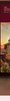
Recipe for Success

Lesson 1, 4th Quarter, September 27-October 03



Sabbath Afternoon September 27

Memory Text:

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper wherethoever thou goest." KJV — Joshua 1:7

Joshua was now the acknowledged leader of Israel. He had been known chiefly as a warrior, and his gifts and virtues were especially valuable at this stage in the history of his people. Courageous, resolute, and persevering, prompt, incorruptible, unmindful of selfish interests in his care for those committed to his charge, and, above all, inspired by a living faith in God—such was the character of the man divinely chosen to conduct the armies of Israel in their entrance upon the Promised Land. During the sojourn in the wilderness he had acted as chief counselor of Moses, and by his quiet, unpretending fidelity, his steadfastness when others wavered, his firmness to maintain the truth in the midst of danger, he had given evidence of his fitness to succeed Moses. Of him it was the voice of God: "Participants and Prophets, page 481.4

Sunday September 28

A New Moses

Read Deuteronomy 18:15-22 and Joshua 1:1-9. Why is it significant that the book of Joshua starts by echoing a promise related to what would happen after the death of Moses?

"It was with great anxiety and self-distrust that Joshua had looked forward to the work before him; but his fears were removed by the assurance of God, "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Unlike Moses, Joshua, in his people that thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them." Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses." "In the heights of Lebanon in the far distance, inspired by the Spirit of the Great See, and away to the banks of the Euphrates in the near—all this land I have given you." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 482.1

Read Exodus 33:11; Numbers 14:6, 30, 38; Numbers 27:18; Numbers 32:12; Deuteronomy 1:38; Deuteronomy 31:23; and Deuteronomy 34:9. What do these texts tell us about Joshua?

"Joshua was selected of God to be Moses' successor in leading the Hebrew host to the promised land. He was most solemnly consecrated to the future important work of leading, as a faithful shepherd, the people of Israel. "And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him. And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses." And he gave pledge charge before all the congregation of Israel, "Be strong and of a good courage; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel unto the land which I sware unto them: and I will be with thee." He spoke to Joshua in God's stead. He also had the elders and officers of the tribes gathered before him, and he solemnly charged them to stand firm and unflinchingly in their religious offices, and to faithfully obey all the instructions he had given them from God. He called Heaven and earth to witness against them, that if they should depart from God, and transgress his commandments, he was clear; for he had faithfully instructed and warned them." The Spirit of Prophecy Volume One, page 335, par. 1

Monday September 29

Cross! Take! Divide! Serve!

Read Joshua 1. What can we learn about the structure of the book from this opening chapter?

"To this promise was added the injunction, "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper wherethoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night." Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left," for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 482.2

"The Israelites were still encamped on the east side of Jordan, which presented the first barrier to the occupation of Canaan. "Arise," had been the first message of God to Joshua, "go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give them." Not instruction was given as to the way in which they were to make the passage. Joshua knew, from the experience of his predecessor, what course he should take, and what was to be done, perform, and in this faith the intrepid leader at once began his arrangements for an advance, confident of a miraculous aid from God. . . .

"A few miles beyond the river, just opposite the place where the Israelites were encamped, stood the large and populous city of Jericho. Jericho was the key, not only to the fertile valley of the country, and it would present a formidable obstacle to the success of Israel. Jericho therefore must be taken before the Hebrews can venture into the country and become in its population, its resources, and the strength of its fortifications. The inhabitants of the city, terified and suspicious, were constantly on the alert, and the messengers were in great danger. They were, however, preserved by Rahab, a woman of probity, at the peril of her own life. In return for her kindness they gave her a promise of protection when the city should be taken. Patriarchs and Prophets, page 482.4

"The spies returned in safety with the tidings, "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us." Joshua had declared to them in Jericho, "We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of your coming: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 483.1

Tuesday September 30

Heirs of Promise

Read Joshua 1:4-6 and Hebrews 6:17, 18. At that moment, the Promised Land was exactly that, a promise. Yet, God calls it an inheritance. What does it mean to be the heirs of God's promise?

"And now a panoramic view of the Land of Promise was presented to him. Every part of the country was spread before him. The Jordan was crossed and canopied in the dim distance, but standing out clear, distinct, and beautiful to his delighted vision. In this scene it was presented, not as it then appeared, but as it would become, with God's blessing upon it, in the possession of Israel. He seemed to be looking upon a second Eden. There were mountains clothed with cedars of Lebanon, fully grown with their stately and majestic forms, and valleys with green plains bright with flowers and rich in fruitfulness, here the palm trees of the tropics, there the vine loaded with its luscious clusters, and everywhere the choicest of fruits and flowers and the song of birds, goodly cities and fair gardens, lakes rich in "the abundance of the seas," pouring fleecy clouds upon the hillsides, and even while the spectator looked the wilds have blossomed. It was indeed such a land as Moses, inspired by the Spirit of God, had described to Israel: "For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring forth out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. This was the secret of Joshua's victory." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 483.1

Heirs of Promise

"Moses saw the chosen people established in Canaan, each of the tribes in its own possession. He had a view of their history after the settlement of the Promised Land; the apostasy of the people, their oppression by their enemies, their crying to God for help, the sent them, because of their sins, dispersed among the heathen, the glory departed from Israel, the beautiful city in ruins, the temple of God polluted by the heathen, the land made desolate by the land of their fathers, and at last brought under the dominion of Rome. Patriarchs and Prophets, page 484.1

"Before the distribution of the land had been entered upon, Caleb, accompanied by the Hebron, and to whom Caleb had given a special charge. Except Joshua, Caleb was the oldest man in Israel. Caleb and Joshua were the only ones among the spies who had brought a good report of the land of promise. Their faithfulness in carrying the people up and possess it in the name of the Lord. Caleb now reminded Joshua of the promise then made, as the reward of faithfulness, that the land whereon they had trown troden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord." He therefore presented a request that Hebron be given him for a possession. Here had been for many years the home of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and here, in the cave of Machpelah, they were buried. Hebron was the seat of the dreaded Anakim, whose formidable appearance had so terrified the spies, and through them destroyed the courage of all Israel. This, above all others, was the place which Caleb, trusting in the strength of God, chose for his inheritance." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 515.2

The promise of the land (heavenly Canaan) is to Abraham's seed, Jesus said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. [If ye are not the children of Abraham, ye are not heirs of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." See John 8:39-44. By doing the works of Abraham, "Then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29

Wednesday October 1

Be Strong

Read Joshua 1:7-9. Why did the Lord need to emphasize twice to Joshua that he had to be strong and courageous?

"Joshua endeavored to follow Moses, but they had not subdued it, and to human appearance the struggle to gain possession of the land must be long and difficult. It was inhabited by a giant race, of which the children of Israel had brought the people to go and possess it in the name of the Lord. Caleb now reminded Joshua of the promise then made, as the reward of faithfulness, that the land whereon they had trown troden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord." He therefore presented a request that Hebron be given him for a possession. Here had been for many years the home of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and here, in the cave of Machpelah, they were buried. Hebron was the seat of the dreaded Anakim, whose formidable appearance had so terrified the spies, and through them destroyed the courage of all Israel. This, above all others, was the place which Caleb, trusting in the strength of God, chose for his inheritance." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 515.2

"Except Joshua and Caleb, the spies, who had brought the report to Israel, Jesus said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. [If ye are not the children of Abraham, ye are not heirs of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." See John 8:39-44. By doing the works of Abraham, "Then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29

Thursday October 2

Prosperous and Successful

Read Joshua 1:7-9 together with Genesis 24:40; Isaiah 53:10, and Psalm 1:13. Based on these texts, what does it mean to be prosperous and successful?

Here are positive directions that reach down to our time. God is speaking to us in these last days, and He will be understood and obeyed. Caleb spoke to Israel through his servants: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 328, par. 3.

Read Romans 3:31. What does this text say about the relationship between law and faith?

"For not the hearers of the law [the ten-commandment law] are just before God but the doerer of the law will be justified." Rom. 2:13.

Then Paul goes on to explain that no one is actually justified by the keeping of the law (the decalogue) itself, but that it points out the sinner's transgression, pronounces his doom, then sends him condemned to Christ His Saviour Who alone, through the merits of His atoning blood which He shed in behalf of all sinners, can forgive him, justify him, then go on to sanctify him. Thus the apostle declares.

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin (not the forgiveness of it). But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . . Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:20-24, 31.

Friday October 3

Further Thought

"This book of the law shall not depart out of the mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Joshua 1:8. Conflict and Courage, page 116.1

"If men will walk in the path that God has marked out for them, they will have a counselor and guide who is far more than any human wisdom. Every step will be marked by divine Providence. God will his guide. The first word that Joshua used was the word of the Spirit, the Word of God.... Conflict and Courage, page 116.2

"It was because the strongest influences were to be brought to bear against his principles of religious worship, the Lord in mercy charged him not to turn to the right hand or to the left. He was to follow a course of strictest integrity.... If there had been no peril before Joshua, God would not ever and anon have charged him to be of good courage. The same God and His cares, Joshua had his God to guide Him. Conflict and Courage, page 116.3

"There is no greater deception than for man to suppose that in any difficulty he can find a way of escape for himself, or can extricate himself in any emergency, by his own wisdom or circumstance.... Conflict and Courage, page 116.4

"The Lord has a great work to be done in these last days. To every man He has given work for his time and strength, such as no man has done, and he will be led astray. He is always under While Bible religion embodies the principles of activity in service, at the same time there is the necessity of asking for wisdom daily from the Source of all wisdom. What was Joshua's victory? Thou shalt meditate upon the Lord day and night. The word of the Lord came to Joshua just before he passed over Jordan.... This was the secret of Joshua's victory. He made God his Guide. Conflict and Courage, page 116.5

"Those holding the positions of counselors should be unselfish men, men of faith, men of prayer, men that will not dare to rely upon their own human wisdom, but will seek earnestly for light and intelligence in what is the most manner of conducting their business. Joshua, the commander of Israel, searched the books diligently in which Moses had faithfully chronicled the directions given by God—His requirements, commands, and restrictions,—lest he should move unadvisedly." Conflict and Courage, page 116.6

For further studies, feel free to contact:
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