

Joshua 23

V.1-2 Joshua called the leaders. Joshua was mentored under Moses. The many times Moses addressed Israel; Joshua witnessed the importance of communication in the decisions/decrees made. Moses counseled, corrected, and assigned him not only in battles, but also to be the next successor as God designated.

And the LORD said to Moses: “Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; ¹⁹ set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight.

Numbers 27:18-19

Moses was also teaching Joshua to continually be in communication, not only with God, but also His people. This is why Moses trusted Joshua. Leadership takes communication.

“Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them.” ²⁹ Deuteronomy 31:28-29

Joshua wanted all the leaders to publicly make a stand for the Lord. This is how accountability works. It is important for a leader to have a good relationship with God and their followers. If you don't, you are just appointed!

What are some ways that an effective leader can form bonds with followers?

v.3 This is a reminder. It brings to mind a remembrance of all that the Lord has done. But not only that, it provides a message that God is and has been their military strategist, commander, deliverer, and salvation!!

For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword,
Nor did their own arm save them;
But it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance,
Because You favored them. **Psalms 44:3**

v.4 The Land that God promised, He shows Himself as faithful. God wants to remind you to look back and remember. Those hard times when you thought you'd never make it, He brought you through. God wants to show himself through your situations!!!

Would anybody like to share when God moved for you and it is a reminder for you until this day?

v.5 It doesn't matter what you see in the natural, or how big the situation looks. If God spoke to you about it, He will route out the enemy if you are obedient too His Word!!!!

One example that may help us understand the difference between fighting God's enemies and fighting our enemies, look at King David.

When he was fighting personal battles with King Saul, his son Absalom, and Adultery with Bathsheba, these were very hard battles for him. **1 Sam 19:11, 21:11/19-25:1, 2 Sam 11:4-5, 2 Sam 13:14-29, 2 Sam 16:17**

Yet, when he faced giants like Goliath, and people like the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites and Syria, God made victories that easily possible. **1 Sam 16:1-13, 2 Sam 8:1, 2 Sam 8:2-10:19**

v.6 God puts an emphasis on courageous....He says be very courageous, but not to fight in battle, or win a war, or win an argument with your spouse (Lol)...No He says to be very courageous to the Word!!! What are some of the ways you can be courageous for the Word?

Our refrigerator example: The evidence that it wasn't here became the evidence that it was on the way.

God makes mention of right and left which is a help to keep us aligned with His will (which is His Word!) **Prov 4:27, Ecc 10:2, Joshua 1:7, Isa 30:21, Duet 5:32** Don't go off in a ditch!

v.7 God says to not mingle, be coerced, intertwine, participate, follow, look to, be drawn.....speak of, bring to thought, relate to, consider, imagine, ponder, desire, replicate, these nations.

The term religious syncretism. Religious syncretism involves the harmonious fusion of multiple religious ideologies, rituals, and customs into a distinct, unified belief system. This often transpires as diverse cultures come into contact and adopt aspects from one another. For the Christian church today, it is viewed as "tolerate and accept, or be banned."

Can you think of any examples of religious syncretism?

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. **Romans 12:2**

v.8 Hold on and don't let go or give up, or be dissuaded, or grow faint, or lose your faith, or get pessimistic, or agitated, depressed, offended, dissatisfied, on what God has promised you! Be strong in the Lord and the Power of His might, be not anxious, believe and have faith, get fully persuaded because God gives you life and more abundantly!

v.9 God is your protector, Master Planner, Faithful Father, Redeemer, Restorer and Peacemaker, Valiant Warrior, Healer, all-encompassing deliverer and compassionate to His people!

v.10 In the eyes of God, He has designed you to be a formidable foe, with increase to your enemies detriment, but only if you trust Him.

Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight;
your enemies shall fall by the sword before you. **Leviticus 26:8**

The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. **Deuteronomy 28:7**

One thousand shall flee at the threat of one,
At the threat of five you shall flee,
Till you are left as a pole on top of a mountain
And as a banner on a hill. **Isaiah 30:17**

v.11 Do not be deceived by the enemies' plans that manipulate, twist, corrode, corrupt, dismantle, bring malice, cause anxiety, break relationships, take a hold on your mind, oppress your thoughts, or bring a lack of willingness for correction. Take the love **for** God wherever you go.

God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. **1 John 4:15-16**

¹ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not **love**, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not **love**, I am nothing. ³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not **love**, it profits me nothing.

⁴ **Love** suffers long and is kind; **love** does not envy; **love** does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ **Love** never fails. **1 Corinthians 13:1-8**

Love is counted seven times here and seven represents completion or perfection!

¹³ And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. **1 Corinthians 13:13**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. **Galatians 5:22-23**

v.12-13 God always provides a clear direction through His Word as well as the consequences of disobedience! When you want control, God will allow his permissible will but they will not come without a heavy price of burden.

v.14 God's spoken promises never return void.

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;

It shall not return to Me void,

But it shall accomplish what I please,

And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. **Isaiah 55:11**

v.15 Keep His promise in your heart so you won't forget God's goodness.

If your heart is right, God's promises apply. If it is not, all the curses will apply!

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 6:23**

v.16 God takes covenants very seriously!!! Your Word is your Bond....
God's Word is his Bond, He even puts it before Himself!

For You have magnified Your word above all Your name. **Psalms 138:2**