

Word Notes Sunday 19/06/16
Roy Wheeler: Ground breaking obstacles

Summary

Key Text: Josh 5:13-6:20

In 1 Cor 10 v 11 Paul speaks of history of Israel and how their experiences were recorded as an example to us. In Sept 2014 Roy spoke to us to rise up and take the promises that God had given to us in Newmarket like the people of Israel crossed the Jordan. Roy's Message for Newmarket today is that he senses we have experienced some setbacks (eg in the attempted move to the Academy) and wants to encourage us in the experience of God's people with Joshua. He had begun to receive the promises of God but there was a setback at Jericho where Joshua faced an impossible situation. This is some advice in facing our "Jerichos".

When facing an impossible situation God's answer is a need for a fresh encounter with the Lord. God acts sovereignty to intervene but he also responds to our time alone with him. Joshua went to one side and God drew near to him in a way relevant to the situation he was facing. When Joshua looked up he saw the Lord in a new way. He didn't quite recognise him at first - this was no angel, this was the Son of the living God. Even though Joshua spent a lot of time with God in the tent God now meets him in a way relevant to his situation - commander of the army of the Lord. How do we need to experience God at this moment, as healer, peace giver? God's answer seems to be about a fresh response in worship as Joshua down in reverence.

In these blockage situations we can also expect a fresh word from the Lord. Joshua asked: "What message does my Lord have for his servant?" God said "See, I have *[past tense]* delivered it into your hand". We should visualise what we believe God will do and treat it as a done deal. In Rom 4:17 we read that God calls things which are not yet as if they are, so believe and see things from God's perspective. God's further answer was a fresh impartation of faith to leaders and people (Josh 6:6,7). All of the people needed a fresh word (the rhema word – an utterance of God) then they could respond to that word (Rom 10:17 KJV). That faith was then put into action, in Josh 6:21 they marched around Jericho in silence, showing their trust in God and their leader, in contrast to the Moses generation who would have grumbled and complained. On the 7th time around they gave a shout and the wall collapsed in response to their faith.

God has a strategy both for us as a church and a way to break through obstacles holding people back in their personal lives. A life of praise makes a change to you, even if it doesn't change your situation. In the letter to the Philippians we are exhorted to "Rejoice and again, rejoice, not to be anxious but present your requests by petition with praise and thanksgiving" and believe that "God will grant your hearts and minds peace". Rejoicing and thanksgiving can make a big difference.

Application *(this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)*

When faced with an insurmountable obstacle what is your first response?

List some keys to Joshua and Israel seeing victory found in the Key Text.

What is the significance of verses 6 to 8 in Joshua's context? What might that mean in our Christian context for how we approach blockages, problems and difficulties? *(Hint: Think about what the ark represented and the function of a priest)*

What lesson was God giving to both Israel and the Canaanites? How is this underlined by there being 7 priests with horns and them marching around on 7 days and 7 times on the 7th? How does that impact on your response to challenges and difficulties?

Who stands with you in difficulty, whom might you ask with whom you can share and receive insight?

Witness *(this is the bit where the cell talks, plans and prays about how to share the Good News)*

With summer now here (at least according to the calendar) can your cell plan some outreach activities?