

JOSHUA - A MAN FOR HIS TIME

by Angela Simon

Reading: Numbers Chapter 27 verses 15-23

As I was praying about what to do for "*Contact*", one character came in to my mind; Joshua!

His name means *Jehovah-Saviour*, and what an appropriate name, as he captained the children of Israel, leading them in to the "Promised Land". But why was he chosen for this task? Well it wasn't on a whim of God. In fact, we need to look back at his history of his relationship with God, resulting in his transformation and growth, if we are to understand why he was chosen for this task.

Firstly, Joshua had a good teacher: Moses. Joshua spent time with him, listened and learned from him, and observed Moses' relationship with God. In the book of Exodus 24v13, it speaks of Joshua being Moses' 'aide' (NIV), and it reads: "and Moses rose up and his aide Joshua, and Moses went up unto the mount", where God spoke to Moses face to face. This experience must have spurred Joshua on, to learn more of God.

It shows us the need for teachers and good mentors in our churches, and the need for quality time with them. When I was a young Christian, in our home church, I was fortunate to have this mentoring and teaching, which gave me a love for the word of God. Now more than ever there is a need for this contact, in whatever shape or form it takes, in such difficult times.

Another important point is that Joshua had friends who were spiritually on the same wavelength as him. Caleb was his friend, and they both brought back a good report, when Moses sent twelve spies (one from each of the tribes of Israel), into the land of Canaan, to spy out the land. The other ten spies brought back a negative report, but Joshua and Caleb tried to encourage the people of Israel to believe the good report (even though the Israelites threatened to kill them). We really, really need brothers and sisters in Jesus, where we can share and talk honestly about our faith, and the times we are going through, in a safe space.

Moving on from this, although Joshua was in the right place with God, he had to experience the 40 years of wilderness wanderings, as a result of the unbelief of the people. This must have been so difficult for Joshua, and he must have been so disappointed and frustrated by this. However, this time must have been needful for Joshua, as he searched for God, and clung to Him in those difficult and dry years. He had known moments of spiritual joy on the mount, but now he needed to know his God in a very real and personal way, down in the valley.

It is good to know, that he was no different to us in experiencing the ups and downs of life. It seems for us at the moment, that we are going through a kind of wilderness experience. We wander from lockdown to lockdown, maybe feeling that we are going around in circles. But we

can learn much from Joshua, and in Exodus 33v11, it speaks of Joshua spending time with God, in the tabernacle (depicting God's presence)... "The Lord spoke unto Moses face to face, as you speak to a friend. Moses went again in to the camp, but Joshua the Son of Nun, a young man remained in the tabernacle"

Joshua spent quality time with God there, and you and I are no different. At this time more than ever, we need to spend good quality time with the Lord; after all we may find that this could be one of the most important periods in our Christian faith.

I finish with a promise that was given to Joshua, when God spoke to him before leading the Israelites into the land of promise:

"Be strong and courageous; don't be afraid or dismayed, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1v9).

As for us? Jesus is our Saviour; our captain. He is our advocate and guide; who knows us through and through, who loves us and will never leave us or forsake us. Praise His name. Amen