

Joshua is chosen



Colour me!



Joshua 1:1-9

Moses, the Lord's servant, was dead. So the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, who had been the assistant of Moses. The Lord said: "My servant Moses is dead. Now you must lead Israel across the River Jordan into the land I'm giving to all of you. Wherever you go, I'll give you that land, as I promised Moses. It will reach from the Southern Desert to the Lebanon Mountains in the north, and to the north-east as far as the great River Euphrates. It will include the land of the Hittites, and the land from here at the River Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea on the west. Joshua, I will always be with you and help you as I helped Moses, and no one will ever be able to defeat you.

"Long ago I promised the ancestors of Israel that I would give this land to their descendants. So be strong and brave! Be careful to do everything my servant Moses taught you. Never stop reading The Book of the Law he gave you. Day and night you must think about what it says. If you obey it completely, you and Israel will be able to take this land. I've commanded you to be strong and brave. Don't ever be afraid or discouraged! I am the Lord your God, and I will be there to help you wherever you go."

Commentary

Moses had been a great leader, but in the end it wasn't his job to take God's people into the promised land. This work fell to his apprentice and successor, Joshua. Joshua had been Moses' right-hand man for many years, learning from him not only how to be a leader but also how to depend on God. Even so, it must have been a huge weight of responsibility on his shoulders as he stepped into Moses' shoes. He needed all the help and encouragement he could get — and this is exactly what he receives. God reassures him that the promised land is God's gift to the people of Israel, and he tells Joshua that he will be with him just as he was with Moses. He also shares with Joshua the secret of how to be strong and brave. This strength and courage will follow if he makes the Book of the Law his daily companion. Reading God's words and the stories of God's people will give him all the inspiration he needs.

Obedying the law was Moses' secret weapon, and it would be Joshua's too. For us today, the whole story of God as recorded in the Bible is our place to go for the same encouragement and guidance.

Questions

- ▶ Do you think Moses was disappointed that he never got to take the people into the promised land?
- ▶ Have you ever had to step into someone else's shoes and take over, as Joshua did? How did it feel?
- ▶ Why was it important that God spoke to Joshua in prayer like this?
- ▶ What, in the story, makes you think that Joshua might have been just a little bit scared?
- ▶ Which of God's promises in this passage do you think meant most to Joshua?



Visual aid

Invite everyone to share stories from the Bible that have been important to them and have helped them at some stage in their life.



Activity idea

Using the five letters of the word BIBLE, create together a simple poem or acrostic that attempts to describe how special this book is. It could be five individual words or five sentences, each beginning with a letter from the word BIBLE.



Prayer idea

In this story Joshua is at prayer, but he is listening, not speaking. God has a lot to say to him to prepare him for his new work. Try to spend time in prayer together, listening and not speaking. After a time of silence, share together what you think you have heard. Perhaps some words came into your head, or a picture, or a story from the Bible, that could be the way God is encouraging you as a family today. End this time by reading together some of the special promises from this passage, which were spoken to Joshua then but are also in the Bible for us today.

Key verse

Don't ever be afraid or discouraged! I am the Lord your God, and I will be there to help you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9).

New Testament story link

Matthew 28:16-20: Here are the last words Jesus spoke to encourage his disciples for the work that lay ahead of them.



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