

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOSHUA AS A LEADER

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Abstract

Leadership is one aspect that the world needed right now. As a Christian, biblical leadership can be found in the bible in numerous characters. Christian leadership is an aspect that is rare and profound in this day and age. Mrs. White even stated about characteristics of the people who can stand for the right in the midst of a messy world. Mrs. White said, “the greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”¹

The Bible mentions many people who possessed this trait of leadership, such as Joseph, Daniel, Paul, even Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, but the concentration of this article is the man who succeeded Moses, which was Joshua.

Keywords: *Character, Leadership*

Who is Joshua?

The bible stated that Joshua is one of God’s great men. He is the leader of Israel. His greatness as a leader started with small things with great earnestness. The book Number gave the actual name of Joshua, which is Hosea (Num. 13:6), which means a Savior. Moses in later years changed his name to be Joshua which means “saved by God.”

Joshua as a young man started his career as soldier and in later years God chose him to replace Moses. He was chosen to led the Israelites to Canaan, the Promised Land. The bible stated that Joshua lived for 110 years. And there are three phases of his live: (1) 45 years – prior to the exodus from Egypt; (2) 40 years – together with Moses, (3) 25 years – as the leader of the Israelites.

God has chosen Joshua, he is one among two people in all the Israelites who were born in Egypt, that were able to reached Canaan beside Caleb. The other Israelites died in the wilderness on their journey to Canaan land. Joshua and Caleb are the one according to God. They were the only two among all who were born in Egypt who reached Canaan because of their faithfulness until the end of their lives and there are many instances in the Bible that Joshua showed his strong faith and faithfulness to God.

¹Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1952), 57.

Joshua's Gift of Faith

Joshua has the gift of faith. This means he has God given ability to claim God's promise to do great things that is impossible for man to achieved. This faith is peculiar to his leadership as the leader of Israelites. In the course of his leadership as leader of Israelites, when God told Joshua to cross the Jordan river, he directly set up the plan even though he did not have any guide. He only had faith and this is his gift of faith to God. As stated in Joshua 1:10-11, "So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.'" They were successful because God made the river dried. His faith in God shows his firmness and assurance in God. A leader need this firmness and assurance in God and claim God's promises in the course of one's leadership as Joshua did.

Joshua is a Leader that is Willing to Help

As a leader Joshua is one of few who has the willingness to help others. When the Gibeonites were attacked by the Amorites and other nations, they came and asked help from Joshua. Joshua immediately helped them, even though he was deceived by them before.

The Gibeonites are one of those nations that were located on the west side of Jordan river, similar to the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites and Jebusites. These nations had a plan to unite their force in order to attack the Israelites. However, when the Gibeonites heard that the Israelites had conquered Jericho and Ai, they were terrified and refused to attack Israel. They tried to find ways in order to save their lives.

"However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, ⁴ they resorted to a ruse: They went as a delegation whose donkeys were loaded^[a] with worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended. ⁵ They put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and moldy. ⁶ Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the Israelites, We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us" (Joshua 9:3-6).

And our elders and all those living in our country said to us, 'Take provisions for your journey; go and meet them and say to them, "We are your servants; make a treaty with us"' (Joshua 9:11). "Then, Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath" (Joshua 9:15).

When the Gibeonites were attacked by the Amorites, they asked for help from Joshua. Joshua is faithful man of God, and in doing his job, Joshua kept his promise that he had made with his own enemy who deceived him. However, since he made that promise, he fulfilled it.

Joshua is Prayerful

A leader in the sight of God, is a prayerful leader. Joshua profess his faith in prayers. The Bible says, "On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day" (Joshua 10: 12, 13).

This story mentions that God answers the prayer of Joshua. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky. This has never happened in history. This gives the Israelites enough time to defeat their enemies.

God answers the prayer of Joshua because he is faithful to God, to his nation and to the Gibeonites.

Joshua is a Sincere and Humble Leader

Joshua is a peculiar leader, as he shows his sincerity and humbleness in midst of the Israelites. In the beginning Joshua was just an ordinary man, but he did his responsibilities sincerely, and he always has a positive perspective, and he became the leader of the Israelites.

Joshua's commitment to the Israelites was done with sincerity and humbleness. God saw the greatness of someone through his/her character or integrity. Through sincerely and faithfulness.

In his life, Joshua never expects honor and glory, but he stresses on character development in God. Towards the end of his life, Joshua gives a challenge to the Israelites, he said, "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed" (Joshua 23:14).

Joshua Make God as His Guide

One true leader in the sight of God, is one whose characteristic is making God as his guide. There is no better guide than God. As Joshua lead the Israelites, there has been peril and Joshua has his God to guide him.

SDA Bible Commentary says: "The Lord has a great work to be done in our world. To every man He has given His work for man to do. But man is not to make man his guide, lest he be led astray; this is always unsafe. While Bible religion embodies the principles of activity in the service, at the same time there is the necessity of asking for wisdom daily from the Source of all wisdom. What was Joshua's victory? Thou shalt meditate upon the Word of God day and night. The word of the Lord came to Joshua before he passed over Jordan.... (Joshua 1:7, 8,

quoted.). This was the secret of Joshua's victory. He had God his Guide (Letter 188, 1901)."²

Conclusion

Joshua's life is one who shows leadership of self and that can be attributed to his characteristics who have dependence and faithfulness toward God's will. When Joshua was nearing the close of his life he took up a review of the past for two reasons – to lead the Israel of God to gratitude for the marked manifestation of God's presence in all their travels and to lead the to humility of mind under a sense of their unjust murmurings and repining and their neglect to follow out the revealed will of God.³ We also need to recall God's Words. As Joshua plainly declares that his instruction and warnings to the people were not his own words, but the words of God. . . . The Word of God presents special truth for every age. The dealings of God with His people in the past should receive our careful attention. We should learn the lesson which they are designed to teach us.⁴ Joshua's life is a model of faithfulness, faithful to the guidance and Word of God. Joshua is a firm in his faith and courageous, he is willing to help others, he is a man of prayer, he is sincere and humble, but more so in his life he makes God is guidance as he leads the Israelites and his family. In one of his famous quotation as he depart in his old age in Joshua 24:15, he said: "And if it seems evil unto you to serve the LORD choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

²F. D. Nichol, ed., *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1953-57), 2:993.

³Ibid., 1000.

⁴Ibid.

Daftar Pustaka

Nichol, F. D. Ed. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1953-57, 2:993.

White, Ellen G. *Education*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1952.

