

Prepare to Cross Over: Joshua 1 Explained

Scriptures for Today: Joshua 1:10-18

""Joshua 1:10-18

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, 11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it. 12 And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, 13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them; 15 Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising. 16 And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. 17 According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. 18 Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.""

Introduction — A New Leader, A New Land, and a New Command

Up to this point in the Bible, God has been forming a people, shaping a nation, and preparing a leader. From Genesis to Joshua, the story has been one long movement toward this very moment.

In Genesis: God called Abraham out of Ur and promised him three things: a land, a nation, and a blessing through his seed. Isaac received the promise. Jacob received the promise. Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel.

In Exodus: Israel grew into a great nation in Egypt, was enslaved, and cried out to God. God raised up Moses, delivered Israel through the Passover, brought them through the Red Sea, gave them the Law at Sinai, and commanded them to go into the Promised Land.

In Leviticus: God taught them how to approach Him, worship Him, and live holy as His people.

In Numbers: Israel was counted, organized, and prepared for war. But because of unbelief at Kadesh-barnea, the nation wandered for forty years until the unbelieving generation died off. The book ends with Israel standing east of the Jordan, right on the border of the land God promised Abraham.

In Deuteronomy: Moses gives his final sermons. He reminds Israel of God's law, God's faithfulness, and God's expectations. Moses dies on Mount Nebo, and God buries him. Leadership now passes to Joshua—a man filled with the Spirit of God, a man who faithfully served under Moses, and a man chosen to lead the next generation into the land.

Where Joshua Begins: Joshua opens with transition. Moses is dead, but God's promise is alive. The wilderness is behind them. The Jordan River is in front of them. The land of Canaan—the land promised for over 600 years—is finally within reach.

Joshua 1:1–9: God personally commissions Joshua: "Arise. Go over this Jordan. Every place your foot steps is yours. I will be with thee. Be strong and of a good courage. Meditate on the Book of the Law day and night."

Joshua is prepared by God.

Where Joshua 1:10–18 Fits In: Now the focus shifts from **the leader being prepared** to **the people being prepared**. Joshua speaks to the officers. Instructions are given. The people must get ready to move. The eastern tribes must honor their commitment. The nation must unite behind their new leader.

This moment determines whether Israel will remain wanderers or finally become conquerors.

What Happens Next in Joshua? After this passage:

Joshua 2 — The spies enter Jericho. Rahab hides them and believes in the God of Israel.

Joshua 3–4 — Israel crosses the Jordan on dry ground as God stops the waters.

Joshua 5 — The new generation is circumcised; Israel keeps the Passover; the Captain of the Lord's host appears to Joshua.

Joshua 6 — Jericho falls by the power of God.

Joshua 7–12 — Battles, victories, failures, repentance, and conquest.

Joshua 13–21 — The land is divided among the tribes.

Joshua 22–24 — Joshua gives his final charge and says, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Joshua begins with a nation preparing to cross the Jordan and ends with a nation established in the land God promised. Why? Because of a great leader named Joshua.

Verse 10 — Leadership Moves First

""**Joshua 1:10**

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ""

God speaks to Joshua THEN Joshua speaks to the leaders THEN the leaders speak to the people.

Spiritual progress requires leadership. God does not bless confusion. He works through order, clarity, and obedience.

Joshua does not delay. He does not hesitate. He does not form a committee. He obeys instantly.

That is strong leadership.

Verse 11 — Prepare, Because You're About to Cross

""**Joshua 1:11**

Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.""

Three commands:

1. Prepare your food. Victory requires preparation. God gives the land—but the people must get ready.

2. Within three days you will cross. God gives a timetable. The decades of wandering are ending in seventy-two hours.

3. You will possess the land God gives. It is theirs because God gives it—not because Israel is mighty.

The command is simple: **Get ready. God is moving.**

Verses 12–13 — Joshua Reminds the Eastern Tribes of Their Promise

""**Joshua 1:12-13**

And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, 13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.""

These tribes had land **east** of the Jordan—land already conquered. Their families were settled. Their cattle were safe. They were “at rest.” But Moses made them promise something important:

They must still help their brothers inherit THEIR portion.

Rest does not remove responsibility. Comfort does not cancel commitment. Blessing does not eliminate duty.

Verse 14 — The Mighty Men Must Go First

""**Joshua 1:14**

Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them;""

The mighty men are not allowed to stay home. They must go ahead of the others. They must fight for their brothers.

God's people do not rest while others struggle. We do not say, “My life is comfortable, so I'm done.” Strength is given so we can serve.

Verse 15 — Rest Comes AFTER Obedience

""**Joshua 1:15**

Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising.""

The principle is simple: **You don't get to enjoy full rest until your brethren do.**

God expects unity. God expects shared responsibility. God expects His people to fight for each other. When all have rest, THEN you enjoy your rest.

Verses 16–17 — A Unified and Obedient Response

""**Joshua 1:16-17**

And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. 17 According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.""

This is one of the greatest responses to leadership in Scripture: **“We will do. We will go. We will listen.”**

And their one request? **“Only the LORD thy God be with thee.”** A wise church knows: A leader is only strong when God is with him.

Verse 18 — Courage Is Contagious

""Joshua 1:18

Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.""

In Moses' day, rebellion spread like wildfire. In Joshua's day, the people shut that down from the start. They refuse to tolerate rebellion. They demand unity. They echo God's words from verse 9:

“Only be strong and of a good courage.”

When God's people are united, obedient, and courageous—no river, no wall, no giant, no nation can stop them.

Application — What Joshua 1:10–18 Teaches Us Today

1. God often blesses after we prepare. Israel had to get ready. You cannot cross Jordan with an unprepared heart.

2. The blessings of others depend on your obedience. The eastern tribes could not sit idle while others fought. Your faithfulness strengthens someone else's walk.

3. Leadership must obey God immediately. Joshua moved the moment God spoke. Delayed obedience brings delayed blessing.

4. Unity multiplies strength. “We will do... we will go... we will hearken.” When God's people unite behind God's Word, victories come quickly.

5. Courage grows when God is with us. Their final words: “Only be strong and of a good courage.” Because God is near.

Conclusion — God Prepares You Because He Intends to Move You

Israel stood at a river they could not cross alone. A land they could not take alone. Enemies they could not defeat alone.

But God said: **“Prepare... for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan.”**

TRUE WORDS

Baptist Church

Revelation 21:5 

Book of Joshua

Joshua 1:10-18

God prepares you because He intends to move you. He strengthens you because He intends to use you. He calls you because He intends to lead you.

When God says, “It’s time to cross,” no river is too deep, no enemy is too strong, no obstacle is too great.

If God goes before you, victory is guaranteed.

Let’s pray.