

## Joshua 1

Good evening and welcome to Calvary Chapel. Would you now please turn in your bibles to Joshua 1?

For 7 years, they were unstoppable and untouchable. 7 nations conquered. At least 31 kings defeated. Approximately 10k square miles of land claimed.

7 years of nearly unbridled success.

In the book of Joshua, we'll see the Hebrew people were unstoppable. Perfect no, but unstoppable when they walked in God's ways.

If you've been with us as we've studied the OT, you know the history of the Hebrew people hadn't always been good. The Bible doesn't gloss over the checkered history of God's chosen people. Abraham had too many wives. Jacob told too many lies. Esau sold his birthright, Joseph's brothers sold Joseph. Let alone all the times the Israelites lacked faith in the very God who delivered them from 4 centuries of Egyptian slavery! No, the history of the Hebrews was anything but glamorous.

But in the book of Joshua, it all changes. The Israelites transform from wanderers, to possessors.

Tragically, it won't last. Sandwiched between the hardships of the Exodus and dark days of the Judges, here in Joshua are the glory days of the nation of Israel.

In our study over the next several months we'll see the Jordan river open up, the walls of Jericho fall down, the sun stand still, and evil empires fall like dominoes as Israel finally takes possession of the promised land.

This book is bursting with encouragement for the times we find ourselves in today.

Before we begin our study it's important to know that a lot of Christians have made the mistake of believing that the promised land of Canaan is a representation of heaven-the promised land for us.

But we need to establish right now that is not the case.

How do we know that Canaan doesn't represent heaven? Because there are battles in Canaan, there are no battles in heaven. There were failures in Canaan, there are no failures in heaven. There were tears in Canaan, there are no tears in heaven.

However, Canaan does represent for us today our ability as believers to live victorious, faith filled lives while we remain on this earth.

The book of Joshua is much more than a story of military conquest, yet it's chocked full of action, intrigue, and espionage. We'll read of powerful examples of bravery and dedication, and deceit and trickery.

Joshua is full of remarkable battle scenes, but it has deeper levels of meaning as well...

If you remember from prior studies, Moses represents the Law - whereas "Joshua" is the Hebrew word for the Greek name "Jesus". The Law could never bring us into God's peace and rest. Only Jesus – our Yeshua or Joshua can give us the victory.

One of my favorite things we'll see in Joshua is a model for effective leadership. This book is filled with leadership principles, and is a powerful study for aspiring leaders.

Militarily, the book is also a blueprint for military campaigns and battle strategies. Joshua employed a divide and conquer approach that's been repeated throughout history.

And in the book of Joshua, we'll also see prophecy throughout the book.

The book of Joshua is divided into two sections... The first 12 chapters describe the conquest of the promised land. The last 12 chapters discuss the land's division and settlement.

We're going to study both chapters 1 and 2 this evening.

The title of tonight's message is Ready to Inherit

### LET'S PRAY

No one likes change, especially when a patriarch passes the baton. Think of all the questions that swirl in your mind when you get a new leader or boss at work. How will they handle the responsibility of the task at hand? Will this new level of power and authority go to their head? As a leader will they have my best interests in mind?

These were all questions Joshua must've been facing, and on top of that Joshua had big shoes to fill-Moses communed with God, and Joshua was replacing Moses!

But God was with Joshua, and that's what allowed Joshua to lead the Hebrews.

As we read through chapter 1, I'll point out a few principles for leadership that this incredible book gives us.

**1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying:** Here's leadership principle # 1, preparation. Before he was appointed as the leader of Israel, Joshua had first been an assistant to Moses.

Never underestimate the importance of preparation. Before a person can lead, they first must be willing to be led.

The Hebrew term for “assistant” refers to a lowly role - a servant, a waiter. Joshua would lead the nation to claim God’s promises, but for nearly 40 years his job description was simply to do what Moses told him to do.

Far too often those who aspire for leadership aren’t willing to pass this first leadership test-faithful servanthood.

Remember the scene at Mount Sinai. Moses goes to the top of the mountain to receive the 10 commandments. Moses is talking with God. The people below see the fire on top of the mountain.

And where was Joshua during those 40 days and 40 nights when Moses was at the top? Joshua was alone on the mountain.

This is always where training for leaders starts. Out of the spotlight, surrounded only by their thoughts, the lure of abandoning their difficult post of servanthood ever present. Yet the faithful servant stays until their task is complete or the Lord moves them on. And Joshua did just that.

God continues to address Joshua...

2 “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.

Leadership principle # 2 is vision. A good leader has to have a vision. A spiritual leader gets a vision from God - then sets out to fulfill that God-given vision.

President Harry Truman once said, “I wonder how far Moses would have gone if he had taken a poll in Egypt?” What would Jesus have preached if he’d taken a poll in Israel?

It isn’t the polls or the public opinion of the moment that counts in leadership. Whether it’s your family, your church, or your

business, leadership needs to lead with conviction and godly purpose toward the vision God has given. A true leader must be willing to stay the course even when it's not popular.

Here in verses 2-3 God gives Joshua the vision-and the promise of the land they will soon inherit.

4-5

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. 5 No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Victory is assured not because Joshua is a great leader, or because Israel is a great nation, but victory is guaranteed because God is a great God! God says to Joshua, 'I will be with you.'

And we have this assurance too don't we? We have God the HS in us!

6 Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. This verse reveals something about Joshua. Even though he was already a battle tested leader, Joshua was still susceptible to the same fears you and I face from time to time.

And it's a reminder that even the greatest leaders need encouragement.

This bold courage wasn't to be in his own talents and wisdom, rather his courage was to be in God.

7-8

7 Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded

you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, pause here... God didn't tell Joshua that His Word was not to depart out of his hand or out of his back pocket, but that it was not to depart out of his mouth.

but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe 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.

At the very beginning of his ministry, Joshua is told to meditate in the Word day and night.

Spirit-filled Christians and congregations are easily identifiable, because they are the ones who meditate in the Word, devote themselves to the study of the Word, and gain more understanding about the Word.

Remember God is calling Joshua to lead 2 or 3m Israelites into the promised land. And what command did God give Joshua-to read Gods word. God didn't command him to seek a spiritual experience, pursue a personal revelation. God told Joshua to dwell in the word.

The bible is the most important tool for our spiritual growth.

The word meditate is a verb, it means reciting, rehearsing and reconsidering God's word over and over.

I have a terrible habit of reading my bible in the morning, and by evening I wonder. What did I read this morning? A practice that's helped me is setting alarms or reminders every few hours to meditate on what I read.

9 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." The 3<sup>rd</sup> principle of leadership is presence.

The secret of Samson's stupendous strength was not the size of his biceps – it was the presence of God upon his life. God made Samson strong!

The secret of Solomon's wisdom wasn't all his studies, rather God gave him the wisdom.

For leaders, true strength and the ability to lead does not rest within the leader, but rather it comes from almighty God.

God is still looking for leaders. The Church is an army - and an army needs leaders. But they must be leaders who recognize everything comes from the Lord.

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, 11 "Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'" The waiting for God is often the most difficult part of life for us. But as we wait God is preparing. There is no wasted time with God.

Eight centuries earlier, God promised the prosperous land of Canaan to Abraham and his heirs. But for the prior 440 years the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt and nomads in the desert. Now though the moment has come. 3 days from this moment they will cross the Jordan river.

And notice Joshua's statements-it's God giving the land to them, not himself.

12-15

12 And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying, 13 "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.'" 14

Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, 15 until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He gave you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

In Numbers 32, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh said, “We don't want to go into the Promised Land. We like it here on the east side of the Jordan. It's a great place for our families and cattle, a great place to retire.”

They were allowed to stay on the East side of the Jordan, but were instructed to be ready to fight when everyone else was entering the promised land. Here they are being reminded of their obligation.

This same principle operates in the Body of Christ. When one member has a need, it is the common need of the body **1**  
**Corinthians 12:25 25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.**

16-18

16 So they answered Joshua, saying, “All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses. 18 Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of



good courage.” The representatives from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh say the same thing to Joshua that he heard from the Lord in Joshua 1:6. This must have been a confirmation of God's word to Joshua when they said it. God loves to confirm His word to us.

## Chapter 2

1 Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove<sup>[fn]</sup> to spy secretly, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” Pause here. Remember Moses sent 12 men to spy out the land 38 years before this. 10 of the 12 came back with a negative report.

Now we aren't given the names of these 2 spies, but Jewish legend suggests they were Caleb, one of the original spies and the High Priest, Eliezer.

Joshua tells these men to focus their attention on Jericho. Jericho was a fortified city, seven miles west of the Jordan River. **SHOW JERICHO PIC**

Jericho consisted of seven acres surrounded by a double wall. Historians tell us Jericho had an outer wall 6 feet thick. Its inner wall was wider, 12 feet. The first wall was 11 feet high. The second wall was 35 feet high, and the wall was tilted at a 35 degree angle. The tilt prohibited anyone from scaling it with ladders. Jericho's walls would be Israel's first major military challenge. **CLOSE JERICHO PIC**

So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there. Some Bible commentators have expressed embarrassment over the fact the spies hid out in a harlot's house.

But a prostitute was accustomed to housing strangers. And the spies could remain at her house and maintain their anonymity.

It's interesting Jesus also was embraced by the harlots and tax collectors **Matthew 21:32** "For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him."

2-7

2 And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country."

3 So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country."

4 Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. 5 And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them." 6 (But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) 7 Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.

Rahab's lie has been a debate for centuries-if it was the right thing for her to do.

But the Bible simply reports Rahab's lie; it does not praise it or excuse it. Perhaps if she had beforehand determined in her heart to not lie in obedience to God, He would have made a way for her to preserve the life of the spies without lying.

Rahab's lie is not justified, but it does show courage. Rahab was a pagan sinner in a city given over to the worship of false gods and immorality.

8-11

8 Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, 9 and said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. This surprising outburst of faith shows how God had a plan in bringing Rahab and the spies together. It's the same kind of thing we see when God supernaturally brings us into divine appointments

Hebrews 11:31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

12 Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, 13 and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." Notice a critical word in verse 12 Swear to me by the LORD, not your Lord. This shows that Rahab longed for assurance by asking for an oath.

14-21

14 So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you."

15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. 16 And she said

to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way."

17 So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, 18 unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home. 19 So it shall be that whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. 20 And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear."

21 Then she said, "According to your words, so be it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window. This little scarlet cord was the signal to the army of Israel that the people in Rahab's home were to be spared.

In spite of Rahab's desire, despite her faith, despite the promises of these spies, Rahab and all her family would have died unless she put her trust in a blood red cord cast down from her window. Without the scarlet cord, she could not have been saved.

As early as the first century, commentators such as Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, Ireneaus, and more saw this scarlet cord as a symbol of the blood of Jesus. Because it is only the blood of Jesus that can save.

Think about Rahab for a moment, the incredible amount of faith she put in the scarlet cord.

Joshua would be a savior for Rahab, but a judge of the rest of Jericho. In the same way Jesus is a savior for those who trust Him, but a judge for those who reject Him.

When you study the genealogy of Matthew 1, you'll find that Rahab's destiny was to marry one of the princes of Judah and be found in the lineage of not only King David but Jesus Himself.

**Matthew 1:5 Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,**

22 They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought them all along the way, but did not find them. 23 So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and crossed over; and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them. 24 And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us." They didn't dwell on the mighty walls of Jericho. They didn't focus their attention on all of Jericho's mighty soldiers or the ruthless nature of the city. The spies knew the Lord had given them the land!