



## Session 2 | From Moses to Joshua | Joshua 1:1-9

Verse 1—

The Hebrew name Joshua is “Yehoshua” translated in the Greek (New Testament) as *Iesous*, and in English, *Jesus*.<sup>1</sup> Joshua’s name was originally, Hosea, or Oshea (KJV), but was changed by Moses (Numbers 13:16). In verse one he is called **the son of Nun**, or, “*bin nun*” in the Hebrew. In our English translation, we miss that **Joshua the son of Nun** contains slight variation in the Hebrew vowel sound so that instead of “*bin nun*” or, *the son of*, it literally could also be translated “*binun*” meaning, **the wise**, or *Joshua the wise one*. Perhaps Joshua had great comprehension, understanding, and wisdom which is why Moses chose him as his **minister** (servant.) It is significant that his name means *salvation or deliverance*, since that is God’s exact plan for him.

Verses 2-4—

Joshua will lead the *children of Israel* into the *Promised Land*. Joshua was hand selected by Moses, and now that Moses **is dead** the mantle of leadership has been handed to him to take the *children of Israel* **over this Jordan**. The boundaries of the Land Israel was to inherit is specifically given in verse 4.

Verses 5-9—

There is a recurring phrase in these verses; **Be strong and of a good courage** (vs.6); **Be thou strong and very courageous** (vs. 7); **Be strong and of good courage** (vs. 9). Moses also gave all the *children of Israel* and Joshua the same exhortation (Deuteronomy 31:6,7). Every word in the Bible is placed there for a purpose. In the case of these three uses of the phrase, Jewish rabbis have detected that there are three parts of Joshua’s upcoming mission that coincide with the three uses of *being strong and courageous*.

1. **Be strong and of a good courage:** Settling the people in the new land (vs. 6) This would take strength and courage to move this monumental mass of people across the Jordan and into the land. **There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life...I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.** This goes back to our session last time, that Joshua will need to have faith to accomplish all that is before him.
2. **Be thou strong and very courageous:** Carefully observing the commands of the Torah (vss.7,8). The Torah refers to the five books of the Law; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Joshua’s mission or command given by God was to not forsake the Law of Moses. By doing so, his way into the Land would be prosperous, and he would have success.
3. **Be strong and of a good courage:** Engaging in warfare to conquer the Canaanites. (vs. 9). While the Canaanites were dreaded and powerful, through faith in God, Joshua was to fight against them and **not be afraid, neither be dismayed.**

These nine verses are often used by Christians to insure prosperity and success. But should we build our doctrine around these passages? First, who does the passage address? **The Lord spake unto Joshua**. All nine verses are directed specifically to Joshua. Therefore, these verses have no direct application for you and me. Then what can we learn from them? We can see clearly receive instruction on the character of God; that He keeps his promises. We can see God’s plan for the children of Israel, to possess the Land. We can see the benefits of trusting God, and the importance of the Law of Moses for Joshua. We can search for and find other truths of God within the first nine verses.

While this passage is specifically directed as a command to Joshua, and not directly to us, there are some parallels in the writings of the apostle Paul that we can directly apply to our lives today.

1. **Be strong and of a good courage:** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Ephesians 5:15,16). It is not an easy task to navigate life today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We need strength to endure and courage to stand for Biblical morality.
2. **Be thou strong and very courageous:** Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord: Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5: 19,20). While we are not under Law and are not punished for forgetting to read our Bible, pray, or make a joyful noise to the Lord, we are stronger when we do. It takes strength and courage to keep our focus off the world and in the right place. Strength is need to take great care as to what we put into our mind and heart.
3. **Be strong and of a good courage.** Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood...(Ephesians 6:11-18). We can withstand the enemy’s fiery darts by putting on the armor of God, and when we do, like Joshua, we need **not be afraid, neither be dismayed.**

**While we may suffer in this life (and we will because the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, Romans 8:22) we can rest assured God will ultimately take care of us as one day we will be with him in glory, forever and ever. God will take care of you.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Most likely Jesus’s mother spoke Hebrew in which case she would have called him *Joshua*. Notice Acts 7:45 which refers to Joshua of the O.T. The translators of the KJV remained consistent in their translation of the name, where other translations, e.g. ESV interpret the Greek *Iesous* as Joshua, rather than translate.