

Joshua, Be Strong

Teacher Preparation

1. Study lesson.
 ■ Scripture **Joshua 1:1–18**
2. Visuals
 - Key Verse 2 **Eph. 6:10**
 - Joshua Map 2 Land promised Israel
 - Joshua Map 1 Wilderness/Canaan
3. Objectives: To learn about—
 - God's charge to Joshua
 "Be strong and of good courage."
 - Joshua's preparation, and
 - Reuben, Gad, Manasseh to lead in battle.

Lesson 2

Outline

The **book** of Joshua is about Joshua leading Israel to conquer the land of Canaan. The **3** divisions of the book are—

Chapters **1** to **12**—the **conquest** of the land.

Chapters **13** to **22**—the **distribution** of the land by lot.

Chapters **23** to **24**—the **farewell** and **death** of Joshua.

God has the sovereign **right** to **give** land to anyone and to any group He chooses. Though nations and people own much real estate, the earth really belongs to the Lord. Therefore, individuals and nations are only temporary **tenants** on earth.

Joshua, a servant

★Teacher reads, as class follows.

Josh. 1:1 *Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, ² Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.*

In scripture, Moses' title is **servant** of the Lord, which perhaps is the greatest title a person can have. Each of us can have that title, if we serve the Lord with all our heart. Joshua had served Moses as his personal attendant. To be a good leader, Joshua needed that

experience as a servant.

God usually **prepares** a person through lowly, routine duties. And, if he proves faithful in those duties, God may call him to higher service.

Thus, God called Joshua to **lead** Israel in **taking** the land of Canaan and distributing the land to the 12 tribes.

The name **Joshua** in Hebrew is *Hoshea*, which means **savior**. In Greek, it is translated **Jesus**. So the names Joshua and Jesus mean the same thing. After Joshua's name, the words "*son of Nun*" appear 29 times. Perhaps, that was to clarify—Joshua was **not** the Savior that God promised in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:15).

Joshua's background

Joshua came from the tribe Ephraim. Born in Egypt, he was a slave for 40 yrs. After Israel came out of Egypt, Moses chose Joshua to be Israel's **captain** to fight the **Amalekites**. He also accompanied **Moses part way up Mt. Sinai**, where God communed with Moses 40 days. Later, Joshua was chosen to be one of **12** men to **spy** out Canaan. He and Caleb were the **only** spies who brought back a **good report**, saying, "We are well able to take the land, for God is with us."

During Israel's 40 yrs. in the wilderness, Joshua was a behind-the-scene person. Josephus says Joshua was 85 yrs. old when he **succeeded** Moses as Israel's leader. It was time for him to take front stage in **conquering** Canaan.

Who God uses

Power and strength in the Christian life come through the word of God indwelling the believer. Then, the weakest person can become a **conqueror**. God often uses the weak person and the nobody to be

His special **channel** to bless others. It is not how we **begin** our Christian life, but how we **end** it, that counts for eternity.

Land promised

★Teacher reads, as class follows.

Josh. 1:3 *Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.*

⁴ *From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.*

The entire land given to Israel was—from the

wilderness in the south—to Lebanon in the north, and—from the Euphrates river in the east—to the Mediterranean sea in the west. But Israel would only possess the land they claimed (“foot shall tread upon”).

point $\begin{matrix} \text{north, south} \\ \text{east, west} \end{matrix}$ →



But Israel never claimed all the land to the Euphrates river. In King Solomon’s reign, his kingdom reached close to that area, but after his death, Israel lost that.

The biblical principle is—God only gives us victory according to our faith and obedience.

Success secret

★Teacher reads, as class follows.

Vs. 5 *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

⁶ *Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.*

⁷ *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

God had told Moses to tell Joshua to “Be strong and of a good courage”

Deu. 31:6. But now, God tells Joshua, which is the 3rd time Joshua heard this. “Good courage” means—strength to venture, persevere and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty.

Meditate on Word

★Teacher reads, as class follows.

Vs. 8 *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

Joshua must meditate day and night on the words of God, for faith and moral strength come through—reading and meditating on scripture. When we do that, we start thinking more like God and seeing things differently than people of the “world.” Our judgment is then filtered by His word, and we begin to have God’s perspective on life.

If we don’t learn God’s truth, the devil can fill our mind with fear, lies, and all kinds of evil. It’s good to memorize Bible verses to go over, especially if one wakes up at night for periods of time. This helps to let God’s word abide in our mind and heart.

God promised Joshua success, and the secret was—faith and obedience, which reminds us of the hymn we often sing “Trust and Obey.” To have God’s power, Joshua must set his heart on God’s word and meditate on it day and night.

Joshua—“Be strong”

★Teacher reads, as class follows.

1:9 *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*

This 4th time Joshua is commanded, “Be strong and of a good courage.” Scripture emphasizes this, which means we need to learn this secret—if we want God’s blessing on our lives.

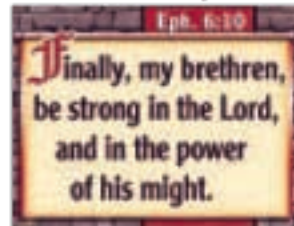
"Be strong" was God's command, and it was Joshua's key to success—and our success. No doubt, Joshua knew how weak he was. Consequently, he **felt afraid** in leading Israel to conquer Canaan. But, by taking his eyes off his weakness and looking to God, **faith** saw what God could do. Remember, "**faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God**" Rom. 10:17.

The NT commands us to "**be strong in the Lord.**" That is—

Key Verse 2

A Key Verse

Eph. 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*



Paul wrote this to the believers at Ephesus, for they

knew the power of Satan because they had been under **Satanic** bondage when they practiced sorcery and witchcraft. We must also be strong in the Lord to resist evil.

Wait 3 days

★Teacher reads, as class follows.

1:10 *Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,*

11 *Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare your victuals; for within **three days** ye shall pass over this **Jordan**, to go in to **possess** the land, which the **LORD** your **God** giveth you to possess it.*

The people had **3 days** to prepare their belongings to move out and be ready to enter Canaan. Waiting is sometimes hard, but God always has purposes in our waiting times. While Israel was getting ready to move out, a heathen woman named Rahab would be saved.

Reuben, Gad, Manasseh

★Teacher reads, as class follows.

Vs. 12 *And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying,*

13 *Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you **rest**, and hath given you this land.*

14 *Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall **remain** in the land*

which **Moses** gave you on **this side Jordan**; but ye shall **pass before your brethren armed**, all the mighty men of valour, and help them;
15 *Until the LORD have given your **brethren rest**, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall **return** unto the land of **your possession**, and **enjoy** it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising.*

Joshua reminded the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh that though they had **chosen** to inherit land on the **east** side of Jordan, they had already **promised** to **lead out** in the conquest of Canaan. Their wives, children, and animals would **remain east** of Jordan, but the men must go, armed for **battle**, to the other side of Jordan and not return 'til Canaan was conquered.

3 tribes say, Be strong

east
Jordan →



★Teacher reads, as class follows.

Vs. 16 *And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou **commandest** us we will **do**, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will **go**.*

17 *According as we hearkened unto **Moses** in all things, so will we hearken unto **thee**: only the **LORD** thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.*

18 *Whosoever he be that doth **rebel** against thy commandment, and will **not hearken** unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: **only be strong and of a good courage**.*

The 3 tribes **pledge** to do all Joshua commands, and to go where he sends them, and also to follow Joshua like they followed Moses.

Be strong in the Lord—4x's

Then, the 3 tribes say the exact words to Joshua that God had said—

"only be strong and of a good courage." This is the **4th** time in

Ch. 1 that Joshua is told this (vs. 6, 7, 9, 18). The tribes knew how

important this was for their **leader**, for if **he failed**, they would **fail**.

No doubt, the entire camp was praying for Joshua to **"be strong and of**

a good courage.” Joshua’s job was—to **defeat** Canaan, which was a great **big** job.

When Satan and his forces tempt us, we need to “be strong and of a good courage.” It’s a mental decision and mindset of **faith**. It helps us to repeat to ourselves, “I **will trust** God in this matter.”

Four times scripture states—“the just shall live by faith” Hab. 2:4, Rom. 1:17, Gal. 3:11, and Heb. 10:38. For—it is **faith** that brings victory in our lives, not our trying.

Paul’s testimony

The opposite of “Be strong and of good courage” is—“be weak and discouraged”, which characterizes the defeated Christian life.

In **Romans** Chapters **6**, **7**, and **8**, Paul discusses spiritual success and spiritual **failure**.

Ch. 6 gives the **mechanics**—“how to live the Spirit-filled life.”

Ch. 7 is about the “monkey wrench”, or “**self**”, that causes our **defeat**.

Here, Paul reveals his battle with “self” (vs. 11, 20, 23–25).

Ch. 8 is about **victory**, which is the Spirit-filled, dedicated life.

Rom. 8:4 says, “walk **not** after the **flesh**, but after the **Spirit**.” To walk in the flesh, our own power, is to sink into spiritual weakness and defeat. But to be **strong** and full of **faith**, we must walk after the Spirit. This produces victory rather than “defeat” in our Christian life.

Rest for today

Christians who do not believe God can, or will, give them victory over their problems or situations, always wander around in a spiritual wilderness. But the book of Joshua challenges us to move forward in **faith**, rather than doubting and considering “retreat” from God. When we act in faith and move on, it helps us avoid yielding to temptations.

In Heb. 3:10, God says, “*Wherefore I was **grieved** with that **generation**, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.*”

That was the generation that 40 yrs. before came to Kadesh-barnea and did **not** believe God could give them **Canaan**.

Heb. 3:11 says, “*So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my **rest**.*”

Faith not only brings victory, it brings an inner **rest** to the soul, mind, and emotions. God wants to give His children deep, spiritual rest, instead of inward turmoil and struggling.

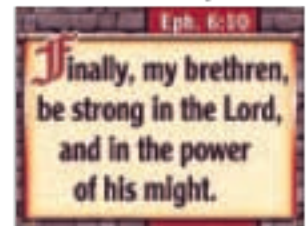
Let’s believe and be strong in the Lord and enter into His **rest**. In our next study, we learn how Israel miraculously crossed the Jordan river.

Key Verse 2

Key Verse

Eph. 6:10 →

Let’s say it together.



Prayer

As class exits, assistant gives out *Compass #2*.

Scripture to read before next study

Joshua 2:1–24