

JOSHUA 1

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: **2** "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. **3** I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. **4** Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. **5** No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. **6** Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

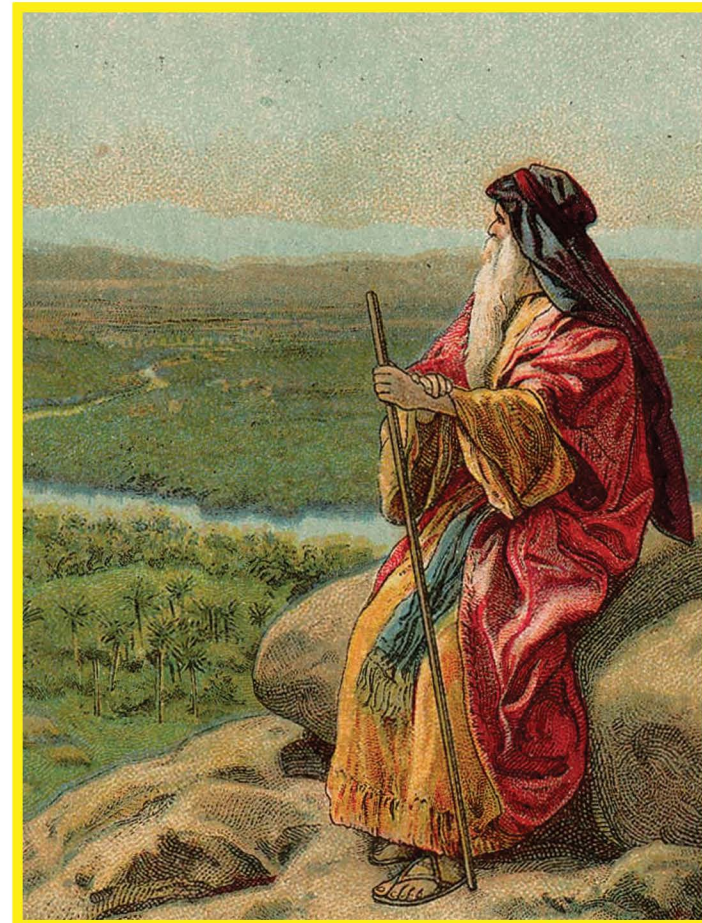
7 "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. **8** Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and

successful. **9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

10 So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: **11** "Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you for your own.'"

12 But to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, **13** "Remember the command that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you after he said, 'The Lord your God will give you rest by giving you this land.' **14** Your wives, your children and your livestock may stay in the land that Moses gave you east of the Jordan, but all your fighting men, ready for battle, must cross over ahead of your fellow Israelites. You are to help them **15** until the Lord gives them rest, as he has done for you, and until they too have taken possession of the land the Lord your God is giving them. After that, you may go back and occupy your own land, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you east of the Jordan toward the sunrise."

16 Then they answered Joshua, "Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. **17** Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you as he was with Moses. **18** Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!"



THE DEATH OF MOSES

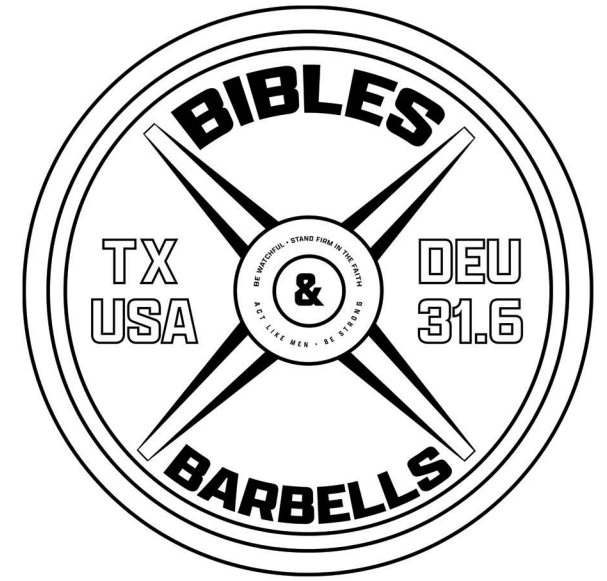
Joshua was very highly favored in the matter of promises. The promises given him by God were broadly comprehensive and exceedingly encouraging. But Joshua was not therefore to say within himself, "These covenant engagements will surely be fulfilled, and I may therefore sit still and do nothing." On the contrary, because God had decreed that the land should be conquered, Joshua was to be diligent to lead the people onward to battle. He was not to use the promise as a couch upon which his indolence might luxuriate, but as a girdle wherewith to gird up his loins for future activity.

As a spur to energy, let us always regard the gracious promises of our God. We should sin against him most ungratefully and detestably were we to say within ourselves, "God will not desert his people; therefore let us venture into sin;" and we are almost equally wicked if we whisper in our own minds, "God will assuredly fulfill his own decrees, and give the souls of his redeemed as a reward to his Son Jesus. therefore let us do nothing, and refrain altogether from zealous Christian service." This is not proper language for true children. This is the talk of the indolently ignorant, or of mere pretenders, who do but mock God while they

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pretend to reverence his decrees. By the oath, by the promise, by the covenant, and by the blood which sealeth it, we are exhorted continually to be at work for Christ, since we are saved in order that we may serve him, in the power of the Holy Ghost, with heart, and soul, and strength.

Joshua was especially exhorted to continue in the path of obedience. He was the captain, but there was a great Commander-in-chief who gave him his marching orders. Joshua was not left to his own fallible judgment, or fickle fancy, but he was to do according to all that was written in the book of the law. So is it with us who are believers. We are not under the law, but under grace; yet still there is a gospel rule which we are bound to follow, and the law in the hand of Christ is a delightful rule of life to the believer. We are not to follow, in the service of God, our own fancies. We are not allowed to frame regulations according to our own conceptions, but our direction is, "whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." His servants shall serve him, his sheep follow his footsteps, his disciples obey their Lord, his soldiers fulfill his pleasure: "By their fruits ye shall know them." If we are not obedient unto Christ, we may rest assured that we have not the spirit of Christ, and are none of his. - Charles Spurgeon



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JOSHUA'S COMMAND

