

SUMMER • JUNE 22, 2020

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

A weekly study to strengthen families

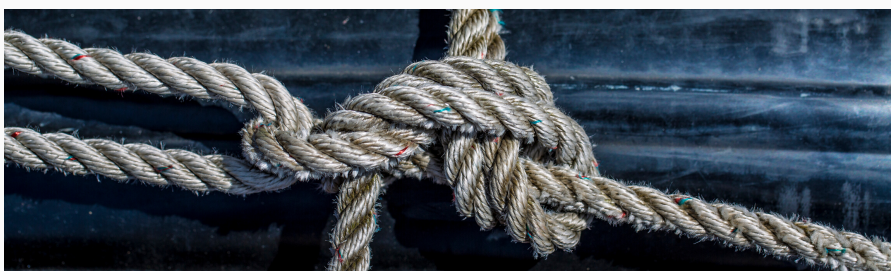


Be Strong and of Good Courage

BY PASTOR JONES

No doubt It was a pivotal time in the nation of Israel. Moses was dead and the nation was camped on the banks of the Jordan River waiting for final instructions from Joshua before crossing over into the Promised Land. They had been wandering for forty years in the wilderness because of unbelief, but now they were ready to trust God and enter the promise land. They knew what they were facing. The inhabitants of this new land would be hostile to their coming. Yes, it was a promised land, but it would not just fall into their laps. They would have to trust God and fight for it. They would have to believe the promises of God and engage in warfare to obtain their inheritance.

Joshua, I am sure, was somewhat intimidated by the giants of the land and their culture. The cities of this new land were walled, and the people were violent. They worshipped other Gods. I am sure he was concerned for his family and what would become of them. Perhaps he was insecure about his ability to lead his family and the nation of Israel into this new land. It was in this state of mind that the Lord came to him and encouraged him saying, "as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee....be strong and of a good courage".



Joshua 1:6-9

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

Joshua 24:15-16

(Easy-to-Read Version)

"But maybe you don't want to serve the LORD. You must choose for yourselves today. Today you must decide who you will serve. Will you serve the gods that your ancestors worshiped when they lived on the other side of the Euphrates River? Or will you serve the gods of the Amorites who lived in this land? You must choose for yourselves. But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD." Then the people answered, "We will never stop following the LORD. We will never serve other gods!"



Application

In many ways we are waking up to a new America today. The America our fathers knew has changed. It is a new land full of many that are hostile to our Christian faith and values. Traditional family values including biblically defined roles and genders are under attack. Many are openly hostile and offended toward those of us who cling to Judeo-Christian beliefs and practice biblical faith. There is also a mounting attack upon biblically defined fatherhood, maleness, and masculinity. The God-fearing, strong, courageous, and gentle father image is being dismantled and minimized by our “cancel culture” and so called social scientists

This is clearly a demonic attack by the antichrist and his one-world socialist system. Their goal is clear. They want to usurp the role of God, the church, and fathers in our societies. They want to raise our kids and father our children. They want to indoctrinate our children in their ideology. They want our children to fight their causes, and not the cause of Christ. This is why they mock and scorn the strong, independent thinking, masculine, moral, courageous, protective, and, yes, gentle, Christian father-teacher image. The media, public schools, LGBT community, and many medical associations like the American Psychologist Association, all believe that fathers who socialize their boys to be strong, masculine, independent thinking, and God fearing, are toxic to society: toxic to their society. No doubt fatherhood is under attack, and the giants, walls, and obstacles are great. But the Lord wants to encourage our fathers and all of his people today like He encouraged Joshua who was also facing a hostile new land. Be strong and of a good courage! Don't be intimidated! We will be victorious...only believe! The promises of God are greater than the giants and obstacles we face. In the end, hopefully our response will be as Joshua's, “as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD!”

Discussion

1. Why did Israel wander in the desert for 40 years?
2. What are the giants of our land, and how do they intimidate us?
3. What were the attributes of Joshua that made him a tremendous leader of the community of believers and his home?
4. What was the source of Joshua's virtue and strength?
5. What does the Lord mean when He reminds us that His promises are greater than the giants we face?

Prayer Focus

Pray that the Lord strengthen our fathers and that they would be strong in faith.

Pray that God's people would not be intimidated by the giants.

Pray that God's people would war with the promises of God and defeat the giants of our land.

Pray that our children would be taught of the Lord and not deceived by the antichrist and his socialist system.

