was so nice that he even produced a golden calf for the people to follow, after Moses and Joshua ascended. What was needed was a soldier who was able to fight for the Lord's testimony.

Joshua had learned to not trust in his own ability to do things for God. He had also seen that man's organization was not something for God's people. That, however, was not enough. He also had to see that God cared that there would no be other gods, and that they were to have a feasting life before God. Eventually, in such a situation, there was a marvelous experience in which the elders of Israel were able to eat and drink in the presence of God. At just such a time God said to Moses, "Come up again. I will give you something that must become your being." For the next level of learning,, Joshua must see that, although everyone else was happy, God still needed something before He could be happy.

The best prayer you pray is, "God, You have done so much for me. Now, in what way can I make You happy? In what way can I satisfy You? You have totally satisfied me. Now I desire to satisfy You." That is not something that is arrived at easily. So the Lord says, "Come up, Moses, with your attendant Joshua, to the mountain of God."

In 25:8-9 the Lord tells Moses that He desires a sanctuary. The Lord tells us, "You love your church life, and I love My testimony. You love enjoyment; I like to be testified. From your view, I satisfy You; from My view, I need you to satisfy Me through My satisfying you." So the first thing the Lord told Moses was that he was to build Him a tabernacle, a sanctuary, that He might dwell among them.

You may be proclaiming that you enjoy Christ in the church life, and yet Christ may still be on the outside. You may have a very active church life, and yet Christ may still not have His testimony. For this, we need to have the heart of a fighter. Joshua, not Aaron, was the right person to accompany Moses for this assignment. The Lord's charge was that Moses would build Him a tabernacle for His testimony. The people of Israel wanted something for their enjoyment, and the Lord promised to be that. But the Lord's desire was that His name would be exalted in their enjoyment of Him.

DOING EVERYTHING ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN

God told Moses to make for Him a sanctuary according to the pattern He revealed to him (Exo. 25:9). It was no longer a matter of their feasting. Now, if they wanted to be proper before Him, they had to do everything according to the pattern He revealed to Moses upon the mountain.

The first level, that of human organization, is exercised by many Christians. The second level of focusing on Christ is experienced by fewer Christians. Very, very few, however, come to the third level in which they only care for the testimony of the Lord, which is His habitation. This, however, is the goal. Everything we do and have in the church life should be according to the pattern God has unveiled to us in the heavens.

Joshua has really experienced much by this time. He has conquered Amalek and has realized its threat. He has seen how Jethro came and brought man's arrangement in among God's people. Then he saw how God called Moses and Aaron and unveiled to them how Christ is to be our enjoyment. In the church life there should be no one, no other way, and nothing but Christ and the enjoyment of Christ. Such a realization will produce a prevailing church life. Even so, however, God's desire is something further. His desire was to have a sanctuary, a tabernacle, concerning which everything had to be according to the pattern He unveiled upon the mountain.

THE PRIESTHOOD

The service of the priesthood was also unveiled at this time. Besides the tabernacle, Moses had to prepare the priesthood. Besides a testimony, the Lord also desires a priesthood. Like the matter of the testimony, the matter of the priesthood is something beyond simply enjoying Christ in the church life. Our vision must advance, and we must advance with the vision.

WE DO NOT CARE FOR HUMAN SUCCESS;
WE CARE FOR CHRIST BEING SATISFIED

We must learn from stage to stage, from step to step. Never envy another's success, and never despise the work of the Spirit. If we look at how a larger group gained its success, that is envy. (But regardless of how much increase any group has gained, no one can beat Watchman Nee. In thirty-six years, the number increased from sixty-thousand to at least six million meeting in thousands of local churches. This is something that has been raised up for the Lord's testimony. Therefore don't be so jealous as to what others have gained.)

Furthermore, do not say, "We have it, and nobody else does." That is not good either. We should have a humble spirit and seek to continue advancing.

We may have gotten beyond valuing human organization to caring about Christ and only Christ. Yet God will still say, "You have to go on to where you care not only about Christ, but also the testimony of Christ." If we care for Christ so much, then our lives should be given for the testimony of Christ. Thus God told Moses with Joshua that they must build the tabernacle and establish the priesthood, which is the church life today.

SERVING WITH CHRIST IN THE CHURCH LIFE FOR CHRIST'S SATISFACTION

If there is one thing short with the young people among us, it is the matter of the church life. When I was young, I felt the church life was for old people, and only went to young people's meetings. But then the Lord revealed to me that these "old people" were my brothers. Therefore I began to go to the "old people's" meetings and found they were very enjoyable. Besides loving the Lord and the church, I also began to love the church life. That is the priesthood.

Who did you care for last week? What kind of service do you participate in? We may think that the church life is something we do. We don't realize that the church life is also something just as much done to us. If you go preach the gospel and care for someone, go to someone's home to have dinner, or read the Bible with someone, you are in the church life. While we say that we are for the Lord's testimony, we should not forget that we need to be fully in the church life if the Lord is to have His testimony.

When you are old, you enjoy coming home and putting your feet up. If I went home after this time and did such a thing, feeling satisfied with what was ministered, that would not be a church life but rather a “job life.” The church life is related to God, to man, to the church, to the church meetings, to the gospel, and to bringing people to Christ. The church life is a life of dispensing.

Whoever goes through this process will become truly spiritual. Typically, the biggest frustration Christian groups face has to do with what Jethro represents. “Tell me what to do so that our group can be prevailing and proper.” But God tells us, “You don’t need a Jethro. You need ME and you need the ENJOYMENT of Me, and you need to build up MY TESTIMONY for Me. For this, you need to raise up a very healthy, profound church life.

In less than two years Joshua had slain Amalek, had seen how Jethro messed everything up, had seen how the Lord had revealed that we must only care for Him and to be joyful in His presence, and had seen how God desired His testimony for His satisfaction, maintained by a priesthood. How much of this have we seen?

DESCENDING FROM THE MOUNTAIN

God finished His instruction to Moses in Exodus chapter 31 and gave him the two tablets engraved by His hand. Moses and Joshua then came down from the mountain. When they came down, Joshua heard noise and thought it was the noise of war in the camp, because he was a soldier. People hear what they like to hear sometimes. The younger man’s ears were better, but the older man’s ears were more accurate. Moses realized it was not the noise of victory or defeat, but the noise of singing (Exo. 32:18).

I believe Moses walked slowly down the mountain, for he was very old. Perhaps Joshua was helping him. Remember, Joshua had just seen something even Aaron had never seen. He must have been exultant. Aaron may have experienced enjoying something of God, but Joshua had been allowed to see the matter of God’s building! He had seen the Lord’s testimony! He had seen the Lord’s priesthood! Then he heard the noise in the camp, and he was ready to fight.

Joshua said, “Moses, there is a war going on!” Moses, however, could tell it was not the noise of victory or defeat, but instead the noise of people playing as they worshiped the golden calf. After they arrived, there was judgment. (From this point onward Hur is no longer mentioned. He had been hand-picked by Moses, standing with Aaron in executive matters, but after this, his function is gone. The more you are given to see, the higher the price you have to pay. If you see much, you must set much apart for the Lord’s sake.)

In Exodus 33:7-11 we find the last major item Joshua needed for his learning. He was kept for another 38 years as an attendant of the meeting hall! While the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, Moses would go into "work" in the morning and then return home every day, but Joshua stayed. Even after you have received so much, you must learn patience. The more you know, the more you must learn to abide in the Lord's government.

Joshua remained submissive to Moses, even after Moses married a Cushite (Num. 12:1). Aaron and Miriam could not handle it. Yet Joshua could trust his leader, for he had learned only Christ, only the enjoyment of Christ, only the testimony of Christ, and only cared to be in the church life enjoying Christ with all the saints to bear this testimony. He said in a simple way, "I don't touch the one who helped me and who raised me up." Joshua did not react to all this. The other lessons he could learn quickly, but this final matter took him 38 years spent as a tent-keeper. So if you want to be a Joshua, prepare yourself! You must be trained and educated. Tell the Lord, "Lord Jesus, everything Joshua learned, I would also like to learn. I would like to learn not to trust anything from the world. I would like to only care for Christ and the enjoyment in Christ. I want to be someone who fights for the Lord's testimony and for the healthy church life. With all the riches I gain, I also want to learn to be a tent keeper."

Joshua may have been in his thirties when Moses first picked him up. If he was with Moses for nearly forty years more, he would be my age, and still only be a tent-keeper. Do you want that? Moses didn't give him any other assignment. He was there, patient, serving the older brother who raised him up. He stood with the one who had helped him. If we are trained as Joshua was, we will also become someone the Lord can use to fight for His interests on the earth.

Joshua experienced seven particular matters in which he learned much. Firstly, he encountered and defeated Amalek, which continually reminded him to be watchful. Secondly, he witnessed Jethro's attempt to help Moses, and thirdly, he witnessed God's response that they have no other gods. Fourth, he saw how God desired that they hold feasts unto him, representing the enjoyment of Christ. Fifth, he was with Moses when God unveiled to him the matter of the tabernacle and the priesthood, both matters for the Lord's testimony. Sixth, he saw the dealings of all those who withstood Moses, and seventh, he stood firm with whatever was committed to him from the brother who had trained him. He did not feel he was being wasted; he knew that God was taking care of everything and everyone. He went through so much, and yet was content to be just a doorkeeper in the tent Moses pitched. Are you ready for that? If you are, then the Lord says, "I will use you." - *Titus Chu*

JOSHUA: A LIFE OF SERVICE

MESSAGE THREE

MANIFESTED TO SERVE

When we touch upon what Joshua had to learn before he could serve the Lord (Josh. 24:15), we are covering profound matters. To cover what was included in his declaration that he and his house would serve the Lord, we would need hundreds of messages. We may think we are quite heroic when we can make such a statement, but typically those who make it or even hang such a plaque in their homes have no idea what is involved. Even to the end of his life, Joshua did not fully realize all that had been committed to him by the Lord. (This is actually a principle; no one besides the Lord Himself can truly say he has fully received or discharged what the Lord has unveiled to him.)

REVIEW OF LESSONS JOSHUA LEARNED

Joshua's first lesson involved a commitment in which he learned to know himself. He was the one to lead the Israelites against Amalek, but when all was done, God instructed Moses that a book was to be made and recited to Joshua. In other words, it was something Joshua was to learn and put to memory. He had experienced success, and therefore was a prime target for the thought that he had the right to say he had done something for the Lord, when in fact it was Moses (representing Christ) who prayed and secured the victory. He needed to be reminded of this matter all his life. He also had to undergo a long process of education as he worked with Moses to see how it was that the Lord worked.

He witnessed how Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, made a marvelous suggestion, which Moses adopted. This advice of man, however, was not God's direction to His people! Most Christian groups never get this. Instead, they, like Moses at the time, are glad to adopt human organization if it helps develop things. Just at the time Israel was being separated to God, organization came in. This is what is seen among most Christian groups as well. Many say, "The Lord

bless you," but they themselves are not dependent upon the Lord's blessing. Yet they wish it upon others! To have the Lord Himself as the one who leads is primary, and yet it is difficult for many Christians who are trying to serve the Lord to live by this.

After that, Joshua saw Moses and Aaron bring in the matters of being for God alone, and enjoying God alone in the feasts. God must be our source and our enjoyment! Then he advanced further to actually go up with Moses to see the Lord's testimony and the priesthood. Thus we have seen five lessons that became very crucial for Joshua's development. If you have seen what it is to serve the Lord, you must have also realized these stages. In the first stage, your view is very natural. Anyone with talent can come in and have some outward success. If you are caught by that, you will miss Christ's way. Second, which is closer to our situation, you really begin to focus on Christ alone and to enjoy the riches in the Lord's presence. We feast before God! Along with the person who wrote the hymn "Beulah Land" we can say, "Viewing here the works of God, I sink in contemplation." That is often our experience of the church life. We see that Christianity is full of "Jethros," while we in the Lord's recovery only care for Christ and enjoy such a feast!

Yet God eventually told Moses, "This time, get Joshua to come up with you. I don't need someone like Aaron who is satisfied with the sweetness of My presence; I need someone who will fight for My interest!" That is why God revealed the tabernacle, which was His testimony, and the priesthood, representing all the brothers and sisters in the church life serving Him for His testimony, His church life.

Afterwards, Joshua got somewhat exposed. After only being on the mountain for forty days, the people decided they didn't know what happened to "this man Moses" (Exo. 32:1). Maybe the animals ate him! Therefore they decided to make a golden calf and have a big party. (Some accused the young people of behaving somewhat like this in the past during their events, but even so, I would rather see them misbehaving than dead! As long as there is life, there is hope. But the young people should not boast that they are the future. In order to be the future, you have to be faithful. If you mean business, you will grow.)

Joshua, being a fighter, thought he heard the sound of warfare in the camp, but Moses, being more mature, realized it was the sound of singing. Joshua was most likely still in awe of all he had witnessed upon the mountain. He may have also felt he was co-equal with Moses, or at least able to help Moses, having been present at this great event. And yet when they came down the mountain, Joshua was shown that Moses still was the one with discernment. Joshua made his evaluation, and then Moses said, "No, Joshua, you are wrong. They are neither being defeated in battle nor winning the victory... they are having a Christmas party!" At this exposure, Joshua learned his place. Afterwards, he willingly became a keeper of Moses' "office," where Moses exercised the government (the tabernacle). Through this, the tabernacle came into its full function (Numbers 9:15-23).

PREPARING TO ENTER THE LAND

On the first day the tabernacle was raised up, the cloud covered the tabernacle during the day, and the pillar of fire covered it at night. Wasn't this good enough? Could anything be better? Now the Israelites seemed ready to do whatever the Lord required. Sometimes it seems this way to us in the church life as well.

TWO SILVER TRUMPETS

The first thing the Lord had the Israelites prepare, according to Numbers 10:1-4, were two trumpets of beaten silver. In the church life, sometimes we merely have an idea, and sometimes we have a beaten work of silver. According to how the trumpets were blown, the people came together, or journeyed, or the leading ones gathered. In the church life, we do not need activities, but we need a clear sound from the redemption of Christ (symbolized by the silver). After the Lord's redemption and after His work of pressing and beating, we may become those the Lord can use to sound something for His testimony!

SEVENTY MEN CHOSEN TO BEAR RESPONSIBILITY WITH MOSES, AND TWO "EXCEPTIONAL" PROPHETS

Moses had gotten to the point where he felt quite stretched by the situation, so the Lord told Moses to gather together seventy men whom He would set over the people to help Moses (Num. 11:16). They were to come to the tabernacle where the Lord would speak with them and put the Spirit Moses had, upon them as well. Moses would not lose the Spirit God had given him, but he would now have to share it with these other seventy. Up until this time, Moses had been the undisputed leader. His face shone after leaving the Lord's presence, and all the people would soberly stand as he passed by. Afterwards, they went home. What a glory! In all of history, Moses was the only person that exercised that kind of "kingship." But now God put His Spirit upon others as well. But, according to Numbers 11:26, two of these men remained in the camp, rather than going to the tabernacle with the others. Their names were Eldad and Medad, which meant "God loves" and "love." When God put His Spirit upon the men, these two began prophesying in the camp.

It seems that for some reason, these two men didn't care about becoming leaders. Perhaps we would have felt very privileged and proud to be a part of that group, but these two were different. They had a golden opportunity to come into the "central line," but they seemed not to care. And yet as the others prophesied, they prophesied by the Lord's Spirit as well!

A young man came to report this occurrence, and Joshua said to Moses, "O my lord, Moses, forbid them!" (Num. 11:28). How could they do this?

Moses had called seventy, and two of them were not following orders. Not only did they not respond, but they began to blow “another trumpet”! This certainly may have offended Joshua’s disciplined and obedient character. Perhaps his understanding was that the Israelites could only have one voice. If there were other voices, that would lead to trouble, would it not? But Moses said, “Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them!” (Num. 11:29). To Moses, the fact that only seventy had prophesied was not good enough, for he wished ALL of God’s people were prophets!

REJOICING IN THE SPIRIT’S WORK, REGARDLESS

A natural man thinks there must be only one flow, one speaking, one teaching, and one talk. God’s way is always to work according to His Spirit. If I were there, would I join those two outside the tent? I would not. If I were called to be one of the seventy, I would have done as Moses asked, because that is God’s way. But God is very broad and grand. He can use all such opportunities to develop His testimony. Therefore, we shouldn’t be so narrow. We have the Lord’s presence with us this morning, but at the same time, other places also have the Lord’s presence. Some may have it some fraction of a percent, and some may have something more. We ourselves may have a good amount. Regardless, we are not the only place that has the Lord’s presence. Therefore, we should not judge or condemn others. Joshua was exposed by Moses here as being too narrow. A servant of the Lord cannot be narrow; a servant of the Lord must be broad.

REMAINING FAITHFUL TO OUR COMMITMENT

This doesn’t mean we should give up what the Lord has given to us. If you were to visit another congregation in your city every Lord’s Day, you could never finish visiting all of them in a year before you would have to start again. That is foolish. We have to be firm with what the Lord has committed us with, and how the Lord has led us. We have to be firm according to what the Lord has told us to do. We stand for the Lord’s testimony! Yet at the same time, our heart is very restful, for God is able to do beyond what we can do or what we can see. Moses was very mature at this point. His view was very broad. He was able to tell Joshua that he hoped not only these two would prophesy in such a way, but that all two million of the Lord’s people would! If that truly happened, of course, it would be a pretty “messy” situation, but the sentiment is right. The grandness and openness of Moses was a result of his trust in God.

Moses did not pass on all his burden to the two men who were prophesying. He did not dissolve the gathering of the sixty-eight others in favor of them, either. He was very clear about what the Lord had committed to them, and yet at the same time he realized God was able to do something further. In fact, it was his desire that the Lord would do something further.

Wouldn't we be happy if a certain denomination helped two people to be saved this morning? If another group of Christians helped someone to love the Lord today, would that not be a reason for us to rejoice as well? And yet because of this we do not say, "Let us all go join some other Christian group!" No. We have our commitment. What a high, broad, spiritual view Moses had. His desire that all God's people would prophesy is the desire that Jesus Himself has, for prophesying builds up His church (1 Cor. 14:4).

REFUSING TO REBEL AGAINST GOD'S GOVERNMENT

Moses married an Ethiopian woman, and Aaron and Miriam spoke out against him because of this (Num. 12:1). If Joshua had joined them at that time, he possibly would have become the new leader of Israel. Neither Aaron nor Miriam would have been acceptable. The most capable people were Moses and Joshua. Joshua could have said, "Hallelujah, I don't have to be a tent keeper anymore. I will rise up also and throw my soldiers behind the revolt. Then I will be the leader." But because of all he had learned, he did not say one word. Joshua was the most hopeful "young" man and went through the most dangerous trial. There may come a chance for some among us to do something,, that even seems legal, to make themselves somebody. Yet Joshua let it pass.

Thus, we have the clear call of the silver trumpets, and yet we see a situation that is broad and general. We must recognize this, even while being completely faithful to what the Lord has committed us with. Furthermore, we realize that we must be so careful when we come to the matter of God's government. The leaders God has placed among us may have faults, but we must not touch such things. If we pass this test, God may grant us some manifestation, as He did Joshua at this time.

SENT AS ONE OF THE SPIES TO SEARCH OUT THE LAND

The Lord told Moses to choose the ruler from every tribe to send and search out the land of Canaan (Num. 13:1-2). In order to go in and take the land, you have to know what is going on! Among the twelve leaders was Joshua. Joshua is called Hoshea in Numbers 13:8, which was his name before Moses changed it (13:16). Hoshea means "salvation," but Moses must have said, "Young man, you cannot think that salvation is in yourself; salvation is of Jehovah!" (Jesus is our version of the Hebrew name Joshua.) The fact Moses changed his name probably indicates he was marked out to be the leader.

Moses told them to go southward and get up into the hill country (Num. 13:17). If you desire to win the victory, you have to gain the high ground. Whenever we follow the Lord, we are ascending. In the five books of Psalms there are the Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120-134). The Christian life is always taking us higher. There is no way to walk as a believer and remain at the same altitude. If we are happy when things remain flat, the Lord is not. His intention

is that we would ascend. And after you ascend somewhat, and feel so glorious, the Lord says, "Don't stop now! Ascend further!"

When we arrive at the good land, we will realize that to really get into it, we will have to deal with not only our flesh, but also the powers and principalities in the air. This is the nature of the spiritual battle. Therefore, we must go up!

Moses told the spies to look to see whether the land was good or bad (Num. 13:19). God had already told him it was a land flowing with milk and honey (Exo. 3:8), but Moses wanted them to see for themselves. He knew they would be impressed. This is the principle. If, for instance, you want some young people to go to a certain university after they graduate, you send them first to spy out that campus. It doesn't work for the parents to simply decide that their child is going to go to a certain school. Instead, they should drive their child to the campus to show them around. (Young people, stay in your locality for the Lord's testimony!) Even if you know a thing is good, still take those you are burdened for to see it for themselves.

THE REPORT OF THE TEN SPIES CAUSING THE PEOPLE TO LOSE SIGHT OF WHO THEY WERE

The spies searched through the whole land in forty days, so they must have walked 10 to 20 miles a day. In the Valley of Eschol they brought back a cluster of grapes so large that it had to be carried between two men! While they were in the land they saw the different peoples who inhabited it, including the children of Anak, a race of giants (Num. 13:28). Every one among them looked like Yao Ming! They reported they saw the giants, and we were in their own sight as grasshoppers (v. 33). Grasshoppers are not just small, but also purposeless. If they had said that they felt small, that perhaps would not have been so serious, but to say they were grasshoppers indicated they felt as though they were just going to be trampled. On the one hand, they saw the prosperity of God's blessing (they brought those grapes with them), but they didn't see that God could help them overcome the giants. Because of this, the Israelites began to mourn (Num. 14:1).

Perhaps Joshua and Caleb were the two who carried the grapes to show all the people, but the other ten were there, despondent. Moses asked them, "Was the land good?" They had to reply that it was, and that it really was flowing with milk and honey (Num. 13:27). Then Moses might have said, "Great! Let us then..." but they interrupted, "...but there are giants there! Every one is like Yaho Ming. You want to fight with them? Are you crazy? We are like grasshoppers compared to them!" In saying they were grasshoppers, it signified that they saw themselves as being hopeless. In fact, they were visionless, like many young people today. But God's chosen people are meaningful, purposeful, full of vision, and realize why they live on this earth. They realize the goal of their existence, and they fight for the Lord's interest. Therefore something had happened with the spies. They had seen something, and then it seems they saw something else that ruled it out. Therefore everyone in the

congregation lifted up their voice and the people cried together that night. How hopeless! All the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron. They forgot how they left Egypt, crossed the Jordan, and ate miraculously every day for two years. They forgot the water from the rock. They forgot how God had provided everything they needed. Everything positive they forgot; all they saw now was the discouraging picture painted by the ten spies.

When the churches went through some difficult times three years ago, many likewise forgot all the enjoyment they had experienced, all the spiritual growth they had gained, and all the spiritual riches they had accumulated. All that many were able to think about was how they had been cheated. I don't like to say whether that was so or not. No servant needs anyone to defend him; let his own ministry defend him. Brothers, don't be offended. I could be one of the grasshoppers too. Such people find that they are content with a little water on the grass, even though they used to be clear about God's purpose and how the Lord had gained them for it.

The truth has not changed, and what we have gained up to this point has been real. We still see giants, for there will always be giants. For some reason in their presence some feel like they are just grasshoppers, sipping some water off the grass. But we are God's children! We have all the riches. Whatever happens, it cannot change what has already been constituted in us.

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL'S MURMURING

The children of Israel mourned, however, and murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!" (Num. 14:2). At that point Moses should have said, "Just die here then, what difference does it make where you die? You are still in the wilderness, so you can die here if you want." If I were Moses I would have been very offended. I would have said, "Well, too bad we are out of Egypt, but we are still in the wilderness, so go ahead. Joshua, pick up your sword, for they are all ready to die!"

Murmuring exposes a pitiful condition. The one who has the Lord's commitment, who loves the Lord, who serves the Lord, the fighter, never murmurs. Such a person always knows what is best for God's interest. That is what they are geared to. But the children of Israel were not such people at this point. Instead, they claimed their wives and children would become prey (Num. 14:3). None of this had happened, yet they wanted to prophesy it. They also said it would be better to return to Egypt. This makes sense. If they were not going to follow the Lord, they might as well go back to Egypt, but they could not. (Have you ever experienced becoming so offended by something or someone that you wanted to go back to the world, but you found that you couldn't? You may have even tried to join your old friends again, and found that you simply couldn't stand the old things anymore. You can murmur, but you cannot go back.)

The most serious thing spoken by the Israelites was that they would overthrow Moses and replace him with another leader who would take them back to Egypt (Num. 14:4). At this point, Joshua and Caleb tore their clothing, which was a sign of their grief and distress. They spoke to all the people, arguing, "The land is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delights in us, He will bring us into this land and give us this land which flows with milk and honey." They were two million strong. The Lord was with them. He had caused water to flow out of the rock, and had defeated their enemies in the wilderness. What were they worried about? If the Lord is with us, no one can be against us! They warned the people, "Only rebel not against the Lord." This indicates that for the people to rebel against Moses was to rebel against the Lord. Joshua and Caleb encouraged the people, telling them that the giants would become bread for them (Num. 14:9).

The Lord came in at this point and said, "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmurs against Me?" (Num. 14:27). Actually the people were murmuring against Moses, but in God's eyes they were murmuring against Him, because it was He who appointed Moses leader. I hope we all could learn this crucial lesson. Never murmur against those who raised you up and served you. They are your life-source. The Lord continued, "As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you; your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward which have murmured against Me" (Num. 14:28-29). That was a severe judgment. The Lord chose to raise up a new generation, rather than allow that generation to enter into the good land. Among them all, only Caleb and Joshua would be allowed to enter. Because of this, the children of Israel were forced to wander in the wilderness for the next 38 years.

Joshua was somewhat manifest at this time. He had stood firmly with God for God's interest, and had stood firmly with Moses as God's appointed leader. Thus together they began a thirty-eight year ministry in the wilderness. While the others became grasshoppers and forgot their purpose, Joshua and Caleb had stood firm. They could say they were on the Lord's side, that they were standing with God, that they trusted God's speaking. They held firm to the purpose that had been revealed to them, which had become the goal of their existence.

Joshua had shown that he was someone ready to take the people into the land. For another 38 years, however, he remained an attendant to Moses. Being as manifested as he was, this was probably not easy. In fact, this must have become the hardest lesson of all for Joshua. If it had been one of us, could we have done it without murmuring? As Moses became older, do you think Joshua ever had the thought, "When will this man die so I can fulfill my destiny?" Ambitious people always think about how they can get to the top. Rarely could we find someone who was as capable as Joshua say, "I don't care about getting to the top; I care for my ministry, my constitution, the divine operation, and the divine testimony." Thirty-eight years is not a short time. Joshua continued to learn, and when Moses died, Joshua was able to rise up and say, "Let us go and take the land." -*Titus Chu*

JOSHUA: A LIFE OF SERVICE

MESSAGE FOUR

RISING UP AND FIGHTING TO ENTER THE LAND (1)

EPHESIANS AND JOSHUA

In the New Testament, the most profound book is Ephesians. In the Old Testament, the most profound book is Joshua, as it matches Ephesians.

Ephesians stresses that God is after an inheritance (1:14,18). The stress in the Old Testament is that God is after a piece of land. In Ephesians we are told that we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but instead against principalities and powers in the heavenlies (6:12). In the Old Testament, we are told the struggle to gain the land is against the tribes that represent the heavenly enemies (Exo. 3:8). Joshua and Ephesians very much match each other. In Ephesians, our Triune God is shown to have an eternal purpose which is focused upon gaining an inheritance of glory (1:11-14). This inheritance matches who He is. It is His heart's desire. It also becomes His expression. We should be impressed that in the New Testament there is such a sweet book in which God tells us, "I want to make Myself your inheritance, and in turn I want to make you My inheritance. I have done something to totally match you, and in turn I want you to one hundred percent match Me. I am glorious, but I need a counterpart, an abode, to express My glory."

GOD'S INHERITANCE AND GOD'S GOOD PLEASURE

Ephesians begins with how God the Father planned, how God the Son redeemed, and how God the Spirit has become our surety. Furthermore, God desires to make known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself (1:9-11). In the Bible, there is such a portion that clearly tells us that God has a purpose, and that this purpose is His good pleasure. In

other words, every time we touch His purpose, He is so very happy!

I look for my grandchildren when they are near, because that is my pleasure. There is something in my heart, that is my pleasure. When I see my grandchildren, I am so satisfied, for that is my good pleasure. There is no existence, living, pursuing, labor, or struggle that can be higher than for that which brings total satisfaction to the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ!

You may have pleasure in rock music or piano or being a scholar or being naughty, but do you know whatever your pleasure is, is temporary. God has an eternal pleasure, the pleasure that can bring us on to eternity. In eternity we will still be that pleasure. There is no time the Father gets tired of the Son, and there is no time our Lord will get tired of us. Every time He is so happy, but not just for one of us, but for all of us, for we together become His pleasure which He purposed in Himself.

HEADED UP IN CHRIST

God's desire is to head up all things in Christ (Eph. 1:10, 22). This is His pleasure. What is it that makes Him unhappy? It is when He is unable to see you headed up in Christ. In other words, the Lord can create the heavens and earth, can create man, and can conquer any obstacle in His way, but He cannot conquer you. We are His unique frustration. Every time we go to Him, He looks at us, loves and cares for us all, and even tells us we are His satisfaction, and yet for some reason every one of us is His frustration. Why? Simply because we rarely allow Him to head us up in all things.

Sometimes we tell the Lord that we belong to Him because He died for us, but that still is not what is meant by being headed up. That is the beginning of changing your position so the Lord might head you up, so He might take you forward to bring you into that reality. The Lord desires to head us all up in Himself. We are predestined by the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will. He wants to head us up so He can inherit us. It is my dream to be inherited by the Lord, so I come to the Lord and tell Him, "I give all I have to You." The Lord says, "I like to see that what you have I am able to take for My inheritance. You have a lot of things that I cannot take." You may say, "Lord, I burn them all," but the Lord says, "But I cannot take *you*! I love you, I care for you, I work with you, but I desire that you become so one with Me that you are not only in union with Me, but even that you are incorporated with Me. I desire that who you are becomes constituted with Me, and that you become a part of My constitution. Then we will perfectly match each other, and you will become something of My inheritance."

HIS INHERITANCE IS HIS GLORY IN THE SAINTS

In Ephesians 1:18 Paul writes, "I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has

called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.” We need to have a vision of how glorious the matter of the Lord’s inheritance is! For the past two thousand years, it includes all those who declared, “Wherever the Lamb goes, we will follow” (Rev. 14:4). It includes all the local churches raised up from city to city across one continent to another. How rich is the Lord’s inheritance! Other than the Lord Himself, there is nothing that can match it for glory.

No matter who gets elected president this November, that office in no way can compare to the riches of glory the Lord is gaining in His believers! God is a God of glory (Acts 7:2), and what He desires to inherit are the riches of His glory in the saints (Eph. 1:18). When we see the church, we see God’s masterpiece (Eph. 2:10). The church is something composed of the riches of God’s glory!

GAINGING GOD’S INHREITANCE IS A MATTER OF WARFARE

This is what God desires, but it will not be accomplished without a fight. This is why in Ephesians 6 we are told to put on the whole armor of God (vv. 11-17). To put on the armor of God practically means to put on the church life. We should not say that the Lord Jesus alone is our armor, for we cannot divide the Body of Christ from Christ (Rom. 12:4-5). Christ and Christ’s Body are one. In this one entity we can put on Christ. When we put on Christ, we put on Body of Christ; when we put on the Body of Christ, we put on the saints (1 Cor. 12:23-24; Eph. 4:24). Every local church needs to put on the other local churches. Every saint needs to put on other saints. And altogether we need to put on Christ. The armor of God enables us to stand against the stratagems of the devil (Eph. 6:11).

OUR WRESTLING IS WITH THE AUTHORITY IN THE AIR

Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood. Our battle is against the principalities, against the rulers and authorities (Eph. 6:12). Principalities are the rulers. There is a Banana Republic, and in the air there is also a Banana Republic that pulls the strings of the Banana Republic we see on earth. You may like Walmart or Target. Do you realize there is an office in the air that controls all these earthly organizations? They all are under a certain evil spirit’s control, so when you walk in, you are walking right in Satan’s kingdom. We all have to live on this earth, but when you walk into Banana Republic, don’t become a “banana”! Maintain a sober mind, and be clear in the Lord’s presence. Purchase what you really need, whatever is pleasing to the Lord, while realizing you are taking a tour right through the realm of the satanic rulers and principalities. We are here to wrestle them!

When you refuse to fall under the sway of some store's presentation, or some other ruse of the enemy, one authority will say to another, "Can you do anything?" Therefore one day your in-law comes and says, "There is this sale that I am going to. Can you come with me?" Why does this happen? Because the rulers have begun to work. Then, if you agree to go with this person, he or she may say, "Isn't that cheap? Look at that! It's seventy percent off! Don't give up on this golden opportunity." You are compelled to surrender and purchase it. Then, after you do, you find you don't need someone to invite you again. You begin to go by yourself. Without even realizing it, you have become a "shopaholic."

One day I wanted to buy something for my granddaughter, and met a man holding a very tiny baby. I saw him later in the restroom, changing his child's diaper. I asked him how old the baby was, and he replied that it was less than twenty-four hours old! It happened to be that his wife was a shopaholic, so just after delivering the baby her first thought was to go shop!

THE AIR AND THE EARTH WORK TOGETHER

The principalities control every kind of franchise. The air and the earth work together, and if you don't go along, they will try other things to gather you in. The powers will intensify their offerings and try to make them more attractive. Perhaps they will attract you with the argument that you need entertainment, or relaxation. If you resist, the authority will send an agent to attempt to get you to do something you wouldn't have done otherwise, in order to hook you.

We are not fighting with flesh and blood. That would actually be much easier. We are fighting against principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world. The whole *cosmos* is under the rule of darkness. And under this present darkness, God says, "I want to raise up My testimony, something that satisfies Me, My inheritance. When I gain My inheritance I am joyful, for it becomes a testimony totally of Me!"

Look how dark the world is. Even the news media, which is supposed to be balanced, is unbalanced. Don't think there is justice—everything in the world is under the authority of the air. We are not wrestling with flesh and blood, but we are fighting against these kinds of things.

TO FIGHT WE MUST PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

This is the spiritual warfare we are fighting. Therefore, we have to put on the whole armor of God. Put on your local church life, put on the Body of Christ, put on the saints, love Jesus, and love the brothers. Give yourself to Jesus and give yourself to your brothers and sisters. When you are living such a life, you live under its covering and protection.

JOSHUA'S CHARGE AFTER MOSES' PASSING:
ARISE AND CROSS THE JORDAN

Before Moses died, Joshua was appointed to take his place (Deut. 31:7; Josh. 1:1-2). Joshua, however, didn't do a thing until Moses, whom God called "My servant" (Josh. 1:2) died. I hope that when I might pass away, that I could be remembered as "Titus, the servant of the Lord!" This is so sweet. God was saying, "Moses is not a common man, but My servant." God spoke to Joshua, "Moses, my servant, is dead. Now therefore ARISE, and go over the Jordan." (Notice that God did not say, "Now fulfill his ministry.")

I think many times Joshua must have stood looking over the Jordan and felt, "We have to go over and take it, because this is the good land God has promised us." He would go to Moses, who would say, "Let's pray." Again he might have spoken to Moses about this, and again Moses may have said, "Let's pray." Joshua was a spiritual man, so he didn't murmur or grumble about this. He didn't try to find a way around Moses. He was one with Moses, standing with him. God came and said to him, "You have waited long. Now arise and cross the Jordan!" Joshua had been waiting for this word for thirty-some years. He had said 38 years before, "Come on, let's go and take the land!" But the people and Moses and even God said no. He had to wait until that generation passed away, and the next one was ready.

Perhaps if we heard God's word "Arise" after 38 years of sleeping, we might have replied, "Huh? Arise for what?" Yet Joshua was so clear. In those 38 years, Moses has dispensed every part of his being into Joshua. If you are following a spiritual brother, it is best if you can totally receive what he can give you, to add to what you have. This is how you become a richer person. Joshua could not go beyond Moses, for he was a special vessel, but he had received everything he could from Moses. God then told him to arise and to go over the Jordan. Every place that the sole of their feet would tread upon would be given to them as the Lord said unto Moses.

OUR PROBLEM: WE NEGOTIATE

What was physically true for the children of Israel is spiritually true for us today. The problem is that we are small. We get occupied with whatever is placed in front of us at the moment. We don't realize how much the Lord could use us, but that is based today in how you walk. If you walk with depth, as someone who is pioneering, with an aggressive attitude to take the land, then Christ's unsearchable riches will be your reality and you will become His inheritance with glory! It is all according to how far you want to go.

We tend, however, to be negotiators. We equivocate. If you say, "Lord, I will give you Monday and Thursday," then your blessing will be Monday and Thursday, but not Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday or Lord's Day!

Due to your compromising, you refuse to walk through the whole land. But every place you put your foot belongs to you! Can you say “I want to explore Christ! I want to develop the Christ that is in me! I want to be in the divine Word! I want to have a living Christ! I want Christ to be my government day by day!”? In every instant and every situation He must be your Lord.

WHEREVER THEY PLACED THE SOLE OF THEIR FEET WAS THEIRS

We may read these verses as, “Every place that my eyes observe, or that I think about or am considering, the Lord will give me.” No. The Lord says “every place that the *sole of your foot* shall tread upon, that will I give to you” (Josh. 1:3). Why does your foot have to do the work? Why can’t you let your mind do it? Because it is only when you put your foot someplace that you realize that your Christ is so marvelous, rich, faithful, and exalted. You do not know who Christ is until you take a stand to walk in Christ.

THE STRUGGLE THAT MATTERS

Therefore the basic thought of this wrestling against the rulers of this world is that you walk! God says, “Rise up and pass through the Jordan. Every place you place your foot upon is yours.” Only God can make that promise. Your company may promise that it will make you an assistant manager or something. The world tries its best to buy people, but it doesn’t have much to offer. God, however, can offer us Christ!

Sometimes when I see some brothers I marvel at their foolishness. There is so much God has given them in Christ, and yet they become busy gaining other things instead. They ask others to pray for them so that they might get their degree, and so on. They worry that even though they have sent off so many resumes, still no one has hired them. I usually answer that I have no burden to pray for them. (This is why no one comes to ask me to pray for them anymore.) If I pray, I pray that they will love the Lord, love the church, consecrate themselves to Jesus Christ and nothing else, and that they might be able to say, “I will wrestle the evil powers for the Lord’s kingdom’s sake!” How glorious is such a life! It is immeasurably better than moaning about not having a job or being happy because you do have one. Every day thousands of people lose a job or gain one. I have loved the Lord Jesus for 54 years, and there has not been one period of time I felt was boring. Everything on this globe can be boring, but for the believer, Jesus is always precious and sweet. What a life! This is why I can be happy even in the midst all kinds of turmoils. I may have tears, but within me there is the feeling I can trust in the only One worthy of my trust, for He is there. From the beginning there are challenges, but rise up, for whatever place you stand on, it is yours!

The Lord really encouraged Joshua. He told him, "There shall not be a man who can stand against you all the days of your life" (Josh. 1:5) (Perhaps one day, or a few, but not all the days together!) "As I was with Moses, I will be with you. I will not fail you and will not forsake you. Be strong and of good courage!" Joshua could really rest in that word.

If you feel your life is boring, it is probably because you have never seen what God's glorious inheritance is, and that our existence is for the purpose of fighting to accomplish God's heart's desire. Once you see this you will say, "I am so happy that God will not fail me nor forsake me. I can be strong and of good courage!"

The land was to be divided among the people for an inheritance (Josh. 1:6). This land represents our inheritance, and this land is God's inheritance. God repeats again to Joshua that he had to be strong and very courageous (Josh. 1:6, 7; see also Deut. 31:7). The Lord had given the children of Israel His laws to observe, from which they were not to turn to the left or the right (Josh. 1:7). These laws are His words. Today, these words are the Bible. When we have His word and we abide in His word, we can rise up and take the land. Praise the Lord for this.

God repeats again to Joshua, "Have I not commanded you to be strong and of good courage?" (1:9). It seems as though God was worried that Joshua might have been thinking, "If Moses couldn't make it, how could I make it?" The Lord seemed to be telling Joshua, "I love and respect My servant, but you must come out from under his shadow and be strong and of good courage and go your way!"

We praise the Lord for His servants, and we praise Him that we can serve Him afresh. Therefore, be strong and of good courage. Be not dismayed, the Lord tells us, "your God is with you wherever you go." First, God tells Joshua, "I will lead you." Secondly, He says, "You can rest in Me." Third, He says, "I will give you My word." Fourth, he says, "I will lead you your entire life." So why would Joshua worry?

If you are going to serve the Lord, you may worry, "Who is going to marry me now?" or "Will I ever be able to buy a house?" or "Must I always drive a Kia?" The Lord, however, assures you that He will lead you. He will lead you to a good sister. He will lead you to the right house.

When we moved to Akron, I asked the Lord to give me a house that was close to the meeting hall, that had three bedrooms upstairs, and set back from the street so it wouldn't be too noisy, and to have as small a back yard as possible, so I wouldn't have much to mow (and yet with some yard so I could grow some tomatoes). Also, I asked the Lord to give me a

house that was in pretty good shape, since I am not a handyman. Then I asked one more thing. I didn't have any money, but I did have a couple thousand dollars in a retirement account from my time teaching. After I prayed, I was very restful. Soon the realtor called and said, "Mr. Chu, your God has prepared a house for you!" There had been a fire, so it had been repainted and recarpeted. It was a three-bedroom, two-story house. He said, "There is one drawback... the back yard is very small, due to a development in the back." I thanked the Lord as the One who is so alive! The price also was just right for the amount I had for a down payment. Every time I looked at something in that house, I was looking at a miracle. The Lord is so trustworthy! When He said "Be strong and of good courage," He also said, "I will be with you!"

FIGHTING IN ONENESS FOR GOD'S TESTIMONY

In Joshua 1:12, the tribes Rueben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh saw that the land on the side they presently stood was good, so they asked for that land. They promised they would go in to fight with the rest of the tribes until all their lands were acquired. The local churches should follow this principle. There were twelve tribes, but Joshua realized there was one unique testimony. If one must fight, then all fight together.

It is too easy for someone to say, "We cannot send anyone, for our number is too small." I call this "nest-watching syndrome." If you stay and do not help in the fighting, your own saints will die. If, however, you go, the Lord will gain the glory. Joshua was simple. He said, "We twelve tribes, we fight as one army. It doesn't matter who gets his land. As long as some have not yet gotten their inheritance, we all fight for that one to get it. Let us all fight together for the Lord's testimony." Isn't that glorious? If every church is only for itself, then no church can prevail. How foolish it would be for all the localities to compete for saints! It is a problem when we all just care for where we are. We must be those who are fighting for the one testimony to take the one inheritance. Travel to visit other churches. We shouldn't be for our locality alone. This is the principle Joshua stood upon. Yes, you find your home and your land, but don't be for your "tribe" alone. Rise up in fellowship with all the "tribes" to take the land. - *Titus Chu*

Rise up and take the land!

JOSHUA: A LIFE OF SERVICE

MESSAGE FIVE

RISING UP AND FIGHTING TO ENTER THE LAND (2)

The highest book in the New Testament is Ephesians, which speaks of the combat that is taking place in the heavenly places. The highest book in the Old Testament is Joshua, for its warfare also represents the spiritual combat we experience as we walk in the divine and mystical realm and labor for the Lord's interest.

Joshua was well-trained by the Lord. He was a learned person. God's people had also been prepared and were ready to enter the good land. This is one aspect of our walk in the heavenly realm. The other aspect is our ability to see the enemy clearly. From their vantage point, the children of Israel could clearly see the cities of the enemy. They could see Jericho (typifying the principalities and authority in the air); Ai (typifying the worldly realm of Walmart, Banana Republic, and so on); and Gibeon (typifying the fallen man... you and I).

In His economy, God wants to take care of these three things. He wants to destroy the power of the enemy. He wants to take care of the world. And, He wants to take care of man. You must realize you will continually confront these three matters throughout your entire life.

GOD TAKING THE LEAD IN GAINING THE LAND

The battle for the land was something both for the Lord and for the Israelites. This is revealed in the order of entrance into the Jordan. The first to enter the water were the priests carrying the ark.

What matters is not whether we make it or not, but whether God makes it! If God makes it, and we are with Him, then surely we will also make it. Therefore, as long as God achieves what He intends, that is good enough!

The first thing needed in this warfare is to allow the ark of testimony to lead. The first to walk into the river were the priests with the ark of testimony. After that, all the people were able to pass through.

THE WATERS STANDING UP IN A HEAP

When the priests entered the river, the water stopped and rose up in a heap a great distance away, giving adequate room for all the children of Israel to pass over easily. This was something for God, not for man. Our church life is not for us, it is the testimony of Christ! The Lord putting Himself in the water, however, allowed the children of Israel to experience salvation and victory.

THE EXCHANGE OF STONES AT GILGAL

The Lord told Joshua then to pick twelve leaders from the twelve tribes and have them pick up twelve stones from where the priests holding the ark of testimony were and to bring them to the shore. The stones were brought out of the river to be a testimony there at Gilgal. Then, they were to pick up another twelve stones from the shore and place them in the dry riverbed where the ark was standing. Thus, there were two piles of twelve stones that were made. Actually, this was an exchange of stones. Twelve were brought from the river to the shore, and twelve others were brought from the shore to the river where the ark stood. Afterwards the priests bearing the ark walked through and the water returned to its course in the Jordan.

WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BEING IN RESURRECTION; THE ELDERS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO HELP US EXPERIENCE DEATH

What is the significance of this? The significance is that we are responsible for being in resurrection, but the leading ones are responsible for our death. Baptism is a symbol of burial. To come out of the water indicates being brought into resurrection, and being placed in the river indicates being buried. When it comes to spiritual warfare, however, resurrection is the first matter, and then death. The good land typifies being in the heavenlies with Christ. Your job is to make sure that you are out of death into resurrection. The leading ones' job is to make sure you who are in resurrection are put into death.

As those in the church life, we still may like to do whatever it is we like to do. We like to be in control, when in fact we should have no control. We simply like to be free. Do we realize, however, that we are spiritual stones? Crossing the Jordan indicates we have entered into resurrection and bear the testimony of the Lord. Then, at the same time, another stone (representing the same person) is buried in the river.

This is why we feel like complaining in the church life sometimes. As we are bearing the testimony or being in resurrection, we are dying under the hand of the elders. I have loved and served the Lord for many years, and during this time I have always experienced the Lord's resurrection. On the other hand, I can also testify that during these years I have experienced being thrown into the water right where the Lord's testimony is and have been buried there. I die for the sake of the Lord's testimony. And yet, at the same time, I am able to declare, "Praise the Lord, I am in resurrection," even as I am able to declare, "Praise the Lord, I am dying."

So many things take place in the church life that are not according to our way. No one likes to live in such a situation. We cannot just be wherever we want to be as independent stones. That is why God, in His wisdom, had the twelve stones taken from the river and placed on the side of Gilgal (which signifies circumcision, the cutting off of the flesh). At the same time, the leading ones lay hold of those who have been struggling for God's testimony and fighting for His kingdom, so that they might remember that the process they are in is a process that involves death.

I sometimes wonder about the young people. I ask myself, "Are they willing to die?" I do not worry so much about the older saints who have been in the church life for many years. There has to be an exchange. One part of us the Lord likes very much, and that gets placed on the shore. Another part, for the testimony's sake, needs to be placed under the water at the site of the ark of testimony. It needs to undergo burial there.

If there is no such burial, then there is no readiness to declare that we are here for the Lord's testimony, even if things do not go our way. For the testimony's sake we live in resurrection, and for the testimony's sake we also allow ourselves to undergo burial in the church life. This aspect of the church life cannot be received by everyone.

For instance, some here are extremely talented violinists. Perhaps one of them might hear of an opening in an orchestra far from here. Will that person take the position, or will that person die for Christ? (Actually, even if that person takes the position, he still has to decide whether or not he will simply be in the orchestra, or whether he will die for Christ.) To be in resurrection is not difficult—you just apply it. To be in death, however, we need the church to stand with us. This is the reason Joshua was the one to decide to move the stones back into the river.

In 1954, I made the decision that this would be my life. Since then, I have experienced 54 years of death, as well as 54 years of resurrection. I have enjoyed the spiritual, divine, mystical realm and mingling and incorporation with Christ. I have enjoyed fighting for the Lord's interest. At the same time, I have had to bear being brought to the river where the testimony is. It is here that all the water has flowed over me so that I might be buried here.

BEING IN RESURRECTION TO FIGHT FOR GOD'S INTEREST

We are not in resurrection to have our way; we are in resurrection to fight for the Lord's interest!

I enjoy seeing so many young people here, but I do not trust young people. To merely have come out of the Jordan in resurrection does not mean you have yet accomplished what the Lord is after. It will still be necessary for the leading ones and the church to help you realize that the church life cannot be of the flesh or the soul. For the church life to bear the Lord's testimony, it must be one hundred percent a matter in the Spirit. Therefore, in the church life we always experience this thing called death. Everyone says "Praise the Lord for resurrection" because they don't know what that is. What is the sign of being in the Lord's death? One sign is to be in submission to the leading ones, and another is to always make the meetings on time, or even five minutes early. If not, you are not in the river Jordan, but running around on the shore on the other side!

JOSHUA MEETS THE CAPTAIN OF THE HOST

Joshua 5 begins with the circumcision of the people, the Passover, and their first eating of produce of the good land (and the ceasing of the manna). Then as Joshua is walking near Jericho, he meets a Man with a sword in his hand and asks him whether he was for them or for their enemies. (People like to tell the Lord that He must be on their side, even if it is Christians who oppose them!)

The Man is the messenger the Lord said He would send ahead of them. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. He told Joshua, "I am not on this or that side; I am here as the Captain of the host of the Lord." We do not follow any particular side among men; we follow Jesus Christ! Those who follow a man will change from one camp to another, depending upon whichever side is profitable to them. The Lord told Joshua simply that He was there to take charge. He was not on "their" side. He was saying we must be on the Lord's side.

FIGHTING AGAINST THE HEAVENLY AUTHORITY, THE EARTHLY ATTRACTIONS, AND RELIGION

The children of Israel are finally at the point they are ready to fight for the land. Remember, this fight is of three categories represented by Jericho, Ai, and Gibeon. In fact, these three characterize the entire cosmos. Jericho, which means "fragrance," signifies Satan and his authority in the air. Satan surely presents himself as a fragrant person! When he came to Jesus to tempt him, I have no doubt he appeared to be more beautiful than Jesus (read Isaiah 53:2). He was created in beauty (Ezek. 28:13). The Israelites had to defeat Jericho, which represented Satan's kingdom, first of all. Jericho must have been a beautiful city, being a place of fragrance. Satan's kingdom is beautiful, even to the point it may make a person feel it is a shame to destroy it.

Some people buy so many "collectible" items and then become slaves to them. Many girls come under the authority of a new makeup once they begin using it. All such things are from Jericho. What is most related to Jericho, however, is not what is found in stores, but in the chapels and cathedrals, because

religion is the biggest thing that Satan uses to control mankind. Recently, due to the fact so many are willing to die for Islam, there has been an upsurge in converts. The fact they are willing to die for their faith shows how strong they are. People desire God and want to be satisfied with God, but for some reason they don't find Christ, or, even if they do, they develop what they have into a religion.

Religion brings people all over the world a false sense of security. This is why religion is something worse than sin, for people know that sin is wrong. They do not realize how religion takes people away from God in the name of God. People should be following Christ, rather than merely belonging to Christianity.

The Lord told the church in Laodicea that He stood outside their door and knocked (Rev. 3:20). Someone may say they are "in the flow" and have all the riches, and yet the Lord says, "I stand outside, knocking." In Roman Catholicism there are many good brothers and sisters, but the Lord is standing outside the door and has been knocking there for 1500 years. "Let Me take My sheep. Let Me be their Lord."

JERICO: FIGHTING AGAINST THE POWERS IN THE AIR

How is Jericho overcome? God's way is very simple. He instructed Joshua to march around the city with all the men of war, once a day for six days. Surely this was the strangest tactic ever used for any battle in the history of the world! Seven priests were to walk before the ark of the testimony bearing ram horn trumpets. On the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times, after which they were to give a great shout. Then, when the walls of the city fell down flat, the people were to go into the city to take it.

How does God fight this battle? This battle is with those in the air, but we still have to take care of some things. First, you have to be fighting in the Body, not by yourself. You must realize there are seven priests in front of you with seven rams horns (meaning salvation). How can you overcome? You can declare, "Hallelujah, we are saved!" How do we overcome Satan? By declaring victory in the blood of Jesus!

Satan is very smart. He comes to a sister and tells her how wonderfully she sings. Instead of "Hallelujah," she begins to think, "Halluja-me." If you do well or not, the principle is the same, you blow the trumpet of the rams' horn, declaring you are saved by the blood of the Lord. Because of this, you gain the victory.

Do you fail? Satan will say, "How can the Lord love a person like you?" Don't argue back that the Lord does love you; just be in the church life and walk with the brothers who are marching to surround Satan's kingdom. Once you begin to declare, "Hallelujah I am saved. Praise the Lord!" Then you have to tell Satan, "Yes, I got defeated. Yes, I am a sinner. Yes, I failed. Yes, I am terrible. Satan, you don't know how terrible I am. The Lord cannot afford to expose all that is in me at once; He only exposes a little bit for me to see something. But let me tell you something: I am here because Jesus is my Savior!" That is the blowing of the trumpets. Because of this they overcame Jericho.

AI: FIGHTING AGAINST THE ENTICING WORLD

Ai means a mound, a heap of ruin. The world is a heap of ruin. The children of Israel have been circumcised and have been bearing the ark, but for some reason they forgot to seek the Lord. They spied out the town and felt that a few thousand men could take it. Joshua for some reason didn't go to the Lord and thirty-six were killed. This was not a small thing, because they never fought an actual battle in the land before. They took out their knives the first time. At Jericho they didn't even fight and they made it, but at Ai they fought and didn't make it! Why? With regards to the heavenly realm it is a matter of your declaration, but with regard to Ai, which represents the world, it is a matter of your fighting.

They prayed and the Lord showed them something. Something had come in among them of the world blended with religion through a young man named Achan. He picked up some Babylonian clothing. Babylon is something associated with religion and idol worship. He also picked up some silver, typifying Christ's redemption, and gold, which typifies God's nature. He picked up something of God and something of the world. Be very careful. Don't bring the world into the church life. If you do, the world will eventually conquer you. It starts out with something seemingly small, but eventually it opens the door for the world to invade. Eventually, the Israelites were shown the problem by God, and they burned those things and killed Achan with stones. After that, they went on to win the victory.

GIBEON: FIGHTING AGAINST RELIGIOUS CHEATING

We fight first with the principalities in the air (Jericho), and then with the messiness of the world (Ai). Even Cleveland Orchestra is something in the world. But the hardest thing to deal with is not Jericho or Ai, but rather Gibeon! Gibeon typifies the deceptiveness of man. Men of Gibeon came to the Israelites pretending to have come from a long distance. Joshua did not ask God, and therefore they made a covenant with Gibeon. If he had asked the Lord, the Lord certainly would have made the matter clear. However, although we can be cheated by man, God can use our mistake to gain a victory. Joshua failed, and this brought in five kings to fight with him (Josh. 10). In turn, the Lord used this as an opportunity to display one of the greatest miraculous works of power recorded in the Bible, which was His prolonging the day so Joshua might win the victory.

You may make a big mistake but if you are for the Lord, He can use it. If your heart is right, God will even use your wrong decisions for His glory. God is not afraid of your wrong decisions, but rather that you will forget about Him. He is not for right or wrong, but that you would be for His interest. This is the experience of Joshua. He said, "Let us stand firm for God's economy and fight the battle." Thus, even when he did fail, God used it to clean His house and purge away all the religious elements in the church life, bringing them into a living experience with this marvelous Christ. More than that, God used Joshua's mistake by gathering all the kings together so He might kill all the Amorites. - *Titus Chu*