



## Joshua's Challenge to the Israelites

September 4-10, 2011

**PRAYER:** Begin with a few moments of sharing thanks and praises in prayer.

**Read:** Deuteronomy 31:6 -8

1. How would you feel about replacing a leader whom God had publicly declared could not be replaced?

The Lord did more than reassure Joshua of His presence and power. He also spelled out very specifically and clearly the conditions for successfully taking the land. God left no "ands," "ifs," and "buts" undefined.

**Read:** Joshua 1:7-9

2. The Lord gave Joshua five direct commands, all related to His laws. Though similar, they clearly outline God's conditions for successfully taking the land of Canaan. What were these commands?

**Read:** Joshua 1:10-11

3. What does Joshua tell his officers?

**Read:** Joshua 1:12-18

4. What exceptions to that general command does he give to the tribes who already possess their land?
5. In in turn, what do they promise? (v. 16) From their reassuring reply and from the Lord's promises, what do you infer Joshua must be feeling? (vv.16-18)

As we read about Israel in the Scriptures, we must not miss a very important principle: Ownership of the land of Israel is unconditional. It belongs to the children of Israel and eventually God will give them all of it! However, they will not possess or occupy it totally and enjoy it until they are perfectly obedient to all of the Lord's commands.

Joshua was very encouraged and strengthened because of God's direct communication. He wasted no time responding to God's charge. In Joshua 1:10-18, we are able to read how he first assumed the leadership role by calling together the officers and leaders of the people. He then issued a command which can be divided into two sections:

First, he directed his words to all of the children of Israel (vv 10-11) They were to get ready to cross over Jordan to take possession of the land of Canaan.

Secondly, he spoke specifically to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh. He reviewed for them what had happened under Moses' leadership. Israel had captured a parcel of land on the side of Jordan opposite Canaan which Moses had promised them. But there was one important condition. They were to act as "shock troops" and pass over Jordan ahead of the rest of Israel. When the task was finished and they had helped take possession of the land, they could return to the other side of Jordan and settle permanently into the land Moses had promised them.

### **Principles to learn from Joshua:**

1. We too can, and must, "be strong and courageous" whatever our responsibilities or position in life.
2. Obedience brings blessing.
3. God will never forsake us.

To view the complete teaching from the Sunday services go to [www.centralcommunity.org/media/index.html](http://www.centralcommunity.org/media/index.html)