

CONNECT GROUPS

word time

SPRING 2014



AUSTRALIA
for **CHRIST**
CHURCH



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GOD WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE ISRAELITES

PART 1

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 2:16-25

2. Key Verse: Exodus 2:24-25

“God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.”

3. Reference scripture: Isaiah 49:14-15; Numbers 23:19; Matthew 5:18

Today's message

In our first lesson, we'll discuss how God is a promise keeper and will always answer our prayers in His time.

The oppressed Israelites

The descendants of Jacob numbered seventy in all when they went down to Egypt as requested by Joseph (Exodus 1:5). The Israelites stayed in Egypt for 430 years and were blessed as promise by God. Exodus 1:7 says, “The Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them”

Time passed and a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. He asserted his power by oppressing the Israelites. Pithom and Rameses were, for example, built by forced Israelite labor in this period.. But the more the Israelites were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread. So the Egyptians worked the Israelites more ruthlessly, even to the extent that they tried to kill every new born boy from Hebrew women, only allowing the girls to live (Exodus 1:8-22)

Despite such oppression from the Egyptians, the Israelites continued to multiply and became a huge nation. This was the fulfilment of the promise that God gave long ago to Abraham, the forefather of the Israelites (Genesis 12:1-2; Acts 7:17)

The birth and growth of Moses

By the time the king of Egypt commanded the Hebrew midwives to kill every boy at birth, Moses was born in the house of Levi. When his mother saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months (Exodus 1:15 - 2:2). But when she could hide him no longer, she



placed the child in a papyrus basket and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe and saw the basket among the reeds. She sent her slave girl to get the basket, and she made Moses her son. Pharaoh's daughter chose a woman to nurse the baby Moses, and the woman chosen was the baby's mother. Moses grew up under the care of his real mother after all (Exodus 2:3-10)

Moses was educated by the Egyptians and became an excellent student under their teaching. (Acts 7:21-23). When Moses was forty years old, he saw one his fellow Israelites being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defence and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. But what Moses did was revealed, so he fled from Pharaoh and went to Midian. In Midian God trained Moses for forty years so that he could serve and lead the Israelites effectively (Exodus 2:11-22; Acts 7:23-30).

We can learn about the amazing providence of God through Moses' life. God is looking for someone to train to be a suitable people for His great work.

God chose Moses to bring His people, the Israelites, out of slavery from Egypt. And the same God today chooses and trains us to deliver the people of the world from Satan's bondage.

Closing questions

1. Despite the oppression of the Egyptians, why did the Israelites continue to multiply, prosper and become a nation?

(Genesis 12:1-2; Acts 7:17)

2. Does forty years of preparation seem excessive? Is it possible that many in ACF church have been in training for decades in preparation to minister to all the new people coming and will be coming into our fellowship?

3. It has been said that the most productive years are after the age of 50. Is this True? If so, why do you believe it?

Application in our daily lives

1. Share your experience/s of how God trained you, just as He chose and trained Moses.

GOD WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE ISRAELITES

PART 2

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 2:16-25

2. Key Verse: Exodus 2:24-25

“God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.”

3. Reference scripture: Isaiah 49:14-15; Numbers 23:19; Matthew 5:18

Today's message

In our second lesson, we'll discuss how easy it is to feel alone and abandoned. But God is bigger than any obstacles and knows what we are going through, He will never leave us nor forsake us!

God was concerned about the Israelites

When Pharaoh the king of Egypt died, the Israelites continued to suffer from the hard labour. The Israelites, in desperation, cried out to God for help. God heard their groaning, and He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God was concerned about the Israelites (Exodus 2:23-25). How did God show His concern for them?

First, God heard the groaning of the Israelites when they cried out for help under the oppression of Egypt. Likewise, God hears our distress and answers our prayer when we seek Him for help. Jeremiah 29:12-13 says, “you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”



Second, God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God is faithful and always keeps His promises. Numbers 23:19 says, “God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?”

Jesus said in Matthew 5:18 “I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.”

Third, God did not forget the Israelites – in their slavery in Egypt or later in their captivity in Babylon. Scripture illustrates this in Isaiah 49:14-15, “But Zion said, ‘The Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me.’ ‘Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!’”

The Israelites in their suffering might have thought God had forgotten them, but God never forgot the Israelites whom He chose to be His own people. Even though we are in distress just as the Israelites were, we should not despair but stand firm, because God hears our cries and will help us.

Closing questions

1. When bad situations never seem to end and the same old problems never get resolved, there can be a strong temptation to feel abandoned by God, how might we apply the following scriptures.

“He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you.” Do not fear or be dismayed.” (Duet 31:8)

Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Hebrews 13:5

Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

2. Is the Lord sometimes “slow” in coming to our aid? Give possible reasons why?

Application in our daily lives

1. Do you have faith in God that He cares for you even in difficult times?

MOSES, A GREAT LEADER OF ISRAEL PART 1

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 2:11-15

2. Key Verse: Romans 5:3-4

“Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

3. Reference scripture: Exodus 2:1-10; 3:1-5; Job 23:10

4. Objectives

a. To realize that God trains us through tribulation

b. To discover how Moses was changed

c. To realize that God wants to change us so He can use us.

Today's message

God used Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egypt, but before God used him, Moses had to go through many kinds of tribulation. Today we will discover how Moses became the leader of Israel.

Moses received a calling from God

When the Israelites were dwelling in Egypt, the culture and civilization in Egypt were highly developed. It is at this period that Pharaoh's daughter took Moses and raised him. Moses was educated by the Egyptians and became an exceptional student under their teaching (Acts 7:22). The Egyptians might have thought that Moses would succeed Pharaoh and become the king of Egypt.

When Moses was forty years old, however, he decided to visit his fellow Israelites (Acts 7:23). He watched the Israelites suffer from Egyptian tyranny. In response, Moses murdered a man and had to flee to the backside of the desert for 40 years. During those 40 years The Lord was able to work on Moses character and prepared for the “call” of God on his life to be the leader and great deliverer of Israel.

God's call can come at anytime and anywhere. We were able to believe in Jesus Christ because God called us. John 6:44 says, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.” Anybody who believes in Jesus Christ has already answered the call of God.

When we accept the call of God and come to the Lord, our life of faith is pleasant and delightful. But as time passes, tribulation also comes along in our life. Why do we have such tribulation? The reason is that after God calls us, He trains us to be a person of character so He can use us.

Moses was trained

One day, Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. In a rage, Moses killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. He thought he could rescue the Israelites in Egypt with his own power. But he fled to the land of Midian when everything he did was revealed (Exodus 2:11-15)

Closing questions

1. Why do we encounter tribulation even after we accept Jesus as Saviour? Share some of your experiences.
2. What kind of man was Moses changed into after God had dealt with him those 40 years? Have you known anyone who has had a similar experience?

Application in our daily lives

1. Share an experience how God has trained you.



MOSES, A GREAT LEADER OF ISRAEL PART 2

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 2:11-15

2. Key Verse: Romans 5:3-4

"Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope."

3. Reference scripture: Exodus 2:1-10; 3:1-5; Job 23:10

4. Objectives

a. To realize that God trains us through tribulation.

b. To discover how Moses was changed.

c. To realize that God wants to change us so He can use us.

Today's message

God used Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egypt, but before God used him, Moses had to go through many kinds of tribulation. Today we will continue to discuss how Moses became the leader of Israel.

Moses was unable to go back to Egypt so became a shepherd in Midian tending Jethro's sheep. He married Jethro's daughter and lived with Jethro without a purpose in life. But Moses was being trained in the wilderness of Midian to get rid of his pride and his self-centred and humanistic character, which made him rely on his own ability for everything he did.

When we receive God's call and come before the Lord today, God still trains us to get rid of our pride, self-centeredness, and all of our characteristics that are not in accordance with His purpose. However, when people go through such a process, they generally resist and struggle to hold onto who they are. That is why it took forty years to train Moses to get rid of his self-centredness..

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, the Lord not only makes us lie down in green pastures, but also guides us through the valley of the shadow of death. It is when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death that we are trained to become a new person who is suitable for the Lord to use.

Moses, the man of God, received God's call

Moses fled from Egypt when he was forty and spent the next forty years in the wilderness of Midian. He was changed anew, no longer relying on human means and methods.

One day Moses led the flock to Mount Horeb and saw a burning bush. Though the bush was on fire, it did not burn up. Moses wondered why the bush did not burn up, so he went over to see this strange sight. Just then, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" (Exodus 3:4). And Moses said, "Here I am" (Exodus 3:4). Then God said, "Do not come any closer," "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground," and "I am the God of your father, the God Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:5-6)

God called Moses and made him a man of God. Moses did everything for God's glory, and nobody could go against with him because God was with him. Moses, who fled from Egypt when he was forty, was now eighty years old, and had become a powerful leader and man of God.

Pharaoh and the Egyptian army could not do anything when Moses delivered the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses divided the Red Sea and led the Israelites across the sea. As a result, the Israelites entered the land of Canaan flowing with milk and honey.

Closing questions

1. How does James 1:2-4 apply to our day to day living?
2. Are hard times always necessary in order for us to change and grow in our character?

Application in our daily lives

1. What characteristics need to be changed for God to use you?

MEETING GOD ON MOUNT HOREB PART 1

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 3:1-14

2. Key Verse: Exodus 3:5

"Do not come any closer" God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."

3. Reference scripture: Genesis 3:1-6; Exodus 4:1-17; Acts 7:30-37

4. Objectives

a. To realize that God works through the leaders He chooses.

b. To realize that God who changed Moses on Mount Horeb wants to change us as well!

Today's message

Moses was able to perform the great work of God in Egypt because he met God on Mount Horeb and received a dream and mission from Him. Today we will study about how Moses met God on Mount Horeb and about the mission he received from God.

God called to Moses from within the bush

God appeared to Moses in flames of fire from within a bush (Exodus 3:2-4). Why did God appear to Moses from such an ordinary and worthless bush? The most obvious reason is to put the fear and respect of God in Moses. Only a big God could do such a feat, with fire being one of the most powerful natural forces known to Moses.

In this light, it could also be said that when God chooses someone to work for His glory, He does not regard his/her social status, prestige, wealth or fame.

God wants to reveal His will and be glorified even through a person who (metaphorically) is as weak and useless as a bush. That is why God called us, though we are tiny beings, so that we may reveal His will and work for His glory.

The more surprising thing is that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. What does this mean? It means that all things in the world such as wealth, power, and fame will disappear with time, but God's flames in our life will not die out like the bush on fire, rather radiating even more light with time. God still chooses those today who seem to be insignificant as a bush --- in order to reveal His glory.

Take off your sandals

After God called to Moses from within the bush that was on fire, He again said to Moses, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5). The practice of taking shoes off before entering a temple, a palace, or a house, was, and is still a widely accepted Eastern practice - the rationale of it being that the shoes or sandals have dust or dirt attached to them symbolizing something defiling/not being totally holy. The command given to Moses, which was also repeated to Joshua, was God displaying His transcendent glory, for Moses needed to respect that Yahweh was more powerful and holy than he. God wants to be personal and close to his people, but He knows that if there is not a foundation of awe, respect and fear, we will tend live carelessly. This can ultimately result in His people not obeying the call and going astray.

Closing questions

1. Have you had a “burning bush” experience where you understood that God had a special role for you to play in His plans and purposes?
2. Share with the group what you think is God’s special purpose for your life.



MEETING GOD ON MOUNT HOREB PART 2

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 3:1-14

2. Key Verse: Exodus 3:5

"Do not come any closer" God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."

3. Reference scripture: Genesis 3:1-6; Exodus 4:1-17; Acts 7:30-37

4. Objectives.

To realize that God who changed Moses on Mount Horeb wants to change us as well!

Today's message

Moses was able to perform the great work of God in Egypt because he met God on Mount Horeb and received a mission from Him. Today we continue our study about how Moses met God on Mount Horeb and about the mission he received from God.

Throw the staff on the ground

God told Moses to throw the staff in his hand on the ground (Exodus 4:2-3). Mankind has made countless "staves" to lean on ever since we departed from God. We have made staves of wisdom, knowledge, wealth, talent, abilities and fame. Mankind wants to live without God, relying on their own staves. However, all human staves soon break. That is why God commanded Moses to throw the staff in his hand on the ground.

Moses obeyed God's word and threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake (Exodus 4:3). A snake is symbolic of tempting people. A snake in the Garden of Eden tempted Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and made them fall and betray God (Genesis 3:1-6)



A human staff can cause us to depart from God and rely on our own strength, eventually driving us into the slough of despair. However, a God-empowered staff has power to save us and our neighbours. That is why God's power was released when Moses threw the staff he had in his hand on the ground.

Put your hand inside your cloak

Moses, as commanded by God, put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous (Exodus 4:6). Moses was shocked because he instantly realised that his soul was leprous although his outer appearance was clean.

A sinful person might look clean outwardly, but actually is unclean inwardly as being leprous because of sin. There is no peace for someone who is seemingly healthy, but whose soul is festering. God told Moses to put his hand back into his cloak. When Moses took out his and, it was restored and became clean again (Exodus 4:7). We need the precious blood of Jesus to heal the leprosy of our soul. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses our sins and fills our heart with joy and peace. We are born with leprosy in our soul, but when we repent of our sins and accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour, our sins are cleaned, and we will be healthy as our soul prospers.

When Moses was forty, he attempted rescuing the Israelites by human means and methods, but when he became eighty, he depended upon God alone. Consequently, Moses became a great leader who worked remarkably for God.

The same God who changed Moses wants to have a close relationship with us today. God wants to make us like Moses and use us as to minister to others. Therefore, we should throw down all our worldly staffs and depend wholly on God so that we can be used by Him to be a blessing..

Closing questions

1. How do we allow our staffs that we sinfully lean on be transformed into something touched, blessed and used by Him?
2. What is your personal "staff" that needs to be thrown on the ground? Share with the group.

THE PASSOVER LAMB PART 1

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 12:1-14

2. Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 5:7

Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are.

For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

3. Reference scripture: Exodus 12:15-20; John 6-48-58; Romans 5:8-11

4. Objectives

a. To realize that Jesus has become our Passover lamb.

b. To learn that the blood and flesh of the Passover lamb (another way of saying drawing close to Jesus) revives us and gives us blessings and power.

Today's message

When God brought the tenth plague on Egypt, the Israelites were exempted from the plague because they put the blood of lambs on the doorframe. Today we will study about the Passover lamb that saved the Israelites.

Something to remember

Don't get confused with symbolic language like "eat His flesh" drinking His Blood". This is putting imagery to the need of developing a close walk with Jesus. Also when we talk about the blood of Jesus we can fall into the mistake of thinking of it as a magical force field instead of understanding we're talking about the power of the event of Jesus shedding His perfect blood for us guilty humans. And how this fact is powerful in the lives of all who believe and trust in this finished work.

Put the blood of the lamb on the doorframe

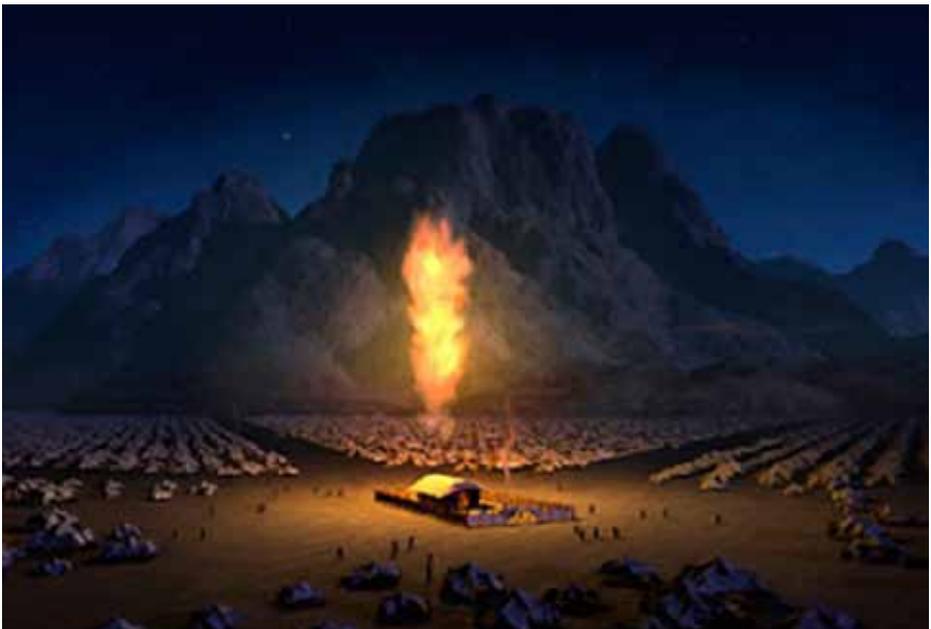
God sent Moses to Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, and told him to let the Israelites go. However, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he still refused to let the Israelites go even after he suffered nine plagues from God. So God brought one last plague on him --- to kill every firstborn son in Egypt. But the Israelites were exempted from the plague because they put the blood of lambs on the doorframe. The lamb signifies Jesus Christ (Corinthians 5:7). John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

We should believe in the precious blood that Jesus shed on the Cross so that we may be exempted from God's judgment and receive salvation, just as the Israelites were exempted from the plague by putting the blood of lambs on the doorframe. Hebrews 9:22 says, "in fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

Besides, we are set free from the power of the devil when we rely on the blood of Jesus (relying/trusting on what Jesus did on the cross and the devil that came at us from one direction will flee from us in seven because the devil can't stand before those who trust in Jesus' substitutionary death. The best gift that God has ever given us is the precious blood that Jesus shed on the Cross. That is why we should always put the blood of Jesus on the proverbial doorframe of our heart.

Let a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire guide us

The Israelites departed from Egypt and entered the desert, then a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night appeared in front of them and guided them on their way. Exodus 13:20-22 says "After leaving Succoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. By day the



Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.” For everyone who believes in Jesus today, the Holy Spirit works as a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire, guiding them to heaven.

When the Israelites travelled in the desert by day, the pillar of cloud blocked the burning sun for them. In the same way, when we encounter tribulation as burning as the sun, the Holy Spirit will come to us as a pillar of cloud.

When the Israelites travelled in the desert by night, the pillar of fire protected them from the night attacks of wild animals and Gentiles. As such, the Holy Spirit protects us from falling into the devil’s snare and temptation. As we journey in life, like travelling in a desert, the Holy Spirit will always guide us safely to heaven.

Closing questions

1. What did the Israelites put on the doorframe when God brought the tenth plague on Egypt? How does this apply today? How do we do this to the doorframes of our lives today?
2. Who plays the role of a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire today for people who believe in Jesus? Give examples of how this happens today in your life

THE PASSOVER LAMB PART 2

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 12:1-14

2. Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 5:7

Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are.

For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

3. Reference scripture: Exodus 12:15-20; John 6-48-58; Romans 5:8-11

4. Objectives

a. To realize that Jesus has become our Passover lamb.

b. To learn that the blood and flesh of the Passover lamb (drawing close to Jesus) revives us and gives us blessings and power.

Today's message

When God brought the tenth plague on Egypt, the Israelites were exempted from the plague because they put the blood of lambs on the doorframe. Today we will study about the Passover lamb that saved the Israelites.

Something to remember

Don't get confused with symbolic language like "eat His flesh" drinking His Blood". This is putting imagery to the fact of our need of developing a close walk with Jesus. Also when we talk about the blood of Jesus we can fall into the mistake of thinking of it as a magical force-field instead of understanding we're talking about the power of the event of Jesus shedding His perfect blood for us guilty humans. This fact is powerful in the lives of all who believe and trust in His finished work.

Eat the meat of the lamb

Before the Israelites departed from Egypt, God told them to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast, and not to break any of the bones (Exodus 12:8, 46). The bitter herbs reminded them of their suffering under Egyptian oppression, and foreshadowed the suffering of Jesus on the Cross. Subsequently, God told them not to break any of the bones of a lamb, which indicated that Jesus on the Cross would not have His legs broken (John 19:31-34).

In order to have spiritual and physical health in the wilderness of this world, we should eat the meat of the lamb, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ (John 6:51). The flesh of Jesus Christ refers to the Word of God. John 1:14 says, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” When we reflect on the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation, it can be said that we eat the flesh of Christ. What kind of blessings, do we receive when we eat the Word of God?

First, if we eat the Word of God, we become clean (John 15:3-4). If the Word of God comes into us, it makes our soul clean, thus enabling us to approach the throne of grace with confidence (Hebrews 4:16).

Second, if we eat the Word of God, we become healed. Psalm 107:20 says, “He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.” The Word of God has healing power, so if we reflect daily on the Word of God, we receive healing for both spiritual and physical diseases, including all sickness in our lives.



Third, if we eat the Word of God, we receive wisdom. Psalm 19:7 says, “The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.” If we reflect on the Word of God in times of difficulty, we can wisely overcome our difficulties.

Fourth, if we eat the Word of God, we grow up spiritually. 1Peter 2:2 says, “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.” We should daily eat the Word of God, which is our spiritual milk, so that we will continue to mature spiritually.

Closing questions

1. Share an experience of how you overcame a difficulty by a revelation you received from the Word, either by your personal reading or from preaching.
2. Is there a passage of scripture that you have found has helped you often in times of turmoil and stress? Please share it with the group.

THE ISRAELITES CROSSED THE RED SEA PART 1

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 14:5-31

2. Key Verse: Exodus 14:14

The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.

3. Reference scripture: Joshua 3:1-17; Acts 16:16-34;

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

4. Objectives

a. To overcome difficulties with God's power as we live a life of faith

b. To give thanks and praise to God in all circumstances.

Today's message

Today, through the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea, we will study about God's deliverance and power and how the Israelites gave thanks and praise to God afterward.

The Israelites were delivered from Egypt

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt for 430 years. But when the appointed time came (Genesis 15:12-16), the Israelites were able to leave for Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey, with Moses leading them as their God-appointed leader. But it was not long until they faced the barrier of the Red Sea. They did not have any means to cross the Red Sea, not even a raft. To make matters worse, Pharaoh's army was chasing them with six hundred of the best chariots along with all the other chariots of Egypt (Exodus 14:5-9).

The Israelites, on the verge of a cliff, complained to Moses, "was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, "leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians"? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!" (Exodus 14:11-12). Their hearts were full of negative thoughts, thinking they could not overcome the barriers before them.

Even in such circumstances, Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still" (Exodus 14:13-14).

Unlike the people, Moses could manage to summon up his courage and be brave because he set the foundation of his life on God who created the universe and everything in it and who deals with all the constant changes in our lives.

God fought for Israel

When Moses cried out to God, He said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground” (Exodus 14:15-16).

Moses obeyed God’s command and moved on. Then the angel of God, who had been travelling in front of Israel’s army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long (Exodus 14:19-20).



Furthermore, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The Israelites followed Moses and started to cross the Red Sea. The Egyptian armies as well followed the Israelites into the sea.

Then God made the wheels of their chariots come off so that they had difficulty driving. Only then the Egyptian armies realized that God was fighting for the Israelites and thus tried to escape, but it was too late for them. The water of the Red Sea all of a sudden swirled about then flowed back, covering all the Egyptian armies and burying them at sea (Exodus 14:21-28).

Just as Moses prophesied, the Israelites never saw the Egyptian armies again. All the Israelites were able to experience the amazing miracle of God because Moses did not waiver with human emotion but held strongly onto God's word and obeyed it.

Closing questions

1. Christian courage is the willingness to say and do the right thing regardless of the earthly cost. We all have our own "Red Seas" to cross but without this kind of courage, we won't even try. Can you share some examples from your life, what are some other specific examples from history or the Bible?
2. Our emotions can get the best of us and keep us from going forward or responding the best way. How is it possible to do the right thing when we are struggling with feelings of fear or hurt?

THE ISRAELITES CROSSED THE RED SEA PART 2

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 14:5-31

2. Key Verse: Exodus 14:14

The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.

3. Reference scripture: Joshua 3:1-17; Acts 16:16-34;

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

4. Objectives

a. To overcome difficulties with God's power as we live a life of faith

b. To give thanks and praise to God in all circumstances.

Today's message

Today, through the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea, we will continue our study about God's deliverance and power and how the Israelites gave thanks and praise to God afterward.

(Review from last week) The Israelites were delivered from Egypt

The Israelites, on the verge of a cliff, complained to Moses, "was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, "leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians"? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!" (Exodus 14:11-12). Their hearts were full of negative thoughts, thinking they could not overcome the barriers before them.

In such circumstances, Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still" (Exodus 14:13-14). Unlike the people, Moses could manage to summon up his courage and be brave because he set the foundation of his life on God who created the universe and everything in it and who deals with all the constant changes in our lives.

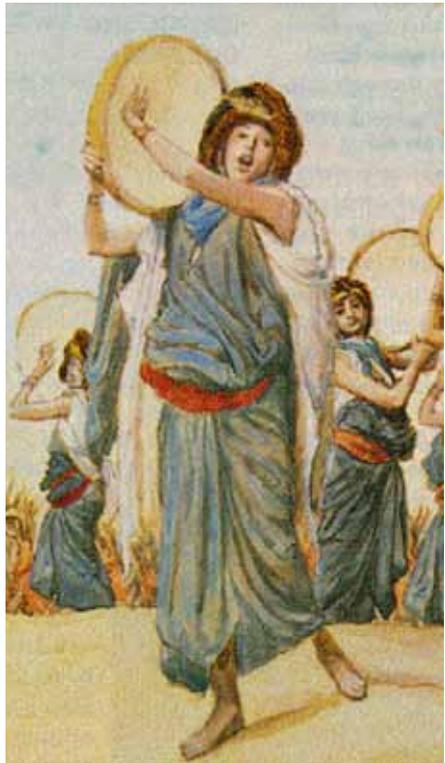
The Israelites praised God

The Israelites were delivered from slavery in Egypt and again experienced the living God, the wonder working God at the Red Sea. They were overwhelmed with deep gratitude, thus dancing with tambourines and praising God (Exodus 15:1-21).

The Israelites praised God after they crossed the Red Sea, impressed by God's grace of deliverance. We should also give thanks to God and praise Him in our daily life just as the Israelites did. Why should we give thanks and praise to God?

First, thanksgiving and praise are God's will for us in Christ Jesus (1Thessalonians 5:18). Humankind was created to praise God. Isaiah 43:21 says, "The people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise." And Psalm 95:1 also says, "come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation." We should give thanks to God and praise Him in all circumstances.

Second, we can experience the power of God through thanksgiving and praise. When the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat King of Judah, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendour of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army. Consequently, Jehoshaphat defeated the enemy (2 Chronicles 20:1-24). And when Paul and Silas were thrown into prison for preaching the Gospel, they prayed and sang hymns to God instead of resenting and complaining. Then they experienced a miracle when all the prison doors flew open, and God's power saved the jailer and his household (Acts 16:19-34).



God, who delivered the Israelites out of Egypt and helped them cross the Red Sea, lives and works among us today. Therefore, we should believe and expect God's power and work. We should continually offer a sacrifice of praise, like the Israelites, to God who delivered us from sin (Hebrews 13:15).

Closing questions

1. Why should we give thanks and praise to God after a victory or breakthrough?
2. What lessons can be learned from the examples of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25) and Jehoshaphat? (2 Chronicles 20:21)

GOD CHANGED THE BITTER WATER INTO SWEET WATER PART 1

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 15:22-27

2. Key Verse: Exodus 15:26

He said” If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you.”

3. Reference scripture: Isaiah 53:5; Malachi 4:2; 1Peter 2:24

4. Objectives

a. To realize that God can change the bitter water in life into sweet water.

b. To realize that the bitter water can be changed into sweet water through Jesus Christ.

Today's message

God, who changed the bitter water into sweet water at Marah, will change the bitter water in our life into sweet water. Today we will study about God who changes the bitter water into sweet water.

The Israelites encountered difficulty

The Israelites safely crossed the Red Sea with the help of God's miracle and went into the Desert of Shur. For three days, they travelled in the desert without finding water. The weather was sweltering and they were indescribably thirsty. Then the Israelites arrived at Marah where they found water. But the water was too bitter to drink. So they grumbled against Moses, saying “what are we to drink?” (Exodus 15:24).

Then Moses cried out to God, and God told Moses to throw a piece of wood into the water. The bitter water was changed into sweet water. This incident foretells that we are to be released from the curse that comes into our life today through Jesus' redemption on the Cross.

The Israelites quenched their thirst, and their energy was restored. Then God made a decree and a law for them. Subsequently, God gave them a promise that if they do what is right in His eyes, pay attention to His commands, and keep all His decrees, He would not bring on them any of the diseases He brought on the Egyptians (Exodus 15:25-26).

If we keep God's decree and law, God not only heals our physical disease, but He also heals our emotional pain and mental illness and releases us from sin, thus making us healthy in spirit, soul, and body.

The Israelites experienced God's miracle and received God's word of promise at Marah. Then they arrived at Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees. The Israelites camped there near the water (Exodus 15:27).

A piece of wood was thrown into the water

It was a piece of wood that Moses used, as instructed by God, to change the bitter water of Marah into sweet water. Moses obeyed God's word and threw a piece of wood into the water. Amazingly, the water became sweet (Exodus 15:25). As we see in this incident, sometimes the answer to our problems is Godly obedience even when it doesn't seem logical.



God changes the bitter water in our life into sweet water through Jesus Christ, just as God changed the bitter water at Marah into sweet water through a piece of wood. We should depend on Jesus Christ to have the bitter water that comes along in our life changed into sweet water, because Jesus will be with us always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:20).

Jesus who solves all our problems speaks to us today, “Here I am ! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20). If we experience bitter water in our life, it can be changed into sweet water through Jesus Christ. Then we will be given the strength to keep God’s decree and law, and He will be our healer.

Closing questions

1. How did the Israelites respond to the challenging circumstances? How could they have done differently?
2. It seemed that the people were infusing each other with negativity instead of faith. Can one individual in the congregation make a difference for good in a situation like this? How do you think the response of the people affected Moses?

GOD CHANGED THE BITTER WATER INTO SWEET WATER PART 2

1. Today's Scripture: Exodus 15:22-27

2. Key Verse: Exodus 15:26

He said” If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you.”

3. Reference scripture: Isaiah 53:5; Malachi 4:2; 1Peter 2:24

4. Objectives

a. To realize that God can change the bitter water in life into sweet water

b. To realize that the bitter water can be changed into sweet water through Jesus Christ.

Today's message

God, who changed the bitter water into sweet water at Marah, will change the bitter water in our life into sweet water. Today we continue our study into our God who changes the bitter water into sweet water.

(Review) The Israelites encountered difficulty

The Israelites safely crossed the Red Sea with the help of God's miracle and went into the Desert of Shur. For three days, they travelled in the desert without finding water. The weather was sweltering and they were indescribably thirsty. Then the Israelites arrived at Marah where they found water. But the water was too bitter to drink. So they grumbled against Moses, saying “what are we to drink?” (Exodus 15:24).

Then Moses cried out to God, and God told Moses to throw a piece of wood into the water. The bitter water was changed into sweet water. This incident foretells that we are to be released from the curse that comes into our life today through Jesus' redemption on the Cross.

Healing for bitter memories

Everybody has a well of past memories. However, the well of memories can act as a source of unhappinesses in our present life rather than as a source of happiness. Unless we change our bitter memories from the past into sweet ones, we will not have faith, hope, and love in our character, because bitter water will continue to rise up from our well of memories. Therefore, we should have our bitter memories healed first. What are the wells of bitter memories that should be healed?

First, there is the well of hatred and anger. We might say, "What has that got to do with me now, that I hated someone or felt angry at someone in the past?" But if the bitter water of hatred and anger is gathering in our well of memories, we will keep drinking that bitter water. And as long as we are drinking bitter water, we will never be happy. That is why we should get rid of the hatred and anger in our memory.

Second, there is the well of disappointment and despair. The bitter pain we went through in the past remains in our heart and brings up bitter water although we cannot see it. As long as we are drinking the bitter water from its well, we cannot experience the complete healing of God.

Third, there is the well of guilty feelings. If we want God to heal us, we should get rid of guilty feelings from our memory. A feeling of guilt leaves major damage in our mind. When guilty feelings become deeply rooted in our subconscious mind, we cannot handle them on our own, because when we are damaged by the pain of guilt, the damage becomes a bitter well with bitter water continually welling up from it. We should get rid of guilty feelings from our memories through the power of Jesus Christ who died on the Cross.

If we have in our heart the well of hatred and anger, the well of disappointment and despair, and the well of guilty feelings, we cannot live a true life of faith. We must first change the bitter water in the well of our memories into sweet water, so that we can keep God's decree and law and experience His healing.

The piece of wood God selects for us today refers to Jesus who was hung on the Cross to redeem us from sin. Therefore, we should “throw” the cross of Jesus Christ into the bitter well of our memories. The God’s healing power will cleanse our memories, changing our bitter well into a source of happiness. We will be given the strength to keep God’s decree and law, and He will be our healer.

Closing questions

1. To be healed of bitter memories do we have to somehow forget them?
2. Share how a bitter memory from the past was healed by God’s power.

Application

Do you still have a well of bitter memories that has not yet been healed? What should you do to have your bitter memories healed?

THE TWELVE SPIES PART 1

1. Today's Scripture: Number 13:1-14:10

2. Key Verse: Hebrews 10:38

My righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.

3. Reference scripture: Number 14:11-38; 26:65; Psalm 37:35-40

4. Objectives

a. To learn why the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years

b. To learn from Joshua and Caleb how to have unwavering faith in all circumstances.

Today's message

Today our study is based on Numbers chapters 13 and 14, about the twelve spies who explored the land of Canaan. We will discover through them the kind of faith God is pleased with.

Forty days of exploration

When the Israelites arrived and encamped in the Desert of Paran, God told Moses to choose a leader from each ancestral tribe and send them to explore the land of Canaan, which He gave to the Israelites (Number 13:2). So Moses obeyed God's command and did as God told him to do. The names of the chosen leaders are listed in Numbers 13:4-15.

These twelve spies explored the land thoroughly from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob, toward Lebo Hamath. They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron to spy out the land as Moses commanded them (Numbers 13:17). When they reached the Valley of Eshcol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes along with some pomegranates and figs. And at the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land of Kadesh in the Desert of Paran (Numbers 13:17-26).

Two different reports

After returning from exploring the land of Canaan, the twelve spies reported to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community. Of the twelve spies, ten of them had a different report from the other two.

The ten spies said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (The descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them” (Numbers 13:32-33). As such, they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. After hearing this report, all the Israelites raised their voices and wept aloud throughout the night, grumbling against Moses and Aaron (Numbers 14:1-3).

In contrast, the other two spies, Joshua and Caleb, tore their clothes and said, “The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of them” (Number 14:7-9).

Joshua and Caleb thought it was possible to enter the land through God’s power, but the other ten spies thought it was impossible to even set foot in the land.



God never works through a person who has a negative attitude about everything. But a person who has a positive and aggressive attitude under any circumstance receives help from God, overcomes difficulties, and even controls the environment. No matter what circumstances we are in, we should have faith in God's power and have a positive and aggressive attitude like Joshua and Caleb.

Closing questions

1. Ten of the twelve spies who were sent to explore the land of Canaan had a different report from the other two about the exploration. How were the reports different and what was the spirit or attitude behind each report?
2. What are some lessons we can learn from Joshua and Caleb?

THE TWELVE SPIES PART 2

1. Today's Scripture: Number 13:1-14:10

2. Key Verse: Hebrews 10:38

My righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.

3. Reference scripture: Number 14:11-38; 26:65; Psalm 37:35-40

4. Objectives

a. To learn why the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years

b. To learn from Joshua and Caleb how to have unwavering faith in all circumstances.

Today's message

Tonight we continue from last week in Numbers chapters 13 and 14, about the twelve spies who explored the land of Canaan.

(Review) Forty days of exploration

When the Israelites arrived and encamped in the Desert of Paran, God told Moses to choose a leader from each ancestral tribe and send them to explore the land of Canaan, which He gave to the Israelites (Number 13:2). So Moses obeyed God's command and did as God told him to do. The names of the chosen leaders are listed in Numbers 13:4-15.

These twelve spies explored the land thoroughly from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob, toward Lebo Hamath. They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron to spy out the land as Moses commanded them (Numbers 13:17). When they reached the Valley of Eshcol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes along with some pomegranates and figs. And at the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land of Kadesh in the Desert of Paran (Numbers 13:17-26).

The Israelites wandered for forty years

After hearing the report of Joshua and Caleb, the whole Israelite assembly was about to stone them. Then the glory of the Lord appeared at the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites (Numbers 14:10). As we see here, God himself intervenes and preserves His glory when His authority entrusted to human beings is undermined (Numbers 16:42; Job 38:1). God's intervention acts as judgement for the evil but as blessing and salvation for the righteous (Psalm 37:28; 145:20).

God said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them? I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they" (Numbers 14:11-12). Then Moses prayed eagerly to God for His forgiveness of the Israelites' sin (Numbers 14:13-19).

God answered Moses' prayer and said He would forgive the Israelites, but anyone who disobeyed Him, tested Him, or treated Him with contempt would not enter the land of Canaan (Numbers 14:20-23). And again God said that the Israelites would wander in the wilderness for forty years – one year for each of the forty days the spies explored the land (Numbers 14:31-34).



God said that because Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Num followed God wholeheartedly, He would bring them into the land and let their descendants inherit it (numbers 14:24-30).

The men Moses had sent to explore the land, who returned and made the whole community grumbled against Moses by spreading a bad report about it – were struck down before God and died of a plague (Numbers 14:36-37). Of the men who went to explore the land, only Joshua son of Num and Caleb son of Jephunneh survived (Numbers 14:38)

Therefore, whatever our circumstances may be, we must have a positive attitude of faith and follow God wholeheartedly just like Joshua and Caleb. Then we will be able to live a blessed life flowing with milk and honey.

Closing questions

1. The spies with the bad report influenced the whole congregation. Whether we realize it or not we are influencing people. How can we make sure we are influencing people in a positive and not a negative way? (Number 14:36-37).

Application in our daily lives

1. Share how you overcame difficult circumstances that others were seeing no hope.
2. What problems are you facing that a positive, God centered attitude is needed in order for you to push through?

THE PEOPLE BITTEN BY VENOMOUS SNAKES

1. Today's Scripture: Number 21:4-9

2. Key Verse: John 3:14-15

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

3. Reference scripture: Psalm 78:40-52; 1 Corinthians 10:9-11;
1 Peter 2:22-25

4. Objectives

a. To learn to give thanks in all circumstances instead of being resentful or complaining

b. To learn that salvation is received only through Jesus Christ.

Today's message

Numbers chapter 21 describes an incident about venomous snakes and the bronze snake. Today we will study this incident and discover God's message for us.

The people complained against God

The Israelites received God's grace for forty years guided with a pillar of cloud by day and with a pillar of fire by night, from the Exodus until their entry into Canaan. Nevertheless, the Israelites in the wilderness never ceased to complain and grumble against God and Moses.

At Taberah, the Israelites first complained about God and their hardship. When God heard their complaints, He was angry, and fire from God burned among them. Then the Israelites repented of their sin (Numbers 11:1-3). The Israelites grumbled against God for the second time at Kibroth Hattaavah. Then God's anger burned against them, and He struck them with a severe plague because they craved other food (Number 11:4-35).

The Israelites who went through all these things must have realized what a terrible sin it is to grumble against God. However, when they travelled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea to go around Edom, they grew impatient and started grumbling again (Number 21:4-5). They had their eyes fixed only on the difficult situation, thus speaking against God and Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest

this miserable food!” (Number 21:5) Then God sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died (Number21:6).

God punishes those who complain and grumble against Him. We should give thanks in all circumstances instead of being resentful or complaining.

The bronze snake

The Israelites saw their people dying around them, bitten by venomous snakes and said to Moses, “We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us” (Number 21:7). When the Israelites were repenting of their sin, Moses prayed to God for them.

Then God said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live” (Numbers 21:8). So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when the people who were bitten by a snake looked at the bronze snake, they lived (Numbers 21:9)



The bronze snake on a pole represents Jesus Christ who was hung on the Cross. Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life” (John 3:14-15). There, everyone who looks at Jesus Christ who died on the Cross to redeem humankind from sin will have eternal life. But whoever does not believe in Jesus Christ who was hung on the Cross will die (John 3:15-16).

We should look at Jesus who redeemed us from sin. Romans 3:23 says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:10-12 The only way for sinners to be forgiven is to look at Jesus Christ who died on the Cross to redeem us from sin.

Closing questions

1. Why were the Israelites bitten by venomous snakes in the wilderness? (Numbers 21:4-6)
2. What is the difference between legitimate complaints and evil murmuring?
3. Everyone in the group share 3 things you are thankful for.

JOSHUA, MOSES' SUCCESSOR

1. Today's Scripture: Joshua 1:1-9

2. Key Verse: Joshua 1:5

No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

3. Reference scripture: Deuteronomy 31:1-8; Isaiah 41:8-16

4. Objectives

- a. To realize that God prepares our way and is always with us.
- b. To imitate Joshua's faith

Today's message

Moses chose Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide, and appointed him to be the new leader of Israel in the presence of all Israel (Deuteronomy 31:2-8). Today we will study about Joshua, the successor of Moses.

God appointed Joshua

When Moses was forty years old, he killed an Egyptian and fled from Egypt (Acts 7:23-29). When he was eighty years old, after another forty years had passed, he met God in Mount Horeb and delivered the Israelites out of Egypt.

After they came out from Egypt, God punished the Israelites because they did not trust in Him and complained against Him. Consequently, they had to wander in the wilderness for forty years. Moses, who received his calling from God when he was eighty, led the Israelites for another forty years until he was 120 years old. The leader of the Israelites, Moses, helped them through all kinds of difficulties, resolving all their problems for forty years. Then Moses died in Moab (Deuteronomy 34:5-6)

When the Israelites lost their leader, they grieved for Moses for thirty days (Deuteronomy 34:8). Then God appointed a new leader as Moses' successor who would lead the Israelites into the land of Canaan. The new leader of Israel was Joshua, the leader of the tribe of Ephraim, who remained steadfast in faith in God along with Caleb son of Jephunneh. His original name was Hosea, but Moses changed it to Joshua (Number 13:16).

Joshua was Moses' aide (Joshua 1:1). However, it was not because he was Moses' aide that he was appointed Moses' successor. Joshua became the leader of the Israelites succeeding Moses because God made him the leader of the Israelites by His own will (Deuteronomy 31:3, 14, 23). Likewise, today it is God himself who appoints His servant – not a human being, a system, or an organization.

God promised Joshua

God came to Joshua who would succeed Moses as the leader of the Israelites and encouraged him to be strong and courageous. Deuteronomy 31:23 says, "The Lord gave this command to Joshua son of Nun: 'Be strong and courageous, for you will bring the Israelites into the land I promised them on oath, and I myself will be with you.'" God promised Joshua three things (Joshua 1:1-9).

First, God promised to give him every place where he would set his foot. Joshua 1:3 says, "I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses."



Second, God promised to lead his way into prosperity. Joshua 1:8 says, “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

Third, God promised to be with him. Joshua 1:5 says, “No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.” Joshua 1:9 says, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you whenever you go.”

Closing questions

1. Why do you think That Yahweh felt it needful to say to Joshua 4 times in Joshua chapter 1 to be strong and courageous?
2. What is it about meditating on the Word of God that brings success? Is it the act of reading itself that benefits, or is it something else?

TOWARD THE BLESSED LAND OF CANAAN

1. Today's Scripture: Joshua 6:8-21

2. Key Verse: Joshua 1:13

Remember the command that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you: "The Lord your God is giving you rest and has granted you this land."

3. Reference scripture: Joshua 2:1-24; 3:14-17; Hebrew 11:31

4. Objectives

a. To overcome such an obstacle as the city of Jericho and to possess such faith accompanied by action as that of Rahab.

b. To have faith in God who surely keeps His promise.

Today's message

Last week we studied about Joshua, Moses' successor. Today we will study about how the Israelites entered the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua.

Rahab the prostitute and two spies

When the Israelites arrived at Shittim, Joshua chose two spies and ordered them to spy the city of Jericho, a bridgehead for conquering Canaan. Two spies entered the city of Jericho and stayed at the house of a prostitute named Rahab. The king of Jericho was told that some of the Israelites came to spy out the land. So the king of Jericho ordered his men to capture the spies. His soldiers went to Rahab's house and cried out, "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house" (Joshua 2:3).

Rahab had already hidden the spies under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof. She deceived the soldiers in pursuit of the spies by saying that she did not know where the spies had gone (Joshua 2:4-6). Then she went up on the roof and talked to the spies. She said that the Lord had given the land of Canaan to the Israelites and confessed that the Lord, the God of Israel, was the only true God. She asked them to spare the lives of her family when the Israelites attacked Jericho (Joshua 2:8-13).

The spies swore to her that they would accept her request if she did not tell what they were doing. At the same time, they told her to tie the scarlet cord in the window when the city was conquered. Rahab agreed with the spies and sent them away. When they departed, she tied the scarlet cord in the window (Joshua 2:14-21)

The Israelites conquered Canaan

When the people of Jericho heard that the Israelites had crossed the Jordan with the help of God and were near Jericho, they tightly shut up the wall of the city, and no one went out of the city. Then Joshua and the Israelites marched around the city as God commanded. The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. They marched around the city once a day for six days and on the seventh day they marched around the city seven times and shouted aloud (Joshua 6:1-20).

Then the miracle happened. The city of Jericho that was tightly shut up collapsed. The Israelites charged straight in and took the city, destroying every living thing in it – men and women and all the livestock. Then Rahab, the prostitute who had hidden the spies, and her family were spared in accordance with the oath they had made to her.



Through a series of events, the Israelites conquered the land of Canaan that God had promised to give them. The Israelites went through many battles before they conquered the land of Canaan. But the Israelites were able to defeat all their enemies because God always helped them. The land of Canaan that God had promised Abraham was given to the Israelites after a long time had passed (Genesis 15:13-16).

Likewise, no matter how slowly God's promise is fulfilled, if anybody trusts in His promise and endures, he/she will see its fulfillment.

Therefore, when we go through difficult times in life, we have to hold onto our faith in the promised word of God and endure. Then we will receive the promised blessings of God.

Closing questions

1. God's ways are not our ways, He chose to use a prostitute to help in the victory of Jericho. Have you seen God glorify Himself and bring about His will through strange means? Share your story.
2. Rahab was incorporated into the nation of Israel and became the ancestor of Jesus through His human ancestry. What does this tell us about mercy and grace? Acts 17:11
3. Rahab and her family were the only citizens of Jericho who were saved. What does this tell us about His sovereignty? Romans 9:10-18

