

# Joshua 1:1-9 – Preparing to Conquer

Calvin, Delitzsch, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Gill, Trapp, BEZ, Geneva, Poole, INT, Henry, Expositor?

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: We don't know for sure who wrote this book, whether Joshua or someone else, but there are many things and themes you will learn from it. For example, you will learn that Joshua, the conqueror of Canaan (迦南地的征服者), whose name was translated "Jesus," was a type of Jesus. You will learn of the need for persistent and faithful Christian living in the face of daily challenges. You will learn of incredible examples of God's providence (上帝的旨意). But above all, you will see God's faithfulness to his covenant people by using Joshua to continue to secure that Line of Promise—that line through which the Lord Jesus would come to save the world and restore his people to God. In this first message you will see the final preparation of Joshua to lead God's people to capture Canaan. Capturing Canaan was an important part of God's redemption plan. You will see more of this later.

Our headings are: Assurance of Victory, Encouragement to be Brave, and Command to Keep the Law.

Our goals are: That knowing you have been brought into Christ's kingdom through the blood of Jesus Christ, that you will obey God's Word and go out in the spirit of Joshua, enabled by the Spirit, to conquer the world for Jesus Christ.

## Assurance of Victory

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying:

**1. The Book of Joshua begins with God's directions to him.** God's Word is always central to the lives of his people. God gave clear revelation to **Adam** that the woman's seed would crush the serpent's head. God told **Noah** to build an ark to preserve the line of promise. God told **Abraham** to leave Ur of the Chaldees and know that the whole world would be blessed through him. God gave directions to **Isaac** regarding Esau and Jacob. God made a special covenant with **Jacob to establish His house**. One after the other, God spoke to his covenant people. The very first problem in the world came when Adam ignored God's Words.

Genesis 3:11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

2 "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel.

**2. God, the king of the universe, spoke to Joshua and appointed him leader to replace Moses. God knew the importance of proper leadership, especially considering the great task that was ahead.** Joshua had to rule over 2,000,000 people as they crossed over Jordan. God did not leave his covenant people without a commander. Even though Joshua was chosen to be a replacement for Moses earlier, he did not usurp (篡夺) Moses' authority when he was alive, and he did not grab the leadership role after Moses died. He waited for God's timing and appointment. He remained Moses' student. He learned from Moses' weakness and sins. He learned from Moses' patience, faithfulness, humility, and teach-ability. *An illustration: (I know a man who once left a church because they would not call him to be an elder. Today he hardly goes to church...and then not even to a Reformed church. The point? Obviously by his actions he proved he wasn't fit to be an elder in the first place. Ego.*

**3. Because the words were from God, Joshua did not have to worry about whether he was doing the right thing – which was to enter the land and conquer it.** All lands belong to God and he gives them to whomever he wishes.

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.

Wouldn't it be great if church elders were ready to keep the people safe, expose outside enemies, and root out sin from within the ranks of the church knowing they were doing so with God's explicit command?

**4. Interesting note here is that Joshua's original name was "Hoshea" meaning "salvation," but God changed it Joshua, meaning "God is salvation." This was to remind him that it was God who did the work; it was God who saved.** This surely removed pressure from Joshua. This would have reminded him that success of the kingdom wasn't tied to one man. God's kingdom continues, with or without anyone. No one is indispensable (不可或缺的) to the kingdom. This surely would have removed more pressure.

3 "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. 4 "From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

**5. God promised Joshua success wherever he walked, including all the surrounding lands.** He would take Lebanon – north and west, the land of the Euphrates in the north east, and the land of the Hittites in the East, and the land of the

Philistines, who were by the Mediterranean Sea in the south.

6. But it is what is not mentioned in the text that is critical. **Why would Joshua believe and be assured that all these things would come to pass?** Joshua believed this would happen because of his faith...not a blind faith (盲目的信心), but faith in God's promises. Moses had promised that a great prophet than he would come so he kept his eyes on that coming prophet. With Christ before him, he would conquer.

**Deuteronomy 18:18** 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

Hebrews 11, the great examples of faith chapter, alludes (提到) to Joshua's faith in God and his promises.

**Hebrews 11:30** By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.

**What a beautiful picture of the Lord Jesus. Jesus was** the anti-type of Joshua. Like Joshua, he passed through his Jordan – death – and then sent us out, in his authority, to capture the nations for him.

**Psalms 72:8** He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.

5 **"No man shall be able to stand** before you **all the days of your life**; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

**7. God assured Joshua that he would destroy all his enemies.** And in order to add strength to his point, the Lord added his continual presence (临在). God wasn't going to help him from a distance. That assurance of a loving Father nearby gave confidence for the job. You know how a child might ride a bike without training wheels. The child feels safe because the father's hand is on the seat. Just knowing you are there comforts him.

**Hebrews 13:6** So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

And how long would God be with Joshua? Forever.

**1 Kings 8:57** "May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us,

**And who is able to stand against Joshua's antitype, Jesus Christ?** He destroyed sin, destroyed the devil, destroyed principalities and powers (执政掌权者), abolished death, and is now conquering the world! And did not the Psalmist say that the Father would not abandon his Son and leave him in the grave? I hope this sounds familiar! The presence of Jesus Christ removes fears.

**Matthew 28:18** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

## **Encouragement to be Brave**

6 "Be **strong and of good courage**, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

**1. Joshua had to be strong for the work that was set before. Moses wasn't there to help him along...to hold his hands, and the people of Canaan were more powerful and more skilled in fighting.** Furthermore, like Moses, **Joshua had to face enemies from outside and** inside the camp. God knew that fear was debilitating (使人软弱). Fear makes one take shortcuts. But faith gives life. Faith gives strength. Doubt brings cowardice (胆怯). Without faith you are effeminate (软弱的).

**And did not his antitype – the Lord Jesus – have to set his face like flint as he went to the cross?** Did he not face internal and external strife...from his own men, from the Jews, and from the Gentile Romans? And didn't the Lord assure his people of conquest of all the nations of the earth? **Integrity (正直) is the best ground of fortitude (坚韧).** When you know what you are doing is right, you will not be afraid.

**2 Timothy 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

7 "Only be strong and very courageous, that **you may observe to do according to all the law** which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

**2. Joshua had to make sure that God's law was publicly obeyed. Many, even today, like to have a distinction between public and private life, but that was unacceptable to God.** The lives of the people had to reflect knowledge of, acceptance of, and obedience to God's law. And Joshua had to be ready to rebuke his own covenant people.

**Proverbs 28:1**... But the righteous are bold as a lion.

**Was it not the antitype, the Lord Jesus, who said: Nevertheless, not my will, but your will be done.** And wasn't

he the one who drove men with a whip of cords out of the temple? He was perfectly bold for you!

**3. God assured Joshua and the Jews of rich blessings if they obeyed. Israel should have obeyed** because it was right, but God promised them even more if they obeyed.

### **Command to Keep the Law**

8 "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

**1. God commanded Joshua to keep the law. That meant he had to read it, repeat it, remember it, and talk about it!**

Psalm 1:2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

(惟喜爱耶和华的律法，昼夜思想，这人便为有福。)

Joshua had to daily draw from the Lord in order to survive as a leader. He had to make it his duty to study God's law...and learn how to apply the spirit of the law. To not rely upon the Word of God, which produces faith, he would have wilted (消沉) and died as a leader. There was no magical power when Moses put his hand on Joshua's head, but it was ordaining Joshua to a reliance on God. He needed truth to help him keep the precious people of God.

Acts 20:27 "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

**2. And isn't this one of the most serious problems of the church today: Many are ignorant of the Word.** Let it not be so with you, brothers and sisters. Learn to find a book in the Bible and where key passages are. Memorize them. Practice them. Keep Sunday as the Sabbath...don't simply do your "thing" on it. Govern your family well. You can only learn to do so when you are a good student of the Word. On the other hand, don't act like you know everything... And don't assume that you have learned everything you need to learn from some famous Bible teacher. You need God's Word. Be wise and look to the Bible.

9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

**3. Because God knew that Joshua's enemies were numerous and more powerful than he, he urged him again to be courageous.** Repetition was for good effect.

Psalm 124:8 Our help is in the name of the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

### **Conclusion:**

God prepared Joshua over many years to shepherd his people and at the right time he appointed him ruler. Because of the greatness and difficulty of the task, God encouraged Joshua to be brave and assured him of victory. In conjunction with an encouragement to be brave and assurance of victory, God challenged him to be a man of the "Word" – the Word that directed him how to stay strong and fight.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: Today you have the task of advancing God's kingdom in this world. But you don't do it alone. Jesus said that he was with you, and the Psalmist said it in beautiful language: Psalm 121:1 - Lift up our eyes to the hills for there comes your help, your help is in the name of the Lord! The Lord delivered you out of darkness. You are in his light and he will guide you in his light and help you on your path. Live in his light. Be a man of the Word. Be brave. Conquer. It doesn't matter what your task is, God is with you. Your jobs: As a father, you need courage to confront sin from your children's childhood and encourage them to stand against the world. As a spiritual father, you need to confront sin in the church and make sure believers are prepared for battle. This applies to you mothers and children as well. You have to prepare children to be well equipped in all areas – not just to make a good paycheck. And be brave and confront sin in the nation as well. Some may laugh at you, but you are operating in this world for the glory of the Savior, not for the applause of men.

Finally, either you are a conqueror for Christ and live, or you will be condemned by Christ and sent to hell for eternity. He gives you a choice today. He gives you this choice because Jesus paid for the sins of the world and he offers Jesus' life for you. Chose life.