

Joshua Becomes Leader of Israel

Joshua 1:1-11

As we begin this passage, Moses had died and Joshua had taken over the leadership of the Israelites, as had been arranged in advance (Deuteronomy 31:1-8). Verse 5 tells us that God was going to be with Joshua in the same way he had been with Moses, so we can assume that God's communication with both men was in some way similar. This message from God must have been reassuring to Joshua and the Israelites—Joshua was the right person for the job and God would use him to lead the Israelites as he had used Moses.

The question may arise: Why was it OK for the Israelites to kill other people and take away their land? This is a complicated question. However, one point seems apparent: God was using Israel to judge the immoral people who lived in the land at the time. Just as Israel was later defeated and their land taken away because of sin, so God was using Israel as an instrument of punishment, taking away the land of the Canaanites because of their sin.

In this passage God gave Joshua a command of encouragement ("be strong and courageous"), a condition for success ("obey all the law my servant Moses gave you"), and a promise of his presence ("the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go"). God had a plan for Israel, and Joshua was the instrument through which he was going to accomplish that plan.

What more could Joshua ask for? All he had to do was to follow what God laid out for him, and God would be there to assure success. However unsure or discouraged Joshua might have been at the death of Moses, this visit from

God rejuvenated him. The first thing recorded after God's message to him is Joshua's ordering the leaders to get the people ready to cross the Jordan. The Israelites were ready to move into the Promised Land, and God was going to give them the land.

Devotion for Leaders

The One Thing: When we commit our lives to Christ, we give our lives to Jesus and he uses us to accomplish his mission.

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Our plans and God's plans don't always match. In today's culture of "seizing the day," it's easy to slip into a mentality of entitlement: "I'm a good person, and I deserve to be happy. I deserve to be successful. I deserve to be comfortable."

The truth is, we deserve death and serious consequences for our sin. But God doesn't give us what we deserve. Christians surrender their lives to God's service because of what God has given us and what he has to offer through us. How has this message gotten lost or distorted in your life? What is keeping you from truly surrendering your life for the sake of others? Make a list of people and situations that need your greater service. Go through the list, and serve in these areas this week.