

## Men and Women of God – Joshua

**Worship: Today I choose (to follow you)**

**Background:**

**Recap on Moses** – Moses did not see the promised land because he disobeyed God - but (**Numbers 28 v 14, Numbers 20 v 8–12** – God told Moses to speak to a rock to bring out water but Moses struck the rock twice and said ‘must we bring water out of this rock’ thus failing to give credit to God). Moses was a great man of God who was greatly used by God and at the end of his life he was honoured. **Deuteronomy 34 v 10-12**

**Exodus 33 v 11** ‘The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend’.

**Choice and its consequences** –see also **Genesis 2 v 16**

**Cain and Abel:** Genesis 2 v 15,16,17, Genesis 4 v 6,7 ‘Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do what is right, sin is crouching at your door: it desires to have you, but you must master it.’

**Ecclesiastes 7 v 29** ‘This only have I found: God made man upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes.’

**Isaiah 53 v 6** ‘We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way: and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.’

**Amos 5 v 14** ‘Seek good, not evil, that you may live, then the Lord will be with you, just as you say he is.’

**Romans 2 v 8** ‘But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.’

**Hebrews 4 v 7** ‘Today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts.’ (Psalms 95 v 7,8)

**Hebrews 8 v 9** ‘It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them.’ (**a new covenant – see also Jeremiah 31 v 33,34**)

**Jeremiah 18 v 7,8** ‘If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent

and not inflict on it the disaster that I had planned. And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.’

### **Blessings and Curses**

**Deuteronomy Ch 28** (blessings and curses) **Deuteronomy Ch 30 v 15-20 (v 19** ‘This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that your children may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.’

**John 4 v 36** ‘Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.’

As the Israelites entered the promised land they were told to totally destroy the nations **Deuteronomy 7 v 1-2** that the Lord was going to drive out before them but they did not (**Judges 1 v 27, v 29 v 30 and v 31**). There were seven nations larger and stronger – the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

N.B God drove these nations out because of their wickedness not because of Israel’s righteousness. **Deut 9 v 4-5**.

**Foreign gods:** Canaanite: Baal – the god of the storm and the rains (thought to control vegetation and agriculture). Ashtoreth (also called Astarte or Istar) was the goddess of love, war and fertility – temple prostitution and child sacrifice were a part of the worship. (Judges also mentions – Judges 10 v 6, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites and the gods of the Philistines inc Dagon the chief god of the Philistines – the god of the grain and the harvest – and worship here included human sacrifice)

**N.B** Acceptance by God was based on faith and not religious practices or birthright - not limited to the Jews (e.g Ruth a Moabitess, an ancestor of Jesus – a later study in the series) **See also Isaiah 56 v 6,7** ‘And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him, to love the name of the Lord and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.’

The choice of the Israelites had consequences **Judges 2 v 1-3**

**The period of the Judges (post Moses and Joshua pre the first king Saul).**

**Pattern:**

- Rebellion (**Joshua 1 v 11** – ‘Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord’).
- Oppression (**Deuteronomy 28 v 25** ‘The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies).
- Repentance and Restoration (**Deuteronomy 30 v 1-3** ..... and when you and your children return to the Lord your God ..... then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you...’ ,
- Restoration = God’s mercy and God’s grace (the God of the new testament as revealed in Jesus is the same God of the old testament)

Pattern = rebellion, oppression, repentance, restoration. This pattern occurred on **six separate occasions in this 325 yr period during which God raised up 12 judges (11 men and 1 woman)**. God raises up judges (read **Judges 2 v 16-19**)

**Focus on Joshua**

Background: **Numbers 13 v 30 – 14 v 9**

Commissioned: **Numbers 27 v 22,23**

Instructed: **Joshua 1 v 7,8**

**Joshua: Military leader, tactician, obedient to God – assistant to Moses (Moses changed his name from Hoshea to Joshua (Num 13 v 16) who took over the leadership of Israel from him, leading them into the promised land. Caleb and Joshua were the only two Israelites over the age of 20 who entered the promised land (Num 14 v 28-30).**

**VAK Moment:**

- Ask the group to write down some important decisions that they have made in the past

**Bible Study**

**Read: Joshua 9 v 3-15 (choices) Joshua 9 v 16 to 10 v 15 (consequences)**

In how many important decisions do or did we not include God?

(Israelites enquired of the Lord through the Urim and the Thummim (**Exodus 28 v 30** – ‘Also put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastpiece, so that they may be over Aaron’s heart whenever he enters the presence of the Lord. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the Lord.’ – Names mean ‘curses’ and ‘perfections’ and were kept in a pouch and taken out or shaken together to get a yes or no decision.))

**Read: Joshua 24 v 14-15 (Joshua is coming to the end of his life and there is still work to do)**

- What kinds of things today would be equivalent to the ‘gods of your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites’?(money/material possessions **Matt 6 v 19-24 and Ecc 4 v 10**, success, family, career, looks, **1 Sam 16 v 7** status etc)
- What others kinds of things would prevent us from serving the Lord? (remember parable of sower in Mark)
- In what ways can Christian parents in this case a father influence their family?
- In what ways do we influence our family for Christ?
- If we are honest how much do we rely on the church or perhaps our husband or wife (if we have one) for the spiritual development of our families?

#### **Fathers**

**Ephesians 6 v 4, Proverbs 4 v 6, Prov 22 v6,**

#### **Mothers**

**Titus 2 v 4,5, Proverbs 6 v 20**

#### **Mothers and Fathers**

**Deuteronomy 6 v 4-9**

#### **Children**

**Exodus 20 v 12, Ephesians 5 v 15-33**

**Read Joshua 24 v 14-15 again.** Before general prayer allow a minutes silence to allow those who wish to a moments quiet to pray that the Lord will enable these verses to be true for them and all that that means.

#### **Prayer:**

**Use the prayer time to pray specifically for opportunities to share the gospel either generally or with specific individuals.**

After closing in prayer you may want to use the following doxology (an expression of praise to God) to read together in closing (different translations may be read in groups or individually).

**Deuteronomy Ch 31 v 8 'The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.'**

**Author:- Carl Lee**