



## "REASONS TO REJOICE"

Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

### KEEP CALM AND MARCH ON!

#### Marching through the Book of Joshua: Lesson 3

Joshua was very strong in the Lord. By God's grace he survived many things. He suffered through slavery in Egypt and he endured the grumbling and complaining of the Israelites as they wandered in the wilderness. Not only did he have to listen to them complain, he himself had to wander because of their sin. He had not been rebellious, he had not doubted God's promise ... they had! Joshua was suffering for something that he didn't even do, but God used that time to build his character and prepare him for the road ahead. God wanted a man with a strong and devoted heart and Joshua was learning to be that man. Joshua was learning patience, longsuffering, and forgiveness. He learned about loyalty, obedience, and trusting God.

Joshua saw the people turn against Moses when they were angry. He saw Moses make a mistake and pay the consequences for that mistake, but he never saw Moses become bitter or angry at God. Moses knew what he had done was wrong and he accepted the responsibility for his actions. That was a great example for Joshua.

#### First Day

Before we begin reading, let me ask you a few questions:

1. Have you, like Joshua, ever suffered for something you didn't do?
2. How did you react? Has God used that incident to build your character? How have you grown through it?
3. Who else suffered for something He didn't do? (Romans 3:24-25)

4. Have you had any mentors in your life? What have you learned from them? What did you learn from their strengths? What did you learn from their weaknesses? Have you made any changes in your life because of their example?

There will never be a perfect leader. All people make mistakes, Christians and non-Christians alike. But one who is spiritual will learn from his mistakes, accept responsibility for his actions, and ask forgiveness from God and those who have been affected by that mistake. We usually learn the most from mistakes, unfortunately. Joshua never turned on Moses or bad-mouthed him when he misrepresented God to the people. He continued to be a loyal and supportive assistant.

5. Think of a recent mistake that you've made. (I've made some doosies!) What valuable lesson did you learn? How has that lesson affected your life?

Joshua is about to be re-commissioned by God. As you read this chapter, try to put yourself in Joshua's place. What was he feeling? What questions must have been going through his mind? Was he afraid?

6. Read Joshua 1:1-18. What do you think is the theme of this chapter? What is the key verse?
7. How do you think Joshua felt? What fears or worries might he have had?
8. Have you ever had to follow in someone's footsteps ... someone's BIG footsteps? How did you feel? What fears or concerns did you have?
9. How do you think the Israelites felt?

10. Does it seem like Joshua was hesitant?
11. What does the apostle John tell us about obedience in 1 John 2:3-6?
12. What does Jesus say about those who don't obey Him? Read Luke 6:46-49.

We are called to obey, no matter what the cost, no matter how afraid we are or how impossible the job may seem. As someone once said, **"It is the exactness of obedience which constitutes the essence of obedience."** We will continue to discuss the principle of obedience all through this study, as it is a key lesson in the Book of Joshua. Tomorrow we see how God reassured and comforted Joshua as He gave him his marching orders.

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "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." Joshua 1:9

### Second Day

**Review your memory verse. How does it encourage you today?**

- 1 Today Joshua receives his marching orders. Read Joshua chapter one again, then re-read verses 1-9.

The children of Israel are camped on the eastern side of the Jordan River, on the plains of Moab, just north of the Dead Sea. They had mourned over the death of Moses for 30 days and were now ready to follow their new leader (Deuteronomy 34:8-9).

Moses was dead, but God's work would continue because it was God's work. No man is irreplaceable or indispensable in the work of the Lord. God's ordained work will be brought into completion. Matthew Henry said, **"God will change hands to show that whatever instrument He uses, He is not tied to any."**

2. Read Joshua 1:1-2. Why do you think it was necessary for God to state that "Moses was dead"? Why did the people need that confirmation? What might have happened if that wasn't made clear?

3. What is Joshua described as in verse 1? What about in Joshua 24:29?
4. What are the two action words in verses 1 and 2 that Joshua is told to do?

Now it was time to move forward. **Arise and Go!** Sometimes God tells us to "stand still" (Numbers 9:18, 1 Samuel 12:16), or "be still" (Psalm 46:10), while other times we are told to "Go!"

5. What are some of the things we are told to "Go" and do?
  - a. Go and \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 16:15)
  - b. Go and \_\_\_\_\_ (John 15:16)
  - c. Go and \_\_\_\_\_ (John 8:11)
  - d. Go and \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 19:21)

Joshua spent 40 years of his life "being prepared." Now it was time to move!

6. Has God called you to be in a place of "being still" before Him or is He calling you to "arise and go"? Is there something He's called you to do?
7. If you know what He's called you to do and you aren't doing it, what does that become? Read James 4:17.
8. Why does God sometimes call us to "stand still"?
9. In verse 2, where is Joshua told to go?
10. What does God say about the land in verse 2?

God was giving the land to Israel. Not because they deserved it or had done any good works to receive it, but because He Loved them (Deuteronomy 7:6-8). Their inheritance was a free gift. Our inheritance is a free gift also. He chose us before the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1:3-6). We are saved by faith, and

not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

11. Locate on a map the areas that are named in verse 4. Try to become familiar with the territory. This will help you understand where exactly they are going.

The wilderness was the southern boundary, which was the region west and south of the Dead Sea. This formed a natural boundary between Canaan and the Sinai Peninsula. Northwest of the Sea of Galilee was a mountain range that was considered "this Lebanon." To the east lay the southern boundary, the Euphrates River, while the western boundary stretched to the "Great Sea." God actually gave the Israelites over 300,000 square miles of land. (They only took possession of about one-tenth of what was given to them, but we'll discuss that in another chapter.) The Hittites were one of the people groups that occupied the land of Northern Canaan and Phoenicia. This may have been a general term to include all the races that occupied the land. The Hittites were known for having many chariots and usually occupied most of the plains. The Amorites lived in the mountain areas, the Perizzites dwelt in scattered villages, and the Jebusites occupied what is known as Jerusalem. All these people groups were enemies that needed to be conquered.

Let's end our lesson here for today. Tomorrow we get to read God's wonderful encouraging word to Joshua. These are some of my favorite verses in the whole Bible. I am "rejoicing" that God's Word is for us, and not only for Joshua.

### Third Day

**Review this week's memory verse. This is a great one to teach to your children.**

We begin today's lesson with some of the most comforting words in the entire Bible. These first 9 verses give us the main thought of the entire book. God gave Joshua a view of the inheritance (1:3-4), an assurance of success (1:5), revealed the secret of success (1:7-8), and gave him the promise of His presence (1:9), all in 9 verses! I pray that God encourages and strengthens your heart through these verses also.

1. Read Joshua 1:1-9.
2. What commands did God give to Joshua? What phrase is repeated?

3. What promises does God give to Joshua? (Also list the verses.)

I believe that Joshua was fully aware of his weaknesses and inadequacies. He most likely felt weak, if God was commanding him to be strong. He was probably dismayed, because God tells him not to be. And he most likely afraid, because God tells him not to fear. Joshua was in a good position. He obviously didn't feel that he could do this on his own. He knew that he would have to rely on God. Nowhere in Scripture do we find Joshua lobbying for position or seeking to be a leader. Instead, he is content to play second fiddle to Moses, and he is faithful in the little things. Because of this, God gave him more responsibility.

4. What does God promise those who are weary and weak? Read Isaiah 40:28-31. How does this encourage you?

5. Even though Joshua was a new leader and was not to try to copy Moses, he was not supposed to forget him either. What three things does God remind Joshua about regarding the ministry of Moses? Read Joshua 1:3,5,7.

6. It was important for Joshua to receive this assurance from the Lord. Who else needed some assurance before they stepped out in faith? Read the following verses. Who needed reassuring, and why? How were they encouraged?

- a. Exodus 3:12 and 4:12
- b. Jeremiah 1:1-19
- c. Acts 18:9-11

7. What were Jesus' last words to His disciples? Matthew 28:16-20

8. Are you nervous or fearful over something? How do these words encourage you?

Knowing that God was with him was all that Joshua needed. There is no better guarantee than God's presence. In His presence we find everything that we

could ever possibly need. This is one of God's greatest and most precious promises (2 Peter 1:3-4).

Joshua could now move with confidence. His confidence wasn't in himself, but in the Lord. We don't see Joshua's talents or abilities being mentioned, or his leadership qualifications. It was to be totally a work of God so He would be glorified. Before we take a step of faith, we shouldn't ask ourselves, "Are we qualified?" We should ask ourselves, "Are we called?" God had called him, so He would also equip him. He will equip us, too.

9. Is God calling you to do something and you feel totally "unqualified"? Are you presently involved in something that you feel completely unqualified for? How has God been faithful?
  
10. What do the following verses say about confidence? Psalm 18:28-30, Psalm 27:1-5, Psalm 118:8-9, Proverbs 3:26.
  
11. What are three things we can be confident of in 2 Corinthians 5:6-8, Philippians 1:6, and 1 John 5:14.
  
12. What are some examples of other things we sometimes put our confidence in?
  
13. Where is your confidence? Are you sure of yourself and your abilities? Is your confidence in the things of the world? Have you placed your confidence in your job or your husband's job? Is it in your relationships? Ask God to search your heart and reveal to you the source of your confidence.

Our eyes need to be completely focused on God. He wants us to turn our eyes away from the enemy. He also wants us to turn our eyes away from ourselves. When He is our focus, our fears and apprehensions can fade away.

That's it for today. I pray that you stand on the promises of God as Joshua did. God will never let you down.

### **Fourth Day**

**Review your memory verse. How about putting this one on your refrigerator?**

- 1 Today we will continue to look at verses 1-9.
2. God repeats the phrase "Be strong and of good courage." Define the word "courage."
3. In what ways are believers supposed to be "of good courage"?
4. According to verse 9, is having courage an option?

As believers, we are commanded to be of good courage. We can be assured of His presence, but we still need to exercise our faith. Arthur Pink call it, "mixing your faith with God's promises." We do have the responsibility to move forward in faith. Remember that God gave the Israelites the land, but they had to go in and possess it. And as we exercise our faith, He gives us more faith.

**"The faith to move mountains is the reward of those  
who have moved little hills."**

5. Sometimes it takes courage to obey God's command (1:7). Why?
6. As you have courage, what will God do? Read Psalm 31:24.

7. What does Paul say about courage? Read 1 Corinthians 16:13.
8. Find an example in Scripture of someone who was courageous. Briefly explain how this person showed courage. How are they an example to you?
9. Would you consider yourself a courageous person? Why or why not? Where do you get your courage?
10. How can you become more "courageous" in the Lord? What's the key?
11. Is there someone in your life that needs encouraging? How can you encourage them "in the Lord"?

It takes courage to stand up for righteousness, doesn't it? It takes courage to be the minority on certain issues and speak up about it. It takes courage to raise your children God's way when the rest of the world thinks you're crazy. It takes courage to deny yourself certain worldly pleasures when your friends are all "doing it." It takes courage to be an example of Christ in a family who is watching your every move. Yes, I'd say that believers need courage to obey God and His Word. And only God can be the source of that courage. Having courage in God gives us confidence against man!

Is there a situation in your life that you are lacking courage to do what God has told you? Pray about it this week, asking God to strengthen your heart as you wait on Him. He'll give you what you need, and that's a "**Reason to Rejoice**"!

### Fifth Day

**Write your verse by memory. How can you use this verse to encourage someone this week?**

In Joshua 1:7-8 God reveals the secret to success. We all want to succeed, don't we? I think that God's definition of success is a little different than ours. Let's read ...

1 Read Joshua 1:1-9 again. (You can probably quote the whole passage by now!)  
Concentrate on verses 7-8.

2. What was supposed to be governing Joshua's actions and decisions?

"Joshua was the first man to receive orders from God to govern his conduct by the words of a book" (Arthur Pink). We find the first mention of the "Book" in Exodus 17:14. God told Moses to write about the victory over the Amalekites in "The Book" and read it to Joshua. This Book of the Law is the first 5 books of our Bible, which is called the Pentateuch. (This is from two Greek words meaning "5 Books") In Numbers 33:2, we find Moses again writing about the Israelites' journeys. In Deuteronomy 31:9-13, Moses wrote the law and delivered it unto the people. It was supposed to be read in front of the entire congregation once every seven years. He then gave the priests custody over it. This Book became the center of the life of the people of Israel. Although the Book was to be kept in a sacred place (Deuteronomy 31:26), it was to be read, unlike the Ark of the Covenant, which was to be hidden from common eyes. God wanted the Book to be read and understood by the people. He wanted it to govern their lives. Moses wrote this Book over a period of 40 years.

Joshua was supposed to receive special revelation from God through Eleazar the priest, according to Numbers 27:21. Now he is told to read and meditate on this book and carefully observe its commands. Moses had told him what to do, now he is told to study himself!

3. Define the word "meditate." What's the difference between reading and meditating?

4. How often does God tell Joshua to meditate on His Word?

5. What did David think about God's law? Did he believe in meditating on God's Word? Read Psalm 119:97-112. Was it a joy or a task to him?

6. How often do you meditate on God's Word? Do you consider it a joy or a task? What absorbs most of your time and attention? Do you spend more time thinking about your trials, your family, your finances, and your job, or the things of the Lord?

7. How does meditating on God's Word improve our thought life?

8. What does hiding God's Word in our heart keep us from doing? Read Psalm 119:11

Many times we say that we are too busy to spend time meditating on His Word. His Word cannot govern our life if we do not meditate on it. I don't think there is anyone who has a busier life than Joshua did. Yet we still see that he was faithful in reading and obeying God's Word. As Joshua gave his final address to the people of Israel before he died, he again reminded them to "do all that is written in the Book of the Law" (Joshua 23:6).

9. Have you been "too busy" lately to spend time in God's Word? If so, what changes can you make so God will be your priority?

Reading His Word is crucial to our spiritual growth. Jesus said that "Man cannot live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Mathew 4:4). His Word is our life! That's why Jeremiah said that he ate God's Words, and they were the joy and rejoicing of his heart (Jeremiah 15:16). The more we eat His Word, the deeper and more intimate our relationship becomes with Him.

**God told Joshua to do 3 things:**

1. Don't let it depart from your mouth ... **talk about it!**
2. Meditate on His Word ... **think about it!**
3. Observe to do what is written ... **do it!**

10. Why does God want us to talk about His Word to others?
11. Read Psalm 1. What will happen as we meditate on Him?
12. How does God measure success? When God told Joshua that he would prosper, what did he mean?
13. How do you measure success? Is it different than God's way?
- Does money make you successful? **1 Timothy 6:6-10**
  - Does popularity make you successful? **Galatians 1:10, Matthew 5:11-12**
  - Does having a lot of "things" make you successful? **Matthew 6:19-21**
  - Does having a "great body" make you successful? **Proverbs 31:30**

Although Joshua was a man of war, his greatest weapon was the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). He could fight with his real sword in one hand and his spiritual sword in the other. Joshua always seemed like he was fighting. We are also always fighting in this world. We are on a spiritual battlefield and the enemy has waged war with us. But we have no reason to be afraid because "Greater is He that is in us, than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

This ends our lesson for today. I hope your Sword of the Spirit is sharp! The more you use it, the sharper it gets! It's living, it's powerful ... it's awesome! (Hebrews 4:12) My "**Reason to Rejoice**" this week is that God loved me enough to give me a love letter that I can read and meditate on every day. That letter contains everything that pertains to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Remember ... talk about it, meditate on it ... then do it!