

Joshua 1 v 1-9: Facing Challenge

Moses, awesome man of God, is dead. Across the Jordan river lies the Promised land of Canaan, but it's full of strong, warlike people who won't easily give it up to the Israelites. The first city they'll come to is the mighty fortified town of Jericho. Its walls look impregnable.

The book of Joshua includes miraculous victory at Jericho, humiliating defeat at Ai, the gradual conquest and portioning out of the land between the twelve tribes of Israel. A brilliant detail comes in ch14v6-14 where eighty-five year old Caleb requests the formidable, giant-infested hill country of Hebron, claiming, 'the Lord helping me, I will drive them out...'

Ever face challenging times? Don't we all!

Joshua ch 1 is where God commissions Joshua to take on the leadership role vacated by Moses, to take God's people on to conquest and victory. It certainly won't be easy. Rewarding things seldom are.

As is frequently the case with scripture, this passage is a combination of challenge and encouragement. Joshua and the people are instructed to 'be strong and courageous' and to keep strictly to the Commandments of God's Word. But if they do, not only will they succeed and prosper in their new inheritance, but they will know the presence and blessing of the Lord their God:

'I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

And more precious in life than a stake in the territory, is the strengthening presence of God in the struggle!