

Joshua

The LORD is Salvation

Chapter 1 *The LORD Commissions Joshua*

1:1-2 Moses died and was buried by God, but “no one knows where his grave is” ^{Deuteronomy 34:5-6}. God must have had a reason, because later Michael maintained the secrecy from Satan ^{Jude 1:9}. The LORD commanded Joshua and the Israelite nation to cross the Jordan into the land He was “giving” them ^{v.2,3,6,11,13,15}. They did not earn it, but as with all gifts (like salvation ^{Ephesians 2:8-9}), in order for the gift to be fully effective, they must receive/rely upon it ^{faith & obedience: Hebrews 4:2,11}.

The majority of the evidence points to Moses and Elijah being God’s two witnesses in Jerusalem ^{Revelation 11:1-12} during the 70th Week of Daniel ^{Daniel 9:27} ⇔ the Tribulation).

- ✧ The Jews have been expecting the Messiah, Elijah and a Moses-like prophet. ^{John 1:19-21}
- ✧ Moses & Elijah appeared with Jesus at the Transfiguration. The three of them spoke about the death of Jesus ^{Luke 9:28-31} and possibly also about His 2nd Coming ^{2 Peter 1:16-19}.
- ✧ Moses & Elijah represent the Law and the Prophets, indicating the entire OT to the Jews.

Most agree Elijah will be one of the witnesses, because he did not die ^{2 Kings 2:11-12} and he was prophesied to appear before the 2nd Coming ^{Malachi 3:1, 4:5-6}. Elijah also had the ability to call fire from heaven ^{2 Kings 1:10-12} and “to shut up the sky so it will not rain” ^{1 Kings 17:1}. (The witnesses’ ministry and Elijah’s drought are both 3½ years long ^{Luke 4:25, James 5:17-18}.)

Many also agree that Moses will be one of the witnesses, because God promised to “raise up a prophet like [Moses]” ^{Deuteronomy 18:15-19}. Moses also had “power to turn...waters into blood” ^{Exodus 7:17-21} and “to strike the earth with every kind of plague” ^{Exodus 7:8-12:30}.

1:3-4 God extended the unconditional covenant He made with Abraham ^{Genesis 12:7, 13:14-17, 15:18-21} and Moses ^{Deuteronomy 11:24-25} to Joshua by telling him He would “give [him] every place where [he] set [his] foot”. The LORD clarified by stating the bounds of the Promised Land (PL) were: west – Mediterranean Sea, east – Euphrates River (!), north – Lebanon, south – desert (Negev).

God guaranteed He would be giving the Promised Land to Abraham ^{Genesis 12:7, 15:18-21, 17:8}, Isaac ^{Genesis 26:3} and Jacob ^{Genesis 28:13, 35:12}, and all their descendants ^{Exodus 13:11, Deuteronomy 31:6}.

1:5 The LORD gave Joshua His promises for (1) supernatural power to overcome any obstacle they will face ^{Romans 8:37, 1 John 4:4} and (2) His personal & permanent presence ^{Matthew 28:20, John 14:16-17}.

God’s unconditional promise to “never leave ... nor forsake” Joshua was earlier spoken to Moses ^{Deuteronomy 31:6} and presented much later as a promise to Christians ^{Hebrews 13:5}.

The nations the Israelites would face in Canaan are human-type enemies equivalent to the spiritual-type enemies Christians face in the world (“rulers, authorities, powers” ^{Ephesians 6:12}).

Joshua B: 1

1:6 God told Joshua to “lead these people” into the PL, then he gave him the first of 4 commands in this chapter ^{v.6,7,9,18} for Joshua to “be strong and courageous” ^{Deuteronomy 31:6-8, 2 Samuel 2:7}.

The OT and NT ^{1 Corinthians 16:13} exhortations to God's followers to “be strong” can only be embraced when genuine believers put their full trust in the Lord ^{Isaiah 12:2, John 14:1}.

1:7-8 God commanded Joshua to keep the “Book of the Law” (Pentateuch, Torah ⇒ God's Word) close to his “mouth” ^{Deuteronomy 31:9-13, Nehemiah 8:7-8}, to meditate upon it and to be obedient to it.

The Lord assured Joshua that his faithful response to these commands would result in him being strong, courageous, prosperous and successful.

This principle, defined by the LORD for Joshua, was not only the key for their success in dispossessing the land, but it is the key for living a victorious life for all followers of God.

Today, meditating on Scripture is a seldom-used tool for studying God's Word even though the Bible encourages meditation ^{Psalms 1:2, 119:15,23,27,48,78,97,99,148} and careful thinking ^{Philippians 4:8}.

1:9 God assured Joshua that he could be strong and courageous ^{Genesis 15:1, Isaiah 41:10, Jeremiah 1:7-8}, because as the LORD had informed him earlier ^{v.5}, He would be alongside Joshua at all times (the fact that Jesus made the same promises to His NT followers ^{Matthew 28:20, John 14:16}, illustrates the immutable nature of God).

God's provisions always accompany His commands, enabling a person to obey ^{Ephesians 6:10-18}. In this case, God directed Joshua to be “strong”, because He would be there to help him.

1:10-11 Immediately (i.e., he did not ask for a vote or conduct a poll), Joshua ordered preparations be made for the crossing of the Jordan. The original Greek indicates the actions included food preparation, because the supernatural production of manna was going to end soon ^{Joshua 5:12}.

Prior to this, Joshua sent two “spies” into Jericho, who were gone for several days ^{Joshua 2}.

1:12-15 The tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad ^{Numbers 32:1} and the half tribe of Manasseh favored the cattle country east of the Jordan River. Moses gave the tribes of Reuben and Gad ^{Numbers 32} and the half tribe of Manasseh ^{Deuteronomy 3:13} permission to claim that territory for their tribes, as long as their men went with the other tribes to aid in taking possession of the PL west of the Jordan River. Joshua announced to these tribes his plan to honor the promise of Moses, as long as they were also prepared to deliver on their part of the agreement.

There are two perspectives on these tribes settling on the east side of the Jordan:

(1) some have interpreted them as “borderline” believers who aren't willing to fully commit or
(2) they were equal with other tribes, because God said the PL extended to the Euphrates ^{v.4}.

1:16-18 The response of the tribes to Joshua was resoundingly positive, with a special emphasis on their obedience to his leadership, even unto death. However, in reality, these tribes had 110,580 men available (according to the second census ^{Numbers 26:7,18,34}), but they only sent 40,000 ^{Joshua 4:13} men across the Jordan River into the PL with Joshua. The rest of the men obviously were left on the east side of the Jordan River to protect the women and children.

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