

Joshua — “Victory by trusting obedience” February 5, 2006
Revised 2/12/06

The book of Joshua clearly shows that victory comes by trusting (faith-ful) obedience. The book of Joshua chronicles his leadership from when he is given the reins (at the death of Moses) to his death at 110. Joshua began his life as a servant in Egypt and dies in the promised land, newly conquered by Israel.

In this week’s guide, you will be encouraged to “meditate” on various passages. Meditating has the idea of chewing-on, reconsidering, praying about, and asking God to help you to understand and apply a small portion of scripture to your life (for me, this means only 1-2 vv. at a time). Words that come to my mind when I think of meditating are: “review, reflect, pray (both for insight and for application), rethink, talk about, apply, recopy, question, reread, make changes (personally), and make resolutions.”

1:1-9 Read, meditate, mull-over and think about God’s promises to Israel and Joshua. To what extent does God take priority in your life compared to the significance God told Joshua that HE should have in his life? Joshua 1:7-9 is a good passage with which to begin meditating. Then, every day, read your Bible until you find another significant verse (or verses) and meditate on that passage the rest of the day (cf. Psalm 1:1-3).

2:9-11 Compare God’s plan [Exodus 23:27] with the interpretation of the situation by his children [Numbers 13:28-29, 32-33] and how it unfolds in Joshua. What does this suggest regarding the outworking of God’s plan today? What if 40 years ago they had trusted God and gone forward? While there is not a *direct* correlation (i.e. a sentence of 40 years of wilderness wondering), what does this suggest if we trust God and go obediently forward today as he leads us [or don’t]?

6:1-27 Imagine an ancient attack on a fortified, walled city (pre gun powder!). Arrows, spears, rocks, ladders, shields, boiling water and oil are the tools of the day. If Israel were to have attacked “conventionally” imagine the casualties. God sometimes chooses unconventional methods (cf. Is 55:8-9) so that he shows his glory and power. Contrast God’s way for blessing in one’s life to “conventional” wisdom. [Consider Matthew 5:1-12, and James 1:2-12.] Is there an instruction from God’s word for how-to handle or deal with something in your life on which YOU need to meditate and to which YOU need to yield? Is there some approach or method that God gives that is “opposite” how the world (or “YOU”) might naturally choose to handle things?

Ch. 7 It is often said that the ““what” I do is my business. “It doesn’t affect anyone else.” Tell that to the women and children made widows and fatherless in Joshua 7:5. Sin, though in secret, can have consequences going beyond what one envisions. To use a common expression of today, Achan could easily have thought, “well, it won’t hurt if I just _____.” Instead of bull-headedly yielding to temptation, because “no one would know,” or “no one else will be hurt,” purpose in YOUR heart that by God’s grace you will not give place to temptation. If you do have something “hidden in your tent,” get it out and confess it to the Lord. He will forgive you! [1John 1:9]

Ch. 9 When do you make decisions without praying first? Consider James 4:13 and following. God alone sees and knows all. He will direct our steps as we acknowledge him (Pro 3:5-6). Joshua and the elders didn’t think it necessary to ask God for counsel because the situation seemed so “obvious” to them. Read about the results in this chapter. Now, how important is it for you to pray about the “little” and “obvious” decisions in your life?