

JOSHUA, THE NEW LEADER

Deuteronomy 34:1-8; Joshua 1:1-9

STRUCTURE

Key-person: Joshua

Key-location: Mount Pisgah on the east bank of the Jordan River, across from Canaan

Key-repetitions:

- Moses' death (Deut 34:5, 7; Jos 1:1, 2).
- Land promised: to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut 34:4); to ancestors of Israel (Jos 1:6-8); to Moses (Jos 1:3); to Israelites (Jos 1:2); to Joshua (Jos 1:3).
- Be strong and courageous (Jos 1:6, 7, 9).
- God would be with Joshua: just as he was with Moses (Jos 1:5); wherever Joshua went (Jos 1:9).
- Book of the Law of Moses: obey everything Moses taught (Jos 1:7); don't turn away from it (Jos 1:7); never stop reciting the teachings (Jos 1:8); think about them day and night (Jos 1:8); obey everything in it (Jos 1:8).
- Orders given to Joshua: get ready to lead Israel (Jos 1:2); be strong and courageous (Jos 1:6, 9); obey Law of Moses (Jos 1:7-8); don't be afraid; don't get discouraged (Jos 1:9).

Key-attitudes:

- Respect for Moses.
- Israelites' grief at Moses' death.
- God's challenge to Joshua to replace Moses as leader.

Initial-situation:

Forty years had passed since the incident when Moses sent twelve men to spy out the Promised Land. The spies returned, and ten gave a bad report about giants in the land. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, argued that since the Lord was with them, the Israelites could conquer the land. The Israelites listened to the ten negative spies, complained and wanted to return to Egypt. God declared a punishment for their unbelief. Those who were over twenty years old and lacked faith would wander in the wilderness for forty years until they were all dead. Moses, Aaron, Caleb, and Joshua were the only ones who believed God would give them the land.

However, Moses and Aaron were not allowed to enter the land. The forty years of wilderness wandering had passed. The Israelites were camped along the east bank of the Jordan River. On the other side of the river was Canaan, the land the Lord had promised them.

Initial-problem:

Moses, the Lord's servant died.

Final-situation:

The Lord God promised to be with Joshua every step he took.

BIBLE STORY**Moses' Death**

Moses climbed Mount Pisgah, which is on the east side of the Jordan River from Jericho. The Lord showed Moses the land of Canaan that would soon belong to the Israelites.

The Lord told Moses, "This is the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. I let you see it, but you will not cross the Jordan River to enter it.

Moses, the Lord's servant died. The Lord buried him, but no one knows exactly where. Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyesight was good and his body strong (Deut 34:1-8).

The Israelites mourned and grieved thirty days for Moses.

Joshua Becomes the New Leader

The Lord told Moses' assistant, Joshua, "Moses my servant is dead. Get ready to lead Israel across the Jordan River into the land I'm giving to all of you. I'll give you every place where you set your foot, just as I promised Moses. I was with Moses, and in the same way, I will be with you. I will never abandon you. No one will be able to defeat you.

"Be strong; be courageous! You will lead these people to inherit the land I promised to give to their ancestors. Be strong; be courageous.

"Obey all the law my servant Moses gave you. Never turn away from Moses' law. Then you will be successful in everything you do. Never stop reciting these teachings. Think about this Book of the Law day and night. Obey everything written in it. Then you will succeed wherever you go.

"I have commanded you: 'Be strong; be courageous; don't be afraid; don't get discouraged. The Lord your God is with you every step you take'" (Jos 1:1-9).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the Lord tell Moses before his death?
2. How did Moses die?
3. What promises did God give Moses?
4. What did God tell Joshua after Moses died?

5. What promises did God give Joshua?
6. What instructions did the Lord give Joshua, the new leader of the Israelites?
7. What conditions did God establish for Joshua to be successful?
8. Which of those conditions would help us to be successful?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **The person who has faithfully served God but chooses to disobey clear commands from God will be punished.** Moses had faithfully served God for almost forty years as he led the Israelites. But on one occasion, God ordered Moses to speak to a rock for it to pour out water. Instead, Moses struck the rock two times with his staff. As a result, Moses was not allowed to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land (Num 20:2-13; Deut 34:4).
2. **Assisting a leader is excellent preparation for becoming a leader.** Joshua was Moses' assistant before he replaced Moses as leader (Jos 1:1). Joshua assisted Moses since he sent Joshua to fight the Amalekites (Ex 17:8-13). When Moses climbed the mountain to receive instructions from the Lord, Joshua was at his side (Ex 24:13).
3. **When God takes away one spiritual leader, he will replace him with another.** When Moses died, the Israelites lost their leader; but God replaced him with Joshua (Jos 1:2-5).
4. **God's guidelines for success include to be strong and courageous, and to take seriously God's word.** The Lord told Joshua: to be strong and courageous; to obey all of God's law; constantly read and study the Book of the Law, God's word (Jos 1:3-9).
5. **God's presence enables people to experience success in carrying out his mission.** Joshua's success depended on the Lord being with Joshua (Jos 1:5, 9). In the same way, Christ's presence enables his followers to achieve their mission (Mat 28:18-20; Mk 16:15, 20; Ac 1:8).
6. **God's presence enables his servants to face difficult challenges.** God's presence enabled Joshua to face new challenges (Jos 1:5, 9). Today, God's servants may not conquer nations, but they do face demanding challenges, tough situations, difficult people, and strong temptations. God's presence enables them to face and conquer life's challenges.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Interaction with Characters in the Story:

Invite listeners to interact with characters in the story with a question. What would you like to say:

- To Moses on Mount Pisgah getting ready to die?
- To the Israelites who are mourning the death of their leader Moses?
- To the new leader Joshua?