

Wednesday's (Lesson 1): *Be Strong*

Scripture Focus: *Joshua 1:7–9*

1. Context and Challenges Facing Israel

- Israel was preparing to conquer the fortified city of Jericho, whose walls were legendary.
 - Even the Egyptians, the dominant military power of the time, could not overcome its defenses.
 - To breach such a city, a military would typically need:
 - Ladders for scaling
 - Siege tools to break through (e.g., rams or trebuchets—though the trebuchet was not invented until the 4th–5th century)
 - Protection against enemies holding the high ground
 - Israel possessed none of these in adequate measure.
 - Conclusion: Victory would clearly require supernatural intervention by God.
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2. God's Charge: Be Strong and Courageous

- The word “*courage*” (or a form of it) appears four times in Joshua 1:
 - Verse 6 – Courage to receive the inheritance
 - Verse 7 – Courage to obey the law
 - Verse 9 – Courage to stand firm and not fear
 - Verse 18 – (Fourth mention) Those who rebel against Joshua's command are to be punished, “*only be strong and of a good courage.*”

- This repetition underscores the message:
 - Biblical courage is rooted in trust in God's power, not in personal strength or fearlessness.
 - God does not call for blind bravery, but for faith-fueled obedience.
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3. Courage to Obey God's Law

- The command to be courageous wasn't just for battle—it was especially about remaining obedient after victory.
 - Joshua 1:7–9 stresses the importance of:
 - Observing the law
 - Meditating on it day and night
 - Letting it guide speech, thought, and action
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4. Copying the Law: Internalizing the Covenant

- This principle of clinging to the law continues throughout Scripture.
- In Deuteronomy 17:14–18, God foresees Israel asking for a king.
 - Though not God's original plan, He gives instructions:
 - The king must write out a personal copy of the law by hand
 - This act of copying would reinforce the centrality of God's Word
- Though Joshua was not a king, he fulfills this pattern in Joshua 8, where he publicly copies the law for the people.
- According to *Patriarchs and Prophets*, the law was to be everywhere:
 - On doorposts, gates, ceilings

- **A constant presence and reminder**
 - **The goal: to build a people set apart from surrounding nations, faithful to their covenant identity**
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5. Key Takeaways

- **Victory comes from God, not from weapons or strategy.**
- **Faithfulness requires courage, especially when surrounded by temptation or cultural compromise.**
- **God's people must:**
 - **Stay grounded in His Word**
 - **Continue in obedience after blessings come**
 - **Be courageous in service, not just in struggle**