

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXVIII

June 17, 2018

No.24

Joshua: An Example For Fathers

(Jerry Fite)

At the close of his life, Joshua addressed his people for the final time. He summed up his history lesson regarding God’s deliverance of Israel, and the blessings shed upon His people with these words, “*Now therefore fear Jehovah and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah*” (Joshua 24:14-15).

Examining the life of Joshua, and his final words, we can see qualities in him that are needed today in fathers everywhere.

A Father’s Exhortation

Joshua exhorted his people to “*fear Jehovah and serve Him.*” This was no generic exhortation, leaving people in the dark as to the distinctive demands of such service. They must “*put away*” the false gods among

them. They cannot reverence “*gods*” and fear the One True “*God*” at the same time. They cannot serve Jehovah and other gods at the same time.

The goal of a father’s exhortation is children “*walking worthily of God (I Thessalonians 2:11-12).*” Joshua’s distinctive exhortation lays out clearly the way with all its demands. We need father’s today who do not just exhort their children to “*love Jesus,*” but also distinctively point out that to do so, they must “*keep*” Jesus’ “*commandments*” (John 14:15).

A Father’s Confidence

Joshua exhorted his people to serve God “*in sincerity and truth.*” Sincerity here denotes “*completeness*” or “*wholeness,*” while truth here conveys the thought of “*firmness,*” “*certainty*” and “*dependability.*” Joshua exhorts his people to serve Jehovah with all their being, without fearing what one writer describes, “*the rude shocks of inquiry.*” God and His Truth is everlasting, enduring for ever (Psalm 119:160). We need fathers today who unashamedly exhort

their children to serve God, knowing the foundation for their children’s faithful service is certain.

A Father’s Leadership

Joshua boldly speaks of the direction he and his house will go. “*As for me and my house we will serve Jehovah.*” There was no hesitation in Joshua’s heart as to the focus of his family’s life. His focus was not being determined by what his children’s friends and their fathers were doing or going to do. Even if they serve false gods, Joshua and his house were determined to serve Jehovah, with all its demands.

A Father’s Example

Joshua’s leadership was strengthened by his example. He manifested confidence in God when most around him lost theirs when contemplating taking the land of promise (Numbers 14:6-9). He spent his life serving God without compromise, following God’s distinctive demands (Joshua 6). Fathers, are you leading your family in word and deed? Joshua did. So, can you.