

# CONQUERING CANAAN

**Date: 10.18.26 | God Calls & Commissions Joshua**  
**Scripture: Numbers 27:12-23; Joshua 1**

## CENTRAL TRUTHS



### PRESCHOOL:

God keeps His Promises and is always with us.

### YOUNGER KIDS (K5-2ND GRADE):

God keeps His promises, so we can trust Him and obey Him wherever He leads us.

### OLDER KIDS (3RD-5TH GRADE):

Because God always keeps His promises and is always with His people, we can courageously trust and obey Him.

### STUDENTS:

God's faithfulness gives believers the courage to obey His Word and follow Him, even when the path ahead is uncertain.

### ADULTS:

God faithfully fulfills His covenant promises, calling His people to trust His presence, obey His Word, and courageously follow Him in the inheritance secured by His grace.

## MEMORY VERSE

*"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." Joshua 1:9*



## DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

*How is the Word of God to be read and heard? With diligence, preparation, and prayer; so that we may accept it with faith, store it in our hearts, and practice it in our lives. - NCC q. 42*

## BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS



The book of Joshua begins where Deuteronomy ends. Moses, the great leader whom God used to deliver Israel from slavery and lead them through the wilderness, has died. God knew His people would need a new leader to guide them into the land He had promised to Abraham generations earlier. Joshua had been preparing for this role for many years. Although Scripture gives few details about Joshua's early life, he was likely born a slave in Egypt before witnessing God's mighty acts of deliverance through the Exodus. He faithfully served as Moses' assistant, became Israel's first military commander (*Exodus 17:8-16*), and was one of only two spies—along with Caleb—who believed God would give Israel victory over the inhabitants of Canaan (*Numbers 14:6-9*). Because of that act of faith, Joshua and Caleb alone from their generation were permitted to enter the Promised Land.

Near the end of Moses' life, Moses asked the Lord to appoint a new leader so that Israel would not be "like sheep without a shepherd" (*Numbers 27:17*). God instructed Moses to commission Joshua publicly before Eleazar the priest and all the people (*Numbers 27:12-23*). Joshua is described as "a man in whom is the Spirit" (*Numbers 27:18*). Later as being "full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him" (*Deuteronomy 34:9*). Moses gladly blessed Joshua rather than begrudging his successor, encouraging him with these words: "Be strong and of good courage...the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed" (*Deuteronomy 31:7-8*). Moses understood that Joshua's confidence would come not from his own ability but from God's faithful presence.

Unlike Moses, Joshua would not speak with God in the same unique face-to-face manner (*Numbers 12:1-8*). Instead, he would seek God's direction through Eleazar the high priest, who would determine God's will (*Numbers 27:21*). Even so, Joshua's success would never depend upon military strength or personal wisdom but upon listening to God's Word and obeying it completely.

The promise of this land stretches all the way back to God's covenant with Abraham in *Genesis 12:1-3*. God promised to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation, bless them so they would become a blessing to all nations, and give them the land of Canaan. By the end of Deuteronomy, the first two aspects of that promise had largely come to pass. Now, after forty years of wandering because of Israel's unbelief, the time had finally arrived for God to fulfill the third promise. The entire purpose of the Exodus was not merely to rescue Israel from slavery but to bring them into the land of blessing God had prepared for them. Throughout Joshua, one dominant theme emerges: the Lord is faithful to fulfill every one of His good promises (*Joshua 21:45*). In fact, references to "the Lord giving the land" appear throughout the book, including eight times in the opening chapter alone.

After Moses' death, God told Joshua to prepare the people to cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land. The Lord declared, "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you" (*Joshua 1:3*). Three different times in *Joshua 1:5-9*, God commanded Joshua to "be strong and courageous." Joshua would need courage to lead a nation into battle, courage to trust God's promises against overwhelming odds, and, perhaps most importantly, courage to faithfully obey God's Law. The Lord specifically instructed Joshua to meditate continually on the Book of the Law and carefully obey everything written in it. His prosperity and success would come not from military strategy but from faithful obedience to God's Word. The repeated command to "only be strong and very courageous" emphasizes that spiritual faithfulness would be Joshua's greatest challenge.

Yet every command God gave Joshua was surrounded by promises of His presence: "I will be with you." "I will not leave you or forsake you." "The Lord your God is with you wherever you go." These assurances gave Joshua every reason to trust the Lord rather than himself. Joshua's courage rested not in his own strength but in God's unchanging faithfulness.

Joshua immediately responded in obedience by commanding Israel's officers to prepare the people to cross the Jordan River in three days. The Israelites pledged their loyalty to their new leader, promising to obey him just as they had followed Moses. They even repeated God's own words to Joshua: "Only be strong and courageous." Their confidence, like Joshua's, ultimately rested not in a human leader but in the God who had faithfully kept His covenant promises from

Abraham to Moses. It would now continue to do so through Joshua.

This transition from Moses to Joshua also points us to the greater Joshua—Jesus Christ. Moses could lead God’s people to the edge of the Promised Land, but he could not bring them into their inheritance. Joshua would lead Israel into the earthly land God had promised, yet even that inheritance pointed to something greater. Jesus perfectly accomplishes what every Old Testament leader could only foreshadow. Through His perfect obedience, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection, He leads His people into the eternal inheritance secured by God’s grace. Just as Joshua’s success depended upon God’s presence and faithfulness, believers today walk confidently because Christ has promised, “I am with you always” (*Matthew 28:20*). God’s faithfulness to Israel reminds us that every promise He has made finds its ultimate fulfillment in Christ.

## TELL THE STORY

*Numbers 27:12-23; Joshua 1*



Hey-O! Stories of the Bible: Joshua and Caleb

For forty years, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness because they refused to trust God when He first told them to enter the Promised Land. During those years, Moses faithfully led God’s people, but because of his own sin at Meribah (*Numbers 27:12-14*), God told him that he would not be the one to lead Israel into Canaan.

God knew exactly who Israel’s next leader should be. Moses asked the Lord to appoint someone so the people would not be “like sheep without a shepherd” (*Numbers 27:17*). God chose Joshua, a man who trusted Him and obeyed Him. Joshua had been Moses’ helper for many years. He had fought Israel’s first battle against the Amalekites (*Exodus 17:8-16*), and he was one of the twelve spies who believed God could give Israel victory in the Promised Land (*Numbers 14:6-9*). While everyone else was afraid, Joshua and Caleb trusted God’s promise.

God told Moses to bring Joshua before Eleazar the priest and all the people. Moses laid his hands on Joshua to show everyone that Joshua would now lead Israel (*Numbers 27:18-23*). Moses wasn’t jealous or upset. Instead, he encouraged Joshua because he knew

God had chosen him.

After Moses died, God spoke directly to Joshua. Imagine how Joshua must have felt! He had big shoes to fill. He was about to lead an entire nation across the Jordan River into a land filled with enemies. But God didn't tell Joshua to depend on his own strength. Instead, God made some incredible promises.

God said, "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you" (*Joshua 1:3*). This was the same land God had promised Abraham hundreds of years earlier (*Genesis 12:1-3*). God always keeps His promises, even when many years pass.

Then God gave Joshua a command that He repeated three times: "Be strong and courageous" (*Joshua 1:6, 7, 9*). Joshua didn't need courage because he was afraid. He needed courage because the job ahead was difficult. There would be battles to fight, people to lead, and hard decisions to make.

But God also told Joshua the secret to true success. Joshua was to read God's Law, think about it day and night, and carefully obey everything God had said (*Joshua 1:8*). God wanted Joshua to remember that success doesn't come from being the strongest or smartest person. True success comes from trusting God and obeying His Word.

Best of all, God promised Joshua, "I will not leave you or forsake you... for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (*Joshua 1:5, 9*). Joshua never had to lead alone because God Himself would go with him.

Joshua immediately obeyed. He told the officers to prepare the people because in three days they would cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land (*Joshua 1:10-11*). The Israelites answered by promising to follow Joshua just as they had followed Moses. Then they repeated God's own words back to Joshua: "Only be strong and courageous" (*Joshua 1:18*).

Joshua could lead with confidence because he wasn't trusting in himself. He was trusting the God who always keeps His promises.

This story reminds us of Jesus. Joshua led God's people into the Promised Land, but Jesus leads us into something even greater. We cannot earn a relationship with God by our own strength or

goodness. Jesus came to do what we never could. Through His perfect life, His death on the cross, and His resurrection, He makes a way for everyone who trusts in Him to become part of God's family. And just as God promised to be with Joshua wherever he went, Jesus promises His followers, "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (*Matthew 28:20*). When we trust Christ, we can be strong and courageous because God is always with us.



## REBUILD THE STORY

1. Why did God tell Moses he would not enter the Promised Land?  
(*Numbers 27:12-14*)
2. Who did God choose to become Israel's new leader, and how is he described? (*Numbers 27:18*)
3. What did Moses do to show that Joshua would become the next leader of Israel? (*Numbers 27:22-23*)
4. What did God promise to give Joshua and the Israelites after Moses died? (*Joshua 1:1-4*)
5. What promises did God make to Joshua as he prepared to lead Israel? (*Joshua 1:5*)
6. What command did God repeat to Joshua three times?  
(*Joshua 1:6-9*)
7. According to God, how would Joshua have success as Israel's leader? (*Joshua 1:7-8*)
8. How did the Israelites respond to Joshua's leadership, and what encouragement did they give him? (*Joshua 1:16-18*)

9. Why do you think God chose Joshua to lead Israel instead of someone else? What qualities do you see in Joshua that God values in a leader?
10. God told Joshua to be “strong and courageous” three different times. What does that tell us about the challenges Joshua would face? How can remembering God’s promises help us when we are afraid?
11. God told Joshua that true success would come from obeying His Word (*Joshua 1:7-8*). How is God’s definition of success different from the way the world often defines success today?
12. Joshua had to trust God before he ever crossed the Jordan River or fought a single battle. What is a situation where you might need to trust and obey God before you know how everything will turn out? How can Joshua’s example encourage you?

## GOSPEL EMPHASIS

Throughout the last unit, we saw God repeatedly call His people to love Him, obey His commands, and trust His promises. The Law revealed God’s holy standard and showed Israel how to live in covenant relationship with Him, but it also exposed their inability to obey perfectly. Time after time, the Israelites rebelled, complained, and failed to trust the Lord. Even Moses, Israel’s great leader, sinned and was not permitted to enter the Promised Land. Under the Law, no one could earn God’s blessing through perfect obedience because everyone had fallen short.

As the book of Joshua begins, the focus shifts from what Israel failed to do to what God faithfully does. God tells Joshua, “I am giving you this land.” The Promised Land was not a reward Israel had earned through their righteousness or faithfulness. It was the fulfillment of the covenant God had made with Abraham hundreds of years earlier. God was giving His people what He had promised because He is faithful, not because they deserved it. Their inheritance rested on God’s grace and covenant faithfulness rather than their own performance.



This points us directly to the gospel. Like Israel, we could never qualify for God's blessings through our own obedience. God's Law reveals His holiness and exposes our sin, but it cannot save us. We all stand guilty before a holy God and are unable to earn forgiveness or eternal life by our own efforts. What we could never accomplish through obedience, Jesus Christ accomplished for us through His perfect life, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection. Through faith in Christ alone, we receive the forgiveness of sins and the promise of an eternal inheritance—not because we deserve it, but because of God's mercy and grace.

Joshua also reminds us that God always keeps His promises. Just as He fulfilled His promise to bring Israel into the Promised Land, He has faithfully fulfilled His greatest promise by sending His Son to rescue sinners. Those who trust in Jesus receive an inheritance far greater than an earthly land. We become children of God, are given the Holy Spirit to dwell within us, and are promised an eternal home in God's presence. Because Christ has secured our salvation, we can live with the same confidence God called Joshua to have, knowing that the Lord will never leave us or forsake us (*Joshua 1:5; Hebrews 13:5-6*). Our courage today rests not in our own strength but in the unchanging faithfulness of the God who always keeps His promises.

## WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE TEACH US ABOUT GOD?

Use the attributes of God list and determine the characteristics of God that we see in today's story. How can knowing these characteristics of God to be true change the way we live in Christ?

## PRAYER PROMPTS

God, thank you for keeping Your promises! Thank You for making a way for us to have a relationship with You, even when we don't deserve it. We are grateful for the mercy and grace You continually provide us. Help us to live in light of Your salvation!



## THIS WEEK'S BIBLE READING

*Joshua 2*