

Joshua 1:1-18

Joshua 1:1 – **“After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant,”**

1. Israel's new leader, Joshua, is introduced along with his responsibilities in 1:1, 2, 5, and 17.
2. Joshua means “YHWH is salvation”. His name was originally Hoshea which means “salvation”
3. “After the death of Moses”
 - a. Deuteronomy 34
 - b. Joshua was Moses' successor in:
 - i. Numbers 27:15-23
 - ii. Deuteronomy 3:21-22
 - iii. Deuteronomy 31:1-8
 - c. Moses had disobeyed in Numbers 20
4. Moses was called “servant of the Lord”. Joshua is called “Moses' assistant”.
 - a. **Servant** is an honored title used to refer to Abraham, David, Nebuchadnezzar and the Messiah
 - b. Assistant is *mesaret* meaning aide or one who provides personal service. Joshua will be called “servant of the Lord” at the end of the book.
5. “The Lord said” indicates there is direct communication between Joshua and the Lord at this time.
 - a. In Numbers 27:21 Joshua directions from the Lord came through the priests and the Urim and Thummim

1:2 – **““Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.”**

1:3 – **“Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses.**

1:4 – **“ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory.**

1. The Promised Land:
 - a. “Wilderness” is the south
 - b. “Lebanon” is the north
 - c. “Euphrates” is the east, northeast
 - d. “Land of the Hittites” is the land of the Canaanite nations
 - i. “Hittites” refers to all the people groups just like the terms the Canaanites or the Amorites
 - e. “The Great Sea” is the west or the Mediterranean Sea coast

1:5 – **“No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.**

1:6 – “Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.

1. “to be strong” (hzq) occurs 300 x in Scripture
2. “to be courageous” (‘ms) occurs 41x which means Joshua is to be resolute by showing determination, confidence and steadfastness.
 - a. 1:5 “no one will be able to stand up against you”
 - b. 1:6 “Be strong and courageous”
 - c. 1:9 “do not be terrified; do not be discouraged”
 - d. The idea is repeated again in 1:7-8 which calls for Joshua’s resoluteness, or determination, confidence and steadfastness throughout the invasion of Canaan.

1:7 – “Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.

1. “very” is a word added by the Lord to his commands in 1:6 and 1:9
2. The Lord’s instructions to Joshua are not military strategies or organizational processes, but a command to stay rooted in the Word of God (or, the written Law the Lord gave Moses)
3. Obey the written Word of God, the Law given to Moses:
 - a. Joshua’s key to success was spiritual.
 - b. This spiritual life would be manifested by obedience to God.
 - c. Obedience to God would come from obeying the written Word of God available to Joshua
4. “being careful to do according” (ESV) or “Be careful to obey” (NIV) is a translation of two Hebrew words:
 - a. *smr* – “to keep” or “to observe”
 - b. *‘sh* – “to do” or “to obey”
 - c. These two words appear together 40x in the OT referring to diligently obeying the Law.
5. Obedience to the Law (Word of God) was not being overstated here. 1:7-8 say:
 - a. “be careful to do” the Law
 - b. “according to ALL the law”
 - c. “Do not turn from” the Law “to the right hand or to the left”
 - d. “the Law shall not depart from your mouth”
 - e. “meditate on” the Law “day and night”

1:8 – “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful 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. “Meditation” (*haga*).
 - a. In the context of the Old Testament “meditation” meant:
 - i. Meditation meant to focus on God by considering:
 1. His works (acts of creation, deeds in history)
 2. His law (words)
 - ii. Meditation was not merely a mental exercise, but was done on purpose and out loud drawing on previous recorded and known information.

1. Thus, the meditation resulted in the heart and mind expressing the Word of God in Joshua's mouth. "Meditation" (*haga*) suggests a barely audible murmur by the person meditating
2. Meditation was not:
 - a. Silent
 - b. Emptying of the mind
 - c. Concentration on mystical emotions
 - d. Deep self-awareness
 - e. Visualization
2. "Then" ('az) means the result of keeping the Word of God in your heart, mind and mouth ("meditation") would be "prosperous" (*slh*) and "success" (*skl*)
 - a. Both words rarely refer to financial success in the Old Testament.
 - b. These words refer to engaging in and succeeding in life. This success is must be seen from the divine viewpoint while considering the divine purpose for that life.
 - c. This verse (and, verses like it) have to be twisted in the Western world to fit a materialistic, secular, naturalistic viewpoint of man.
 - d. There is no mention of financial success, treasures, wealth, etc. in this verse. Only one time in all the uses of *slh* and *skl* in the OT does it refer to finances – Ezekiel 16:13 – "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen and silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour and honey and oil. You grew exceedingly beautiful and advanced (*skl*) to royalty.
 - e. In the Ot the concept of "prosperity" did not refer specifically to finances. To "prosper" meant to succeed in an endeavor.
 - f. Here in Joshua 1:8 is the only place in the OT that *slh* and *skl* are used together.
 - g. "**prosperous**" – (*slh*) – 69x in OT. 55x *slh* means "to prosper" in your endeavors because of God's presence
 - i. Gen. 24:12-56 when Eliezer of Damascus found a wife for Isaac.
 - ii. Genesis 39 – Joseph succeeded in Potiphar's household
 - iii. Isaiah 53 where the Lord's will "prosper" in the hand of the Messiah
 - h. "**success**" – (*skl*) –78x in OT. "have insight", "have understanding", "to be wise". Here it means "to have success" because you are doing what the Lord wants and doing it the way the Lord wants it done.

1:9 – **"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."**

1. Joshua was to avoid being afraid and discouraged.

1:10 – **"And Joshua commanded the officers of the people,**

1:11 – **"Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.'"**

1:12 – **"And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said,**

1:13 – “Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, ‘The Lord your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.’

1:14 – “Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them,

1:15 – “until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

1:16 – “And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

1:17 – “Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you, as he was with Moses!

1:18 – “Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”