

“Taking Part in God’s Great Plans”

Joshua Chapter 1

Intro:

I. One of the greatest joys of Bible study is to approach a passage from the standpoint:

“How does this fit in to God’s plan for mankind?”

A. We have the advantage of God’s fully revealed plan, and can look throughout scripture and see how those stories connect together:

B. Not everyone has always had great benefit: There are accounts of faithful men and women who at different points in their lives, were unable to see what part they played in God’s plan, or questioned whether or not God’s plan could even be accomplished:

1. While Joseph was in prison in Genesis 39, consider how he must have wrestled with how the dreams and visions he had seen would come to pass.
2. We have been studying the story of Gideon, while Israel was under such fierce oppression, Gideon proclaims that God has abandoned His people: Judges 6:13
3. Elijah after the defeat of the Prophets of Baal, goes and hides in a cave at Horeb, in 1 Kings 19 he foolishly proclaims that he alone is left of the prophets!
4. Thomas certainly struggled with understanding God’s plan in John 20 when he refused to believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead

II. Have you ever found yourself feeling in the same position as any of these individuals?

Have you asked the question “Does God still have a plan for me today?” Perhaps wondering what God’s plan is for you today, or how He will accomplish it.

A. The idea that we today are all still a part of God’s great plan, and what we can do to be a part of it, is what we want to explore in this lesson.

B. Because, there is much that we can be doing to demonstrate our faith in God’s plans, and to be a part of them, and to that end we will be exploring much of the text from Joshua chapter 1

III. God has always been, and will always be, determined to complete His plans in the lives of his Children:

A. That is very apparent in the story of Joshua and Israel as they prepare to enter into Canaan

B. This is an excellent chapter that provides many parallels for both us as a Church, and for us as individual Christians

1. The Lord desired the Israelites to move forward, and press on with His plans: He has the same goal for churches and disciples today.
2. He has revealed the information in His Word that will ensure a successful start, continuance, and completion of those plans.

C. When God was ready to move, He expected that the Israelites would be paying attention, ready to follow, and have faith in Him to lead.

1. Once again, that same principle applies to us today: When we have the chance to take part in the furtherance of God's plan, we need to be ready to move!
2. Let's begin our study by making applications from Joshua on the steps we need to take to get there.

I. Understanding What the Plan Is: *Joshua 1:1-4*

a. Consider how much has happened recently to muddy the waters of God's plan:

- i. Instead of allowing God to lead, Israel had come up with plans of their own:
 1. Perhaps you could point to the beginning in Ex. 32 Where Israel's plan included a new **Object of Worship**
 2. It was the very first day on the Job for Nadab and Abihu when they sought to change God's plan with a new **Way to Worship: Lev. 10**
 3. Prior to entering the land, the people decided to heed the word of the 10 spies and chose to change **who they trusted: Numbers 13**
 4. Israel even decided to change God's plan by picking a **new destination: Numbers 14:1-4**
 5. Later in that same chapter they decided they could change **how they obeyed: Numbers 14:39-45**
 - a. Ever since leaving Egypt, Israel had sought to change God's plan at every turn which ultimately led to a 40 year detour in that plan as they wandered in the wilderness

b. After all of this, they lost their leader when Moses died:

- i. It would have been easy to give up at this point:

1. After everything that has happened, all of the mistakes and punishment, now God has taken away Moses: *He must not have a plan for us anymore!*
 2. But God wanted Joshua to know: In spite of everything that had happened God's plan remained unchanged, and He wanted Israel to get on with it! Just I've spoken to Moses...
- c. *What applied to them, applies to us:*
- i. As with Israel, we may not know every detail that God has in store for us, and sometimes there is a lot going on around us that tries to muddy the water: But God has given us the general outline of what He has planned for his people.
 1. For Israel the first step was to leave they old, tempting life of Egypt behind them: We to must make sure that we have left our old lives behind as well: **Ephesians 4:22, Romans 6:6**
 2. After leaving behind Egypt, the next step in God's plan was for them to start a new life in a promised land. In the same manner, we are exhorted to enter into a new life as Christians: **Ephesians 4:24, Romans 6:4**
 3. After that they were to live lives of faithfulness, and enjoy God's blessings. The same is true for us.
 - ii. Just as with Joshua and Israel, as we work to move forward as a congregations and as individual Christians, we must remind ourselves that no matter what is going on around us to try and confuse God's plan, even if it doesn't seem like He has one, God has given us His plan and we can understand and follow it.
2. **Understand By What Power the Plan Will Be Accomplished: *Joshua 1:5-9***
- a. *When God gives a plan, He gives the power.*
- i. We must remember that when it comes to accomplishing God's plans we must use the power that He supplies and nothing else:
 - ii. Israel was often tempted to try and accomplish God's plans through means of their own invention: These are the same pitfalls that we can fall in today:
 1. God's plans are not accomplished through:
 - a. The power of our Opinions: **Numbers 14:1-5**
 - b. The Power of our own strength: **Numbers 14:39-45**

2. God's plans will be accomplished when we carry them out His way: **Joshua 1:7**
- b. No matter how well we think that we know the plan, if we act like Israel, and try to accomplish it in our own way, we are not ready to move forward with God*

3. Understand How to Reach the Goal: Joshua 1:10-11

- a. If Christians and churches want to move forward in the lands that God has for their success and growth, it is important that they know how to reach those goals:
- b. In the case of Joshua, God had one fairly simple command for them to follow: *Prepare*
- c. In the context, they were to prepare food and supplies as they entered the land; but consider all that Joshua would have to prepare Israel for in the days to come:
 - i. Joshua would have to prepare them to Trust in God:
 1. As they crossed the Jordan in Joshua 3
 2. As they brought down the walls of Jericho: Joshua 6
 3. To defeat a total of 31 Kings and their cities: Joshua 12:24
 - ii. Joshua would help prepare them to receive the Land:
 1. Now was not the time for them to doubt, to murmur, or complain:
 2. It was a time for great displays of faith that as they moved forward with God's plans, they would be blessed.
- d. As Disciples and as a collective group, we must actively prepare ourselves to reach the goals that God has set before us.
 - i. It involves the exact same preparation today that Israel undertook then:
 1. Are we preparing ourselves to trust God?
 2. Are we preparing ourselves to grow and prosper when we do?

Conclusion:

- God earnestly desires that we embrace His plans.
- He wants us to embrace His power to complete them and keep our eyes on the Goals He sets before us:
- He wants us to have faith that He will provide strength for us to be a part of all of it:
- He wants each of us to be ready to move into action at every opportunity we have: