

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
12-21-22

Joshua 1

Joshua Installed As Leader – Verse 1

¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide:

1:1 As the book of Joshua opens, the Israelites are camped along the east bank of the Jordan River at the very edge of the Promised Land, and they are completing the mourning period for Moses, who has just died (Deuteronomy 34:7-8). Thirty-nine years earlier (after spending a year at Mount Sinai receiving God's law), the Israelites had an opportunity to enter the Promised Land, but they failed to trust God to give them victory. As a result, God did not allow them to enter the land, but made them wander in the wilderness until the disobedient generation had all died. During their wilderness wanderings, the Israelites obeyed God's laws. They also taught the new generation to obey God's laws so that they might enter the Promised Land (also called Canaan). As the children grew, they were often reminded that faith and obedience to God brought victory, while unbelief and disobedience brought tragedy. When the last of the older generation had died and the new generation had become adults, the Israelites prepared to make their long-awaited claim on the Promised Land.

1:1 Joshua succeeded Moses as Israel's leader. What qualifications did he have to become the leader of a nation? (1) God appointed him (Numbers 27:18-23). (2) He was one of only two living eyewitnesses to the Egyptian plagues and the Exodus from Egypt. (3) He was Moses' personal aide for 40 years. (4) Of the 12 scouts, only he and Caleb showed complete confidence that God would help them conquer the land. **1:2** Because Joshua had assisted Moses for many years, he was well prepared to take over the leadership of the nation. Changes in leadership are common in many organizations. At such times, a smooth transition is essential for the establishment of the new administration. This doesn't happen unless new leaders are trained. If you are currently in a leadership position, begin preparing someone to take your place. Then, when you leave or are promoted, operations can continue to run efficiently. If you want to be a leader, learn from others so that you will be prepared when the opportunity comes.

God Will Give Them The Land – Verses 2-3

² "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. ³ I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

1:2-3 Your foot...I have given you: Entrance into the land of Canaan was entrusted to a representative. Joshua was the trustee of the land for the people. In the same way, our representative Jesus goes before us and what we have in God we possess in Him.

1:3 I have given you: The whole land was given, but they could only possess that which they claimed (every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you). What they took must be

fought for against determined opposition. God certainly could have simply eliminated all their enemies with a mere thought, but He called Israel into partnership with Himself to see His will done.

Victory Is Assured Because Joshua Is Called By God – Verses 4-5

⁴Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. ⁵No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

1:4-5 Joshua's new job consisted of leading more than two million people into a strange new land and conquering it. What a challenge—even for a man of Joshua's caliber! Every new job is a challenge. Without God it can be frightening. With God it can be a great adventure. Just as God was with Joshua, he is with us as we face our new challenges. We may not conquer nations, but every day we face tough situations, difficult people, and temptations. God promises, however, that he will never abandon us or fail to help us. By asking God to direct us we can conquer many of life's challenges.

The Conditions Of The Promise Of Victory – Verses 6-9

⁶Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. ⁷“Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

1:6-8 Many people think that prosperity and success come from having power, influential personal contacts, and a relentless desire to get ahead. But the strategy for gaining prosperity that God taught Joshua goes against such criteria. He said that to succeed Joshua must (1) be strong and courageous because the task ahead would not be easy, (2) obey God's law, and (3) constantly read and study the Book of the Law—God's Word. To be successful, follow God's words to Joshua. You may not succeed by the world's standards, but you will be a success in God's eyes—and his opinion is most important.

1:8-9 How strange to equate success with obedience. For many, success is controlling others; for Joshua it meant being controlled by God. God told Joshua that to succeed he must obey the rules for living found in God's law. Often we can't see what the results or future benefits of following God will be. When we are not certain what to do, obedience to what God has revealed in the Scriptures is the only sure step we can take. Resolve to set aside time each day to read and think about God's Word. Remind yourself of God's words day and night. Act today on what you know God has said, and God will assure your success in carrying out his purposes.

Command To The Officers – Verses 10-11

¹⁰So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: ¹¹“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.’”

1:10-11 Three days from now: The waiting for God is often the most difficult part for us, but days of waiting are always days of preparation in God's work. There is no wasted time with God.

Reminder To The Eastern Tribes – Verses 12-15

¹²But to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, ¹³“Remember the command that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you after he said, ‘The LORD your God will give you rest by giving you this land.’ ¹⁴Your wives, your children and your livestock may stay in the land that Moses gave you east of the Jordan, but all your fighting men, ready for battle, must cross over ahead of your fellow Israelites. You are to help them ¹⁵until the LORD gives them rest, as he has done for you, and until they too have taken possession of the land the LORD your God is giving them. After that, you may go back and occupy your own land, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you east of the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

1:12-13 During the previous year, the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh had asked Moses if they could settle just east of the Promised Land. The area was excellent pastureland for their large flocks. Moses agreed to give them the land on one condition—that they help their fellow tribes enter and conquer the Promised Land. Only after the land was conquered could they return to their homes. Now it was time for these three tribes to live up to their agreement.

1:13-15 God was giving the people rest. This was wonderful news to these people who had been on the move for their entire lives. The people who had no land would be given a land of their own, and they would be able to settle and to “rest.”

The Eastern Tribes Promise Their Allegiance To Joshua – Verses 16-18

¹⁶Then they answered Joshua, “Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses. ¹⁸Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!”

1:16 If everyone had tried to conquer the Promised Land his own way, chaos would have resulted. In order to complete the enormous task of conquering the land, everyone had to agree to the leader's plan and be willing to support and obey him. If we are going to complete the tasks God has given us, we must fully agree to his plan, pledge ourselves to obey it, and put his principles into action. Agreeing to God's plan means both knowing what the plan is (as found in the Bible) and carrying it out daily.

1:18 When God commissioned Joshua, he was told three times to be strong and courageous (see 1:6-7, 9). Here, Joshua was given the same kind of encouragement from the people. Apparently, he took God's message to heart, and found the strength and courage he needed in his relationship with God. The next time you are afraid to do what you know is right, remember that strength and courage are readily available from God.