

JOSHUA

Born as a slave in Egypt, becomes a conqueror in Canaan

People saw Joseph as a dreamer, but God saw him as a Governor, people saw David as a shepherd, but God saw him as a King, people saw Jacob as a deceiver, but God saw him as a Prince, people saw Daniel as a slave, but God saw him as a Prime Minister, people saw Joshua as a slave, but God saw him as a Conqueror. You may seem ordinary, but God sees You are extra-ordinary.

The background:

Hoshea, means salvation, his original name as their parents named him (Numbers 13:8) must be the outcome of the cry for deliverance from bondage (Exodus 2:23-25), they did seldom knew what he would become, but it is evident, as we see in the life of Noah, their parents named him and said he will bring rest in his days, so also we find that in the days of Hoshea it was believed there will be salvation for the people of God and ultimate rest. And it was so, because the choice was God's (John 15:16). Surprisingly, we find that nothing is mentioned of his parentage, or history except that he is called the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim. Recently the Jews found the tomb of Yeshua in an Arab village (Timnath-serah), and these days, under strict security, they gather around his grave and chant verses from the Torah and invoke him to reappear to deliver them from their enemies, which refers to the Messiah.

Gradually, as Hoshea grew, he must have heard about Moses, and took initiative for acquaintance and friendship with him, whom we now know him as one of the greatest prophets and the meekest man in all the earth. It is a privilege and honour to have acquaintance and friendship with godly men and women who are close to the Lord. It was Moses who changed the name to JOSHUA, meaning God is my Salvation (Numbers 13:16). What Joshua is in Hebrew, it is JESUS in Greek (Hebrews 4:8 KJV). Joshua was in such a period where God was visiting his covenant people, as one historian writes: "Is there in all human history a more amazing spectacle than the Exodus. A family of 70 immigrants grows into a race of slaves. Suddenly God's detailed and pre-armoured plan unfolds and the shackles of slavery are broken and fallen, and that generation or the nation of Israel immigrating to a new country, a new life, though not easy, but with miraculous deliverances, rescuing them from certain destructions, again and again."

The beginnings:

It was the beginning of months for the people of Israel (Exodus 12:2, 12), stringent preparations were given for deliverance. Joshua being the eldest must have been given the chance to choose and slay the lamb and apply the blood on the door posts and lintels, for the fear, it would cost his own life, being the firstborn (Exodus 12:12). From the beginning God's instructions to his people have

been clear, specific and firm. The LORD spoke: For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgement: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt (Exodus 12:12-13). Remember these words which are very important in this passage. I will pass through...this night, when I see the blood, I will pass over you. **1. For I will pass through...this night:** God was patiently waiting for over 400 years to bring out a people whom he had chosen, not only as a family, or as tribes, but as a nation. But in his eternal plan, one night was necessary to change the course of slavery to freedom, and only through the shed blood of the Lamb. Imagine in the house of Hoshea, never was there any other time of excitement more than this one night, when his parents must have shouted, tonight is the day of HOSHEA-salvation!!! The preparations were made ready, the Lamb was slain and the blood was applied on the door posts and the lintels as the Lord commanded, waiting for salvation, deliverance, redemption and the glorious liberty. **2. When I see the blood, I will pass over you:** It was mandatory for God to execute judgement when he does NOT see the blood on the door posts and lintels, it was mandatory for God to pass over when he sees the blood. Because it is written, without shedding of blood, there is no remission (Hebrews 10.22). THAT night came, and the angel of death passed by, and God's sovereign law was executed. There were two groups of people, one the living and the other dead. There was death in the land of Egypt, but freedom, deliverance, salvation and redemption among the children of Israel, because of the blood on the DOOR posts and lintels. It was the night to be remembered throughout their generations, thus ushering them into a new beginning of life, hope and a future.

Experience: As a Christian by name I was living a very pious life, having the knowledge of heaven, hell, the bible and the judgement of God, but was a slave of sin and under bondage to the devil and never washed by the blood of Christ. But one night came in my life on 24th August 1974 at 10.30 p.m. I was convicted of my sin by the word of the Lord and by His Spirit (I Peter 1:23), and I confessed all my sin, and claimed the blood of Christ, immediately I was washed of all my sins, and the burden of my sin rolled away. That night was a beginning of a new life in Christ, and a new day dawned in my life. I can assuredly say that I have passed from death unto life, and will never come under God's judgement for sin. .

Illustrations: **1. The rich fool:** The Lord Jesus spoke a parable of a certain rich man, who said within himself... Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease. Eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, THIS NIGHT thy soul shall be required of thee; This man lost his soul for eternity the same night and nothing could save him (Luke 12. 16-20) **2. The king's**

doom: Belshazzar, the king made a great feast, lifted himself against the Lord of heaven, and brought the vessels of the house of God and drank wine from them and praised the gods of gold, silver, wood, iron and stone. The same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote on the wall. The writing was; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. IN THAT NIGHT was Belshazzar the king slain of the Chaldeans (Daniel 5:1-30). 3. *The undecided lady:* One evening the Lord clearly spoke to her in a message, being convicted by the Holy Spirit to take a decision to receive Christ into her heart. But her hindrance was, that next morning she had to go out with her friends for a party. So that night she scribbled on a paper these words " I will take this decision tomorrow night" and kept that slip on the desk and went to sleep. The next day her friends came to pick her up from her room, only to find her cold and dead on her bed.

Points to ponder: Dear friends, Christ is the Passover Lamb who was sacrificed for us (I Corinthians 5:7), the blood is the precious blood shed for the remission of sins (Mathew 26:28, Hebrews 9.22), but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sins (I John 1:7,9), and the door and lintel posts speaks of the door of our heart where Lord Jesus wants to enter and make us clean. Behold I stand at the DOOR, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him, and he with me (Revelation 3:20). If the door of your heart is not applied or washed by the blood of the Lamb, you are lost for eternity, standing outside the gate of heaven with those who are dead and condemned for ever (Revelation 22:14,15). Even till this day the same words are uttered by the Lord; I will pass through...this night, when I see the blood, I will pass over you. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; (Isaiah 1:18). With patience and longsuffering, the Lord is still waiting for you and inviting, Come unto me (Mathew 11:28).

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power, Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb
Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour, Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb
Are you washed in the blood, in the soul cleansing blood of the Lamb
Are your garments spotless are they white as snow, Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb

The Battle:

In Exodus chapters 1- 16, we find God was involved directly with the children of Israel in fighting for them, and Moses' rod helped in dividing the red sea and also destroying the army of Pharaoh. The children of Israel complained of food and water, Moses cried unto the Lord and he provided Manna from heaven and water from Rock. Whereas Exodus 17:8-16 begins with these words. Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim (vs. 8). God did not directly involve in this battle, but was seeking for a man who could stand in the gap and plead for the people of God, and he found that

man in Moses. It was Moses who commanded Joshua, "Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand (Exodus 17:9)". In the above passage the scripture records for the first time the mention of Joshua, assigned as the captain of the army (vs.9). Nothing is mentioned of how he got his training as a man of war. In the Indian Army, one has to begin with Lance Naik, and cross about seven (7) ranks to become a Captain in the Army. It is said, a soldier's duties are very challenging and hard: D.M. McIntyre says: The first duty of a soldier is OBEDIENCE. The most evident duty of a soldier is to ENDURE HARDNESS. The ultimate duty of a soldier is to offer the SUPREME SACRIFICE. Battle ground is a place of no return. Joshua accepted these challenges and was able to go forward. Joshua's discipline were marked on these lines, *Obedience - Submission - Willingness - Availability - Love for God's people - God's honour - God's glory*. Follow this sequence and you will place yourself one day among the category of conquerors. Now let us enter the battleground.

The battleground:

In a battle one needs to recognize who is the enemy. The enemy Joshua had to fight were the Amalekites. Amalek is the son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau. Amalek means WARLIKE. Another aspect of Amalekite, it is mentioned "Because a hand was against the throne of the LORD, the LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation (Exodus 17:16 NIV). Speaks of Satan who lifted his hand against the throne of God. His repeated words, I will, I will are prominent in this passage (Isaiah 14:12-15). Remember this war continues even till this day. The Amalekites came suddenly from behind and smote the weak and feeble ones (Deuteronomy 25:17,18). Joshua was commanded by Moses "choose us out men, go out and fight with Amalek: (Exodus 17:9)." Joshua submitted himself to the authority of God, became steadfast in faith, put on the armour and gathered his army and depended on the prayer of his Master. Ultimately the victory was won, and Moses called that place Jehovah-nissi, the LORD is my banner-Victory (vs. 15).

Application:

We shall see how the Amalek gets involved in our lives. Once we are born again or saved, we enter into the battle field sooner or later. There is war between the flesh and spirit, the old nature (self and I) and the new nature. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would. (Galatians 5:17), I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind (Romans 7:23). Three times the scripture mentions the works or deeds of the flesh and closes with an ultimatum - they shall NOT INHERIT the kingdom of God (I Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-5). When you look into Galatians 5:17, there are 17 things mentioned, but we shall consider only two, i.e. Adultery, Lasciviousness which are common among young people.

1. Adultery: It means, illicit affair when one or both is married. It is one of the ten commandments, "thou shall not commit adultery (Exodus 20:14). It is an Act condemned and punishable by death as per law (Leviticus 20:10) And finally it comes under God's judgement (Hebrews 13:4). Whereas in the New Testament, Jesus goes beyond the Act of this sin and concludes it is a matter of heart and mind (desire). He said, But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman (or man) to lust after her (or him) hath committed adultery with her (or him) in his (or her) heart (Mathew 5:28).

2. Lasciviousness: It means Open outrage against decency, refers to public obscenities, such as newspapers, magazines, TV, posters, online pictures, movies etc. In the olden days these (men and women) were displayed in the form of half clad and obscene postures of statues, images and figures, on public display in the erstwhile Greek and Roman periods, which were threat to the imagination or thinking for believer's holy living. Is it not true in our days, where the display of such obscenity has become public and open and beyond the control of law and government. As believers are we supposed to be partakers of such these in thought and practice? Then we cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. It is only those who are weak and feeble who fall into such areas and become victims.

Experience: After being born again or saved, I still continued to have a desire for music both spiritual and worldly. Hearing cinema songs, western songs including Rock, Pop, Jazz, hindustani, classical started influencing my life, robbing my time. I could feel I was growing weak spiritually. Morning till night it was music time, but gradually the time for devotion, prayer, and fellowship decreased and Sunday was an outing day for music. I started to get a feeling whether I was really saved. One day I attended the bible study, where I heard that the works of the flesh could make a believer hopeless, just as apostle Paul says, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me (Romans 7:24)". The preacher continued that, Jesus not only carried and died for our sins on the cross, but also our fleshly desires which reign in the members of our body. I just prayed and said, Thank you Lord Jesus you died with my sins on the cross and has forgiven me, and also with my desire for music too. My desire for music is also buried with you. As you were raised with the power of resurrection into a new life, I believe I am risen with you by the same power to walk in the newness of life. Amen. Since that day till date the desire for worldly music and its influence totally disappeared. New desire and hunger for God's word, prayer and fellowship and love for God's house began increasing more and more, gospel, victory and fruitfulness followed.

Illustrations: Victims: 1. King Saul killed by an Amalek, because he compromised with the Amalekites (2 Samuel 1:2-10, 1 Samuel 15:1-23), so also Cain, Esau became victims of Flesh.

Victors: 1. Joshua conceded defeat with Ai, because of self will, and Achan's sinful desires, but recovered through repentance (Joshua 7). 2. David who fell into adultery, was restored again

because of his remorse and repentance (2 Samuel 11, Psalms 51), Joseph fled from the scene of sin, because he feared God (Genesis 39:7-12), Daniel forsook the king's meat, because he did not want to defile himself, deny his faith nor dishonour his God.

Points to ponder: In your case it may be something else, such as, books, friends, movies, bad habits, attitudes, conduct and relationships which are hard to escape, freed and to be delivered. The way to victory is simple. As we have seen in Joshua's life, Peter, James and Paul give us the same sequel for victory in their epistles. They are: 1. *Identification in the death, burial and resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ* (Romans 6:3-8, 8.2). 2. *Submission to God:* Resist the devil and he shall flee from you (James 4:7). 3. *Steadfast in the faith:* (1 Peter 5:8-9). Faith in God (Mark 11:22), Faith in Jesus Christ (John 20:31), Faith in God's Word (Romans 10:17, 1 John 2:14). 4. *Stand, having the whole armour of God* (Ephesians 6:10-17) . the battle is the Lord's. e.g. Moses (Exodus 14:13-14), Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20:17), Psalmist (Psalms 46:10). 5. *Prayer:* Prayer of Servants of God and Saints. (Exodus 17:9-12, Ephesians:18). EM Bounds writes: God's greatest movement in the world has been conditioned on, centered and fashioned by prayer. Praying saints are God's agents for carrying out His saving and providential work on earth.

May the Lord give us such victory in our lives and enable us to go on conquering and to conquer and become partakers of his heavenly kingdom. The next aspect that is mentioned about Joshua, he was a minister to Moses (Joshua 24:13).

God willing we shall see in the forthcoming issue.

JOSHUA - II

Born as a slave in Egypt, becomes a conqueror in Canaan

Backtracking:

We have seen the life of Joshua of his background and his beginnings which led to the salvation and redemption of the children of Israel through the blood of the slain Lamb. Similarly, it is imperative for a soul to receive this so great salvation offered by Lord Jesus Christ only through his shed precious blood on the cross. Secondly, we saw Joshua engaged in a battle, though he was an amateur, yet being under discipline and submission to his master, he faced the battle and won the victory. We too are engaged in a spiritual warfare, with principalities, powers, and rulers of darkness and spiritual wickedness. As we come under spiritual discipline and submit ourselves to God, putting on the whole armour of God and Stand, the Lord fights our battles and gives us victory. The next aspect in the life of Joshua we see him as a minister to Moses.

Joshua as Minister:

In the next sequel about Joshua, as we read the scriptures he is called as a Minister to Moses. *And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.* Exodus 24:13, In the principle of first mention, this word Minister appears for the first time in scripture with Joshua filling this post. He is referred thrice in the same way, i.e. Deuteronomy 1:38, 33:11, Joshua 1:1. The Greek text refers this word 'minister' as a personal attendant or subordinate in waiting. God did choose this position for Joshua as mentioned in Deuteronomy 1:38. This could carry several meanings and to name a few; 1. *To stand before the Master*, Deuteronomy 1:38, 2. *To pour water on the hands of the Master*, 2 kings 3:11, 3. *To carry the luggage of the master*, 2 Timothy 4:13. 4. *To be a Message Carrier*, Ephesians 6:21. Can you ever imagine that Joshua was willing to be demoted than promoted? Can a Captain of the army become an orderly (servant), No, Never. It is an official service but not of the menial kind. Almost forty years his job was to be a minister. It is very interesting to note what duties Joshua would have had while he was ministering to Moses. Three things are prominent for a minister. Seeing, Hearing and Doing, which he did faithfully till the baton of leadership was handed over by the Master. One commentator writes; *"Joshua was Moses' minister or servant, and waited upon him wherever he went, and was to be his successor; and therefore for his encouragement, and to qualify him the better for it, he was indulged with a sight and knowledge of things others were not;"* One could imagine the greatest opportunities Joshua had as a minister. He must have held the rod of Moses, the rod of God in his hand, and would have carried the tables of stone while coming down from the mount, made by God and written with the finger of God. As in Exodus 33:7-11, He must have seen the cloudy pillar standing on the top of the

door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and hear the LORD speak with Moses as a friend and to hear divine counsel pronounced from the mouth of God through Moses to the children of Israel.

Illustrations: 1. *Samuel was a minister to Eli*, I Samuel 3:1; 2. *Elisha to Elijah*, 1 Kings 19:21; 3.

Timothy to Paul, Acts 19:22; In each of these examples we find that the ministers have eventually succeeded their Masters in due course of time. John Mark, Demas could not reach the standards of their Masters, because they left midway.

Example: A Father had a son whom he supposed that he would take over the mantle of leading his huge congregation as a servant of God. The son would not comply nor heeded his father's desire, but turned away to be a rebel, due to affliction, harassment and suffering of his parents in the ministry. After a while, he pondered the blessings of the ministry, obeyed his father and God's call, and started learning to face the difficulties. Just before his decease, the father could see his son leading another huge congregation on his own (a true story).

Application:

Apostle Paul while writing to Timothy he says: *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* I Timothy 4:6. The question comes: In what way can I be a good minister? When we read through the entire epistle to I Timothy, we find several exhortations to the minister and ministry. *Chapter 1 reveals the Ministry of the Gospel, (1:11-12); Chapter 2 reveals the Ministry of Prayer, (2:1-4,8); Chapter 3 reveals the Ministry in the House of God, (3:15); Chapter 4 refers to the Walk of the good minister, (4:12); Chapter 5 refers to the Work of the good minister, (5:18); Chapter 6 refers to the Warnings to the good minister.* Let us look briefly what these ministries mean.

1. Ministry of the Gospel: We need to take our share in the gospel. Telling the good news of the Love of God to the world, and the death, burial and resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ and his glorious return. The Latin word for gospel is Evangel. Today evangelism is done in various ways, through Radio, TV, Literature, Outreaches, Open air and Personal evangelism. This ministry is not given to angels, but to foolish, weak and despised people like us. We are called to be witnesses of Jesus Christ, Acts 1:8. Paul testified of his life and said: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;* 1 Timothy 1:13-15, Romans 1:16. We need to share our testimony with friends and lead them to Christ. Jesus said: *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.* Mark 8:38.

2. Ministry of Prayer: This ministry supersedes all other ministries. Someone asked Dr Billy Graham, what is the secret of your ministry. Three things, he said. First - Prayer, Second - Prayer, Third - Prayer. Another young man asked Dr Stephen Olferd a prominent official in Dr Billy Grahams team, what is the key to spiritual leadership? He replied, First - Bent knees, Second - Wet eyes, Third - Broken heart. Prayer means, making God to work for us, it is a sweet communion with the heavenly Father. *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.* Mathew 6:6. Prayer not only changes things, circumstances and hearts, but more than all as Dr Leonard Ravenhill says, Prayer changes ME. Joshua and the children of Israel could see Moses face, while returning from the Mount after speaking to God, having the glory of God shining on him. Have you ever tried spending time with God in a closet. Once Bro Bakht Singh shared his experience during family prayer, the need to spend the first hours of the day with the Lord in praise, prayer and meditation of the Word of God, and see their faces shining in the mirror, since then it has become a practice for those servants of God. We need to practice personal prayer, family prayer and church prayer. A few simple tips for prayer. Ephesians 6:18 tells us, *Praying... with ALL Prayer*. It speaks of *Praying at ALL Times* (Luke 18:1), *Praying at ALL Places* (1 Timothy 2:8), *Praying for ALL Things* (Philippians 4:6).

3. Ministry in the House of God: Everyone has a share in some work or the other in the Lord's House. As we begin to take our share in the house of God, we see God's plan unfolding for our life. Any ministry in God's house carries a blessing. As we sincerely pray and ask the Lord, He will show us what ministry he has kept for us. We need to use our talents in God's house. Whatever we do, we need to understand that we are doing it for the Lord and not for man. It is the Lord who sees us and rewards us. It may be as small as sweeping, cleaning or laying of mats, or as big as teaching, preaching in Sunday school, youth or at various occasions. We grow tall and strong by dwelling in the house of God. Psalms 92:12-13. Every blessing of God is through the House of God. *for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.* Psalms 133:3. The best Word, best Work, best Training, best Teaching, best Chastening, best Revelation, best Fellowship, best Counselling are all in and through the House of God. David's desire not only to love and dwell in the House of God, but was willing to be a doorkeeper (Psalms 84:10). This revelation of the House of God, God's dwelling place, God's habitation and the New Testament pattern of **The Church** was given to Brother Bakht Singh alone and none else in this age. We are privileged to be part of this ministry.

Experience in Joshua's life: 1. Joshua blew the **gospel** trumpet along with the others (Joshua 6:16), while surrounding Jericho, the abominable city, and won **Rahab** and her household into the fold of God's people, through whose genealogy Jesus Christ was born (Joshua 6:25, Mathew 1:5). 2.

Joshua's **prayer** life has been very predominant. He fell on his face to the earth before the Lord twice, to receive orders from God, (Joshua 5:14, 7:6) and could make God to work for him by commanding the creation, *Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.* Joshua 10:12-14. 3. The scripture declares about Joshua's love for the **house of God**, *And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.* Exodus 33:11. Thus Joshua went on conquering and to conquer.

By taking our share in the ministry of Gospel, ministry of Prayer and ministry in the House of God, may the Lord enable us to be as good ministers of Jesus Christ and prepare us to be as more than conquerors. The next aspect mentioned of Joshua, that he was a man in whom is the spirit. Number 27:18. God willing we shall share this aspect in the forthcoming issue.

JOSHUA - III

Born as a slave in Egypt, becomes a conqueror in Canaan

Backtracking:

We have seen the life of Joshua of his background and his beginnings which led to the salvation and redemption of the children of Israel through the blood of the slain Lamb. Secondly, we saw Joshua by his courage in fighting Amalek, though he was an amateur, yet being under discipline and submission to his master; he faced the battle and won the victory. Thirdly, we saw Joshua in his humility as a minister to Moses, though a low profile job yet he did faithfully and learnt many lessons for almost forty years. We are to exercise ourselves in the ministry of gospel, ministry of prayer and ministry in the house of God and be as good ministers of Jesus Christ, as exhorted by Paul to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:6. The next aspect mentioned of Joshua, that he was a man in whom is the spirit (Num. 27:18). This is the man whom God relies upon to succeed Moses.

Joshua in whom is the Spirit:

God spoke to Moses that his journey in this world has come to an end. Then Moses asked the LORD, *Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, ...that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd*(Num. 27:16,17). Instantly the reply comes. *And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;* (Num. 27:18). The Lord himself gives this testimony. Although Joshua has been serving under Moses several years, he neither recommended nor did he ever perceive him to be his successor. It was God's choice but with a difference. One commentator writes: "*This must certainly mean the Spirit of God; and because he (Joshua) was endued with this Spirit, therefore he was capable of leading the people. How miserably qualified is that man for the work of God who is not guided and influenced by the Holy Ghost! God never chooses a man to accomplish his designs, but that one whom he himself has qualified for the work*". Caleb, in whom is another spirit (Num. 14:24), stands with Joshua, compassed with the same favours and crowned with the same honours, as true conquerors they lived still (Num. 14:30,38), whereas the other spies who brought evil report, rebelled, vexed and grieved the Spirit of God, perished in the wilderness (Num 14:37, Isaiah 63:10). The heavenly Canaan shall be the everlasting inheritance of those conquerors, who follow the Lord fully guided by the Spirit of God.

Illustrations:

In the Old Testament period, the Spirit of God was upon men occasionally as and when needed by God to declare himself and to accomplish his purposes. To name a few:

1. Joseph - *Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?* (Genesis 41:38). First time in the scripture it is mentioned of 'a man in whom the Spirit of God is', O what a testimony!

2. Bezaleel - *And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship* (Exodus 31:2, 3).

3. Gideon - *...the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him* (Judges 6:34).

4. David - *Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward* (I Sam 16:13).

5. Daniel - *Belshazzar the king - I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee* (Daniel 5:14).

In the New Testament period the Holy Spirit was given as a gift poured upon the early church disciples, beginning at the day of Pentecost. The scripture reveals of Apostle Peter, Deacons Stephen and Philip, and Apostle Paul being filled by the Spirit.

Application:

A. Let us look at the personality and character of the Holy Spirit.

1. First of all we need to KNOW and understand that the Holy Spirit is NOT an influence, or a power or a force, BUT a PERSON. He is the third person of the Triune God (Mathew 28:19).

2. The Marks of a person are seen in the Holy Spirit. a) Knowledge - *HE KNOWS the things of God* (I Cor. 2:11), b) Wills - *decides the ministry as HE WILLS* (2 Cor. 12:11), c) Thinking - *knows the mind (THINKING) of the Spirit* (Romans 8:27), d) Grief or sad - *grieve not the Holy Spirit* (Eph. 4:30).

3. The CHARACTER of the Holy Spirit can be understood by the names or titles given to him. To name a few: a) *Spirit of Wisdom* (Isaiah 11:2), b) *Teacher* (John 14:26), c) *Instructor* (Nehemiah 9:20), d) *Comforter* (John 16:7). In one verse alone (Isaiah 11:2), there are seven titles which we can study and appropriate. Let us consider one aspect of his character:

Comforter: The greek word *parakletos* (*Paraclete*) *Advocate* (I John 2:1) means, one called alongside to help in all situations. For three and half years, Jesus was as one alongside with the disciples in all places and situations, In John 14th chapter, while telling them of his departure, six times the Lord uses the word 'I go' which troubled and created fear in the disciples. In simple words Jesus tells them in verse 16 "*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*"; One divine person going to the Father and another divine person sent by the Father to take his place. As young people we need to remember that as our heavenly comforter (*Paraclete*), He comforts us in times of *fear*, He comforts us in times of *loneliness*, He comforts us in times of *sickness*, He comforts us in times of *ministry*, and He comforts us in times of *loss of loved ones*. He is always there alongside with us.

Caution: Since the Holy Spirit is a person and indwelling in us, we need to remember that He knows all that we see, hear, do, and the places we go. Imagine seeing a bad movie or going to a movie theatre, surely the Spirit of God will be grieved and silenced. Similarly in every area of life we need to take heed that He is always alongside with us either to rejoice or to be grieved.

Illustrations:

1. Joshua led the people of Israel full of the *Spirit of Wisdom* (Deuteronomy 34:9)
2. Ezra *taught* the law of the Lord by the same spirit (Ezra 7:10)
3. Nehemiah *instructed* to build the walls of Jerusalem by the same spirit (Neh. 2:18)
4. Paul *comforts* persecuted Corinthian and sorrowing Thessalonian believers (2 Cor. 1:4, 1 Thess. 4:13-18, 2 Thess. 1:6, 7).

It is a special ministry to comfort and console.

a) Bro CE Dasan is one such gifted servant of God in our assembly, about whom it is said - The saints who were going through sickness, surgery, sorrow, discouragement, in deep trouble, as they think of some servant of God to come and pray, Bro Dasan was at their doorstep.

b) Once Bro Devadoss, my father was to undergo prostate surgery at 7.00 am at Osmania Hospital, and was ready to be taken to the operation theatre, and was hoping someone could come and pray. It was at 6.00 am. one could see a person in white dress, approaching. It was Bro Dasan to pray for him. What a comfort!!

c) Once a family lost their beloved mother and the family could not be comforted by their relatives and friends, but were weeping and crying uncontrollably, Bro Bakht Singh came and prayed kneeling beside the coffin, after prayer, there was no more weeping and crying. This is divine comfort.

B. Let us consider the working of the Holy Spirit.

Saved people are the channels the Holy Spirit can use to accomplish the purposes of God. Now if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his (meaning - does not belong to Christ) (Romans 8:9). The work of the Holy Spirit has a beginning in the human channel.

1. The Spirit of God reproves (convicts, convinces) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement (John 16:7-11).

a) Of Sin, because they believe not on ME. NOT believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is the world's greatest sin. for example: i) The Spirit of Christ preached through Noah to the disobedient, ungodly old world that then was, God spared them not but destroyed by flood (I Peter 1:11, 3:19,20; II Peter 3:6). ii) The same Spirit preached through Peter brought conviction and those who were pricked in their heart, said "Men and brethren what shall we do?" iii) Paul was brought under the same conviction, and cried out "Lord what will thou have me to do?" iv) I too was brought under conviction on 24th August 1974, when I confessed all my sins and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and accepted him as my Saviour, I became a new creation. Dear friends, you may be a Christian by name, by birth, by family, studied in a Christian school or doing Christian activity. If you have not

believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and accepted him as your personal Saviour, you do not belong to Christ. Even now if you repent and receive Christ into your heart, your sins will be forgiven and you will be a child of God. This is the first work of the Spirit of God. Then these other aspects follow being done by the Spirit to a regenerated person.

2. Born of the Spirit (John 1:13, 2 Cor. 5:17), we are made a new creation.

3. Sealed by the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13) we are branded to become God's own property.

4. Baptized into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13) we are made members of the universal church.

5. Built together for an habitation of God (Ephesians 2:22), we are a dwelling place of God.

6. Changed into the image of the Lord from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18), we are given a lively hope.

7. Prepares the bride of Christ to present before the Lord (Rev. 19:7, 22:17). The best friend of the Spirit is the bride, and the best friend of the bride is the Spirit. One could see in the last page of the scriptures, the inseparable bond of the Spirit and the bride waiting for the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus, and also hoping to possess the eternal inheritance which is the heavenly Canaan. As we submit ourselves and allow the Holy Spirit to take possession of us, we too are made conquerors to inherit the Promised Land, the heavenly Canaan.

God who testified about Joshua, in whom the Spirit is, went about conquering and to conquer in these areas which were brought under his authority.

1. All the places came under his authority. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you (Joshua 1:3).

2. All Kingdoms came under his authority. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee (Joshua 1:5).

3. All people came under his authority. And they answered Joshua, saying, *All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses* (Joshua 1:16, 17).

This is not only for Joshua, but can be our experience, because of the Lord's promise, "*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts* (Zechariah 4:6)" by which victory can be ours. May the Lord make it so.

Finally, in conclusion, we shall see how Joshua possessed the land, God willing in the next issue.

JOSHUA - IV

Born as a slave in Egypt, becomes a conqueror in Canaan

Review:

The study of Joshua reminds us of: 1. *Salvation and Redemption* (Exodus 12), 2. *Soldier and Captain* (Exodus 17), 3. *Minister to Moses* (Exodus 24:13), 4. *In whom the Spirit is* (Numbers 27:18) 5. *Possession of the Land, Conqueror of Canaan* (Joshua 11:23).

In the previous issue we have seen the life of Joshua that he was a man in whom is the Spirit (Numbers 27:18). A man whom God relied upon to succeed Moses. In this concluding chapter we shall see how Joshua could become a conqueror and how he possessed and subdued the land before him.

The key word in the Book of Joshua is possession. God had given the children of Israel their land in an unconditional covenant. To Abraham He had said, *“And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God”* (Gen. 17:8). However, Israel’s possession of the land was conditional. They had to fight battles and lay hold of their possessions. And, as Joshua reminded them in his final message before his death, their absolute surrender to God and implicit obedience to the Word of God would determine their continued possession of the land. For Joshua to become a conqueror, he had to be conquered, before he could possess the inheritance, he had to be possessed by the one who promised.

Two verses in the scripture are prominent about Joshua and are worth knowing.

As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses. (Joshua 11:15)

So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war. (Joshua 11:23)

Let us take a look of how Joshua began his mission of subduing the land before him.

On a particular day, Joshua, being the leader and captain of the army of Israel, prepares for the first battle and puts on his armour, takes his sword and goes out to survey, contemplating what steps to be taken for the city of Jericho (may be alone). *And it came to pass, when he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the*

LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so (Joshua 5:14-15). Joshua not only loosed his shoe (his steps), but also lost his sword (his strength). From that day forward Joshua renounced his strategy and tactics and conceded absolute control and implicit obedience, accepting the leadership of the Man with a drawn sword, to work together with closest collaboration. Mark these words *"What saith my lord unto his servant?"*. Having the burden of responsibility lifted, the battle was no longer his, but the Lord's.

The key victory of the whole campaign was the conquest of Jericho. For God *"delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man (Psalms 147:10)*. If we look at the sequence of events that led to the fall of Jericho, it begins with the Captain's command. *"And the LORD said to Joshua, See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and its king, and the mighty men of valour (Joshua 6:2)*. In verses 3-5, are the details of strategy and victory given. It begins and ends like this, *"And ye shall compass the city..." "...and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend every man straight before him."* In God's sight the victory has already been won, but is incomplete without the involvement of human channel. For execution of the above order Joshua had to exercise a) **FAITH** in the (LORD) Captain, b) **OBEDIENCE** to the Word of God, c) **SUBMISSION** to the authority d) **SURRENDER** to the details of strategy.

The wings of faith began to soar high because it is written *" By faith the walls of Jericho fell down"* (Hebrews 11:30). *Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you (Joshua 1:3)*. Thus Joshua went on conquering 31 kings, and no man, king or kingdoms could stand before him. *So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war (Joshua 11:23)*. Firstly they possessed the land which became their inheritance, a place of their own, each one under his own vine and fig tree, which they did not plant, a dwelling place which they never built, they ate the grain which they never sowed (Joshua 24:13). and secondly they had rest, no more wanderings, nor wars (Joshua 21:44). This speaks of **Sufficiency, Satisfaction and Sovereignty**. This is fullness of Christ available to every believer.

Caution:

Sin and Self Confidence has been the source of defeat for many great conflicts both physical and spiritual. So with Joshua, who conceded defeat with a small city of Ai, because *"Israel hath sinned"* (Joshua 7:11). One man's sin brought the whole nation to a halt. We read that Joshua prayed after the defeat and not before the battle. However Joshua regained a major victory at Ai, after searching the guilty and punishing the offenders. The same also with the subtle Gibeonites who entered into a peace agreement. The feet of Joshua and the children of Israel did not tread

on the land of Gibeon, they could not possess it, because the scripture records, *"they asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord"* (Joshua 9:14).

Application:

Is it not true with God's eternal purpose? The price has been paid and victory won through Lord Jesus Christ as the *"Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"* and was *"foreordained before the foundation of the world"* (Revelation 13:8, 1 Peter 1:19-20). *It is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love (possess) him. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.* (1 Corinthians 3:9,22-23). The creation was incomplete without Man, Christ as head is incomplete without the church His body, the heavenly bridegroom is incomplete without the church His earthly bride, Heaven is incomplete without the Saints of the Most High in white robes. The New heaven and New earth is incomplete without the Saints of the Most High to reign with Christ for ever.

The life of Joshua has a very practical application to the believer today. Canaan cannot be a type of heaven since heaven is not a place of conflict and conquest. Heaven is received as a gift of the grace of God. It corresponds to the Epistle to the Ephesians where we see that the believer is blessed with all spiritual blessings. The practical possession and experience of them depends upon conflict and conquest. These are never attained through the energy of the flesh, but through the power of the Holy Spirit in the yielded life of the believer. Canaan is the shadow of the fullness of spiritual blessing that we can claim by faith as our possession in Christ here on earth. Lord Jesus Christ (*the Captain of Salvation*) conquered Sin, Satan, Death, Hell and the Grave. Victory can be ours too.

To enjoy the fullness of blessing we need to do the following:

1. Dethrone Self and Enthroned Christ – Galatians 2:20
2. Abiding in Christ – John 15:7,8
3. Wholly yielded to Christ - Romans 6:13
4. Being under the Headship, Lordship and Kingship of Christ – Colossians 2:9,10
5. Submitting to the Will of God – Romans 12:2

Illustrations:

1. Apostle Paul cries, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord* (Rom 7:24-25). *I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me* (Philippians 4:13). After this, Paul went about conquering and to conquer not only cities, countries but continents for Christ. Oswald Sanders titles him as *"the world's greatest Christian, the world's greatest missionary"*
2. In our generation, it is said about Brother Bakht Singh, every place his feet has tread, an assembly has sprouted, to be the inheritance of God and his saints, because of his

absolute surrender and implicit obedience to his Master who called him. His prayer at every new city or town or village is, “Lord by faith we claim this place as your inheritance”, and soon or later it becomes one.

3. William Carey, who began his missionary work with the motto “Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God” ended his life with these last words “This poor wretched worm, into THY hands I fall”. Translated the bible in more than 14 Indian languages. No wonder he became the Father of modern missions.
4. Hudson Taylor confesses that in spite of fasting, praying long hours, devotion, almost every day, every hour, it was constant conflict and often defeat. Once when he was so desperate, he found deliverance in Christ, who filled his heart, soul and life. The fruit of his work has been the establishment of the China Inland Mission.

The scripture tells us that *“Thanks be to God who leads us, wherever we are, on his own triumphant way”* (2 Corinthians 2:14 Phillips)

My dear brothers and sisters, you may seem ordinary, inadequate and illiterate, but in God’s sight you are special and He is willing to use you to accomplish great things for Him. If you commit your life wholly into God’s hand and be faithful, God will accomplish His purpose in making you a chosen vessel for His glory. May God Bless You.