

## Kingdom Leadership

### Joshua 1:1-9

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant,

<sup>2</sup> "Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.

<sup>3</sup> Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses.

<sup>4</sup> From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory.

<sup>5</sup> No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.

<sup>6</sup> Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.

<sup>7</sup> Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.

<sup>8</sup> This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

<sup>9</sup> Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

### [INTRODUCTION]

Hallelujah!

We are continuing to meditate on the Sunday message according to the order of *Reading Jesus*, and today it is "Joshua."

But regarding the book of Joshua, it hasn't been that long since we already studied it several times in the second half of last year through the "Kingdom Perspective" series on the Kingdom of God. Still, I'm sure you may have forgotten much of it, so let me briefly summarize. The Israel led by Joshua finally arrives at the land personally promised by the Lord, Canaan.

At first, they join together as one and successfully cross the Jordan River, and in obedience to the Word they perform circumcision and faithfully keep the Passover. As they gradually conquer the land, there

certainly was the appearance of Israel beautifully establishing the Kingdom of God through obedience in that process.

However, as we are all weak, because of the sin of Achan, and ultimately because of the disobedience of the whole nation of Israel, they keep falling. As we look at all these “ups and downs” in the process, In the end, as with all the words of the Old Testament, since there is absolutely no answer within us, and with our own strength we can never properly establish the Kingdom of God, because we are all hopeless, Who must ultimately come to this land to personally accomplish and completely fulfill the true Kingdom of God?

Only our Lord Jesus Christ must come to us, fully establish His Kingdom, and personally perform the circumcision of the hearts of His people by the Holy Spirit—only then can the saints truly live on this earth as children of God.

Since we have already examined all of this through the book of Joshua, I even considered just briefly passing over it, but I couldn’t simply skip it. So today, through the book of Joshua, I would like to meditate on that “leadership of the Kingdom of God.”

What’s interesting is that the name of this leader “Joshua” means “The LORD is salvation,” and it carries the same meaning as the later New Testament name “Jesus,” the name of our Lord. In fact, among “all the leaders of the Old Testament,” not even one is a completely flawless leader—not Moses, not Joshua, and certainly no human being—so in the end, we absolutely need our Jesus, the perfect leader, the true, literally Joshua, the complete High Priest, the greatest Shepherd.

But at the same time, in the Word where our God personally refines and shapes the Old Testament leaders, training them in various ways, there are surely parts that speak equally to us Christians, the leaders of this present age. In fact, the “book of Joshua” truly contains the process by which the leader “Joshua” gradually becomes an even greater leader. Shall we take a look? First, I will read Joshua chapter 1, verses 1 and 2.

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant,

<sup>2</sup> “Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.

Even to this day, if you ask a Jewish person, “Who is the person you respect the most?” nine out of ten will choose Moses. That is how tremendous the leadership of Moses was at that time. The “history of the Exodus” that God raised up for Israel, and also the “history of the wilderness,” almost all took place through this one figure, Moses. Therefore, to succeed such tremendous leadership as that of Moses is by no means an easy task, as simple as it may sound.

Moreover, how does our God continue to refer to Moses from the very beginning of verses 1 and 2 today? Even after Moses' death, He continually acknowledges him, calling him "Moses the servant of the LORD, My servant, Moses." In that context, the first description of Joshua today, in verse 1, is simply "Moses' assistant."

This is "sharat," which actually means "a servant who ministers to Moses." The Joshua who had been called "Moses' assistant, Moses' servant" is now being established as the leader of Israel, succeeding that tremendous leader, Moses. So for Joshua, this position would never have been an easy one, just as it may sound.

However, to such a Joshua, from the very beginning of chapter 1, God gives three major commands about "how you are to live from now on as the leader of Israel." And Joshua, even in the midst of "ups and downs," somehow lived them out and led Israel well for many years. Then, when he was called by God and died, Joshua 24:29 describes him exactly in that way. Shall we read the verse at the bottom together?

"After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being 110 years old."  
(Joshua 24:29)

In Joshua 1:1 today, it begins simply as "Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant," but in the end, at the very last moment of his life when the Lord calls him, he is called "Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD." This was the beautiful life journey of Joshua, the leader of Israel! Hallelujah!

My hope is that through today's Word, through the three commands of our God who shapes Joshua into a great leader, that at the final moment of our lives as well, the Lord Himself would acknowledge us, saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" and that we too would become servants of the LORD, true leaders of our families and leaders of the church. I earnestly bless and pray this over all of us! There are three major commands.

## [MAIN]

### **1. Be strong and courageous!**

First, the very first command is God's command, "Be strong and courageous!" Let's read verse 6 first.

<sup>6</sup> Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.

<sup>7</sup> Only be strong and very courageous...

<sup>9</sup> Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous...

In verse 6 once, then in verse 7 again saying, “Only be strong and very courageous,” and once more in verse 9—for a total of three times—God commands Joshua the leader, “Be strong and courageous!” Then what does this phrase, “Be strong and courageous!” really mean?

Is He simply saying something like, “Cheer up! Don’t shrink back as a leader! Stand tall like a man! Don’t be intimidated! You can do it all! Let’s go! Fighting!”? That is the level of “be strong and courageous” that even people of the world can say.

In Hebrew, “Be strong and courageous!” is said as “Chazaq ve’ematz!” (חזקו וצאו) Using this same expression, in Psalm 27:14 below, we see that there is a phrase that is always attached before and after it. Shall we read it together?

“Wait for the Lord (qavah); be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord (qavah)!”  
(Psalms 27:14)

The phrase “Be strong and courageous!” is placed right in the middle, and before and after it, He firmly attaches the command, “Wait for the LORD!” This psalm is, of course, “a psalm of David,” “a psalm of David, the leader of Israel.”

So for a leader to be strong and courageous does not merely mean “to cheer up and have courage.” Rather, it is the exact opposite! A leader is NEVER EVER someone who tries to be strong in himself and squeeze out his own strength!

Instead, “Wait for the LORD!” “Hold fast only to the strength of God and move forward!” Only then, by the power of the Lord who is always with us, do we truly become “strong and courageous.” “Wait for the LORD! Hope in the LORD! Look to the LORD! Wait for the LORD”—all of these are the same Hebrew word, “qavah.” In Isaiah 40:30–31 below, with that same word, He speaks to us in exactly that way. Shall we read it together?

“but they who wait for the Lord (qavah) shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31)

Hallelujah!

In this way, Joshua the leader properly received God’s command, “Be strong and courageous!” and, following the Word contained within it—“Wait for the LORD!”—he gained new strength and moved forward. Even in the midst of ups and downs, he was gradually refined into an even greater leader. Later, in chapter 10, we see that he proclaims this very same message to the people of Israel entrusted to him. Shall we read Joshua 10:25 together?

“And Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous. For thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.”” (Joshua 10:25)

The reason we were able to win the battle of Jericho and the many other battles afterward was never because of our own strength or our own courage! “The LORD has done all these things!” Therefore, wait for the LORD! Hold fast only to the strength of God and move forward!

Only those who hope in the LORD will gain new strength and truly establish the Kingdom of God with strength and courage! I believe this is the wonderful example of Joshua the leader, boldly proclaiming to the people of Israel what it really means to be truly strong and courageous. Hallelujah!

As I continued to meditate on these words, the beautiful confession of faith of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 in the New Testament—“When I am weak, then I am strong”—came to mind and connected so clearly. Shall we read it together?

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, (1) “My grace is sufficient for you, for (2) my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

Even though Paul pleaded three times for the thorn in his flesh—a disease that was almost disabling, a weakness in his body—there was surely a reason why our Lord did not grant the request of the leader Paul immediately. Here, God gives two main reasons.

The first reason is: (1) “My grace is sufficient for you!” God’s grace was already more than enough for Paul; he lacked nothing. The second reason is: (2) “My power is made perfect in weakness!” God’s power is perfected in Paul’s weakness.

For the first point, this is ultimately David’s confession of faith: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want!” Paul knew this well. That’s why God says beforehand, “to keep me from being conceited.” In his mind, Paul acknowledges, “Yes, the thorns in my flesh were given so that I would not become proud. My weaknesses, my problems—yes, all of these are to keep me from pride. The LORD is my shepherd; I lack nothing. God’s grace is always sufficient for me! Just like daily bread, it is always just enough!”

Yet still, it is hard! Because we are always weak, Paul pleaded three times to have it removed. Paul, being Paul, probably prayed three times, heard God’s Word, and then stopped. But we? We often keep pleading endlessly until God answers, wrestling with Him like Jacob, repeating, “Please, fix this problem for me!” But even amid our weaknesses, we must always remember David’s confession of faith: “God’s grace is

always more than enough for me! Just like daily bread, it is always perfectly sufficient!” And through this, our weaknesses are gradually transformed in the Lord into true strength—into “strength and courage”—as God Himself perfects us.

The second point (2) is likewise: “My power is made perfect in weakness.” God’s power is more fully revealed in Paul’s weakness. This is the profound, ironic mystery of the theology of the cross. The cross of Christ, which appeared the weakest, most powerless, and most incapable, becomes the very strong power of God! It is truly amazing.

From the world’s perspective, death means the end, and to win, one must be strong and conquer all. But in God’s way, it is the opposite: one must die to live, and lose to truly win. This is the way of the cross, the very reason Jesus came to this earth. Likewise, the reason we live on this earth is also the way of the cross.

When we think we must always be strong to conquer and crush, God’s power is never perfected that way! If we rely only on our own strength, pride grows, and the precious cross becomes wasted by our own foolishness. No, the way to walk is narrow, hard, and often incomprehensible—waiting for the LORD, hoping in Him, following Him. Even when we feel weak, when we keep losing, when everything seems to fail, when we feel powerless and helpless, even as if we will surely die.

Yet ultimately, this narrow path, the way of Jesus, is the true way of victory, the eternal way of the cross. Even amid our weakness, when we cling to the cross, which is the power of God, and live, “The LORD will do all these things!” The power of Christ transforms our weakness into true strength, into the very “strength and courage,” and the Lord Himself perfects His saints, walking with us to the end of the world. I am confident of this truth.

## **2. Do not turn from the Book of the Law!**

The second command is God’s command: “Do not turn from the Book of the Law!” Let’s read verses 7 and 8 together.

<sup>7</sup> Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.

<sup>8</sup> This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Indeed, a “servant of the LORD,” a leader, cannot have any smoothness or success apart from God’s Word! And God continually commands that we carefully obey all that is written in the Word. Look at it this way: don’t just obey what seems possible to you. Don’t pick and choose only what you can accept. Obey

it all! Even when God's Word is beyond our understanding, submit fully, strive to live before every part of God's Word, and obey it completely. Then, wherever you go, you will prosper.

And again, God also commands, "Do not turn to the right or to the left." Of course, in Leviticus or Deuteronomy, this instruction often refers to not favoring the weak or siding with the strong during judgment. But today, I see it as God's command not to be selective with the Bread of Life, not to "spoil" the Word.

Because the Word of God is perfect and encompasses every part of our lives, if we only focus on part of it, we cannot fully receive the life-giving Word. And in this, Romans 15:4 comes clearly to mind. Shall we read it together?

"For whatever was written in former days was (1) written for our instruction, (2) that through endurance and (3) through the encouragement of the Scriptures (4) we might have hope." (Romans 15:4)

There are four main areas in which a believer should fully partake of the Bread of Life, without being selective:

1) The Word of Instruction – This teaches what is right and wrong, correcting and praising as needed. Importantly, this instruction is not written for correcting others; it is written "for our instruction." In other words, there is not a single part of it that does not apply to me. It's not about thinking, "Oh, the Israelites in Exodus—what were they doing?

They were such faith bipolar patients!" No. It is written for my instruction. Or thinking, "Ah, this is totally about my husband—where is he? Read the Bible properly and treat me right!" No. It is written for my instruction. Every word of Scripture is God's perfect Word, the Bread of Life, given for my instruction and for our instruction.

2) The Word of Patience – Even though we have believed in Jesus, have been converted, and the Holy Spirit dwells within us, it is still extremely difficult to live in constant patience and endurance. How can we always endure those who wrong us? How can we bear all the hardships of life by ourselves? It simply doesn't work on our own.

No matter how long we have lived clinging to the tree of sin, being grafted into the tree of Christ does not automatically give us endurance. Therefore, through Scripture, we must learn patience. The Word gives us the strength to endure, and through the example of Jesus, who endured even the cross, and figures like David, Moses, and Joshua—who made mistakes yet endured—we learn that we too must cultivate patience. Even Peter, once so impulsive, later demonstrated endurance. Through Scripture, we see and learn patience.

3) The Word of Comfort – Scripture reassures us, “I am not the only one suffering, I am not the only one struggling, I am not the only one falling.” Through the authentic examples of our faithful ancestors and God’s loving Word, we are comforted. When we are weary from enduring, God’s Word tenderly refreshes and strengthens us with deep grace. Hallelujah!

4) The Word of Hope – Finally, Scripture gives us true hope, which enables us to live on this earth as children of God. It warns us against clinging only to worldly hope, which can scatter like chaff in the wind, and points us to the eternal hope in Jesus Christ. Holding onto this one true hope allows us to live each day close to our Lord, knowing that heaven is filled with joy and eternal fellowship with Him, free from all sorrow and pain.

At the bottom, Deuteronomy 17:18–20 precisely records the qualities of a leader who does not depart from the Book of the Law. Shall we read it together?

“And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, (a) he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that (b) he may learn to fear the Lord his God (c) by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.” (Deuteronomy 17:18-20) →  
Qualities of a leader

These are the qualities of a king, the qualities of a leader. When a king rises to the throne and diligently practices these three things, he becomes a leader who is not proud and does not turn to the right or left. First, (a) as soon as he takes the throne, he must personally write out a copy of the Book of the Law himself—not have someone else do it.

A leader who keeps it beside him all his life and continually reads the Word. While writing and reading the Word with his own hands, (b) he learns to fear the LORD his God. And (c) he becomes a leader who obeys all the words and regulations of this Law.

When a leader lives his life fully partaking of the Book of the Law, the Bread of Life, in this way, God’s Word humbles him, keeping him from pride. The Word keeps him centered, so he will not veer to the right or left. In this way, God’s Word sustains and guides us throughout life, ensuring that whatever we encounter, we live a life prospered in all things, fully anchored in His Word.

### **3. Do not be afraid!**

The third and final command is God’s command: “Do not be afraid!” Let’s first read verse 9 together.

<sup>9</sup>Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Today, God's Word to Joshua the leader is clearly, "Do not be afraid! Do not Fear!" Then, in Joshua 10:25, Joshua himself proclaims the same message to the people of Israel. Let's read Joshua 10:25 together.

"And Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous. For thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight."" (Joshua 10:25)

In the Bible, God repeatedly tells His people, "Do not fear! Do not Fear!" Conversely, He also frequently says, "Fear!" But when God says "Fear!" it is always in the sense of "Fear the LORD!"—in other words, "Have reverence for the LORD!" In Hebrew, the word yare is used in both cases. When it says "Do not fear," it's yare, translated into English as "Do Not Fear." When it says "Fear the LORD," it's also yare, translated as "Fear the LORD."

So God always pairs these commands: "Do not fear! Do Not Fear!" and "Fear the LORD! Fear the LORD!" Through these two commands, God is essentially telling His people: "Do not be afraid or tremble before things that are nothing. Only fear and revere Me. Behold! The LORD will do all these things!"

Thus, the command "Do not fear! Do Not Fear!" is directly connected to "Fear the LORD! Fear the LORD!" And what it means to fear the LORD specifically is clearly explained in Psalm 2:11–12. Let's read it together.

"Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him." (Psalms 2:11-12)

➔ "And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."" (Joshua 24:15)

All of these passages clearly describe those who worship God! First, (1) the Hebrew word for "serve" is *avad*, meaning "to be a servant" or "Servant of the LORD." This is where the concept of **\*\*service—worship—\*\***comes in.

Second, (2) the text says, "rejoice with trembling," showing the posture of a worshiper. Naturally, as weak human beings standing before God, we feel fear and trembling, but God also allows joy in worship! Even in our fear, we are invited to rejoice.

Third, (3) it says, "Kiss His Son." In the New Testament Greek, the verb *proskuneo* is used for "to worship." "Pro—" means "before" or "toward," and "kuneo" means "to kiss." So the literal meaning of worship is exactly this: to bow before God, to kiss Him in reverent devotion.

All these elements together describe the life of a worshiper as blessed, one who takes refuge in the LORD, free from fear of anything else.

Thus, a leader, a servant of the LORD, is ultimately one who worships God without fear of anything else. Joshua himself proclaims this before Israel at the end of his life. Let's read it aloud together! Just like in Psalm 2, the words **\*\*avad—to serve, to be a servant—\*\***beautifully conclude with Joshua as the true Servant of the LORD, a worshiper before God. Hallelujah!

I pray that Joshua's final declaration becomes our own final declaration in life: "As for me and my household, we will serve the LORD! We will worship God!" Today, may we continually proclaim this to ourselves and to all entrusted to us, so that no matter the fears, trials, or hardships, we remain true worshipers, blessed servants of the LORD, and leaders in His Kingdom. I earnestly pray this for all of us.

## **[CONCLUSION]**

Beloved brothers and sisters,

Today we have looked at God's kingdom leadership through the Word given to Joshua the leader. To summarize:

### **Kingdom Leadership**

1. Be strong and courageous! (Those who wait on the Lord)
  - A leader who waits on the Lord, relying on Him who is strong when we are weak, gaining new strength, and building the Lord's kingdom with true courage and boldness.
2. Do not turn from the Book of the Law! (Those who follow the Word)
  - A leader who partakes fully of the Bread of Life throughout life, keeping centered on God's Word, living faithfully, and prospering in all things.
3. Do not fear! (Those who worship God)
  - A leader who fears nothing else but the LORD, worshiping and taking refuge in Him, living with reverence and wholehearted devotion.

May we all, by God's grace, become such servants of the LORD, true leaders in His Kingdom.