

JCI #184 May 2017
Moses is dead. God isn't!
Deuteronomy 34, Joshua 1

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Everybody wants progress, but nobody likes change!

But the one thing you can count on in this world is change! The generations come and go – the new house of someone's dreams will one day be bought and totally remodeled by somebody else. And another someday it will be torn down and another one built in its place. The car of your dreams today will someday go to the junkyard. The teenager of yesterday is the senior citizen of today. (Yes, I know, this can be depressing. But hang in there with me! ☺) From the nursery to the nursing Home....the one constant is change! To everything there is a season and a time....and the times, they are a-changing!

God has called us into a life of constant change! From a new birth (John 3:3) with a new nature (Ephesians 4:24) with new desires; into a new family (Ephesians 2:12-22) with new goals; with a new direction, (Romans 8:28-31) and a new destination. We are new creations (2 Cor 5:17) ... the old has gone, the new has come...and ***new = change!***

Joshua 1:1-2

Now after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, the word of the Lord came to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' helper, saying: “Moses my servant is dead; so now get up! Go over Jordan, you and all this people, into the land which I am giving to them, to the children of Israel.”

The book of Joshua is a book about change! It's about promises fulfilled, faith tested, and lessons learned... sometimes at great cost! Israel was about to enter a new land, under a new leader, into a new war that would last for years. Moses was gone...his staff was gone... the pillar of cloud was gone... and the manna would be gone in a few days. God was about to fulfill His ancient promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:13-18) but for some it must have seemed like everything had collapsed!

We have much to learn about living in our changing day from this marvelous book.

The Preparation of Joshua

God prepared Joshua for his new assignment. Joshua may not have felt prepared, but he was. God had prepared him by his ***experience on the battlefield*** and demonstrating the necessity of prayer. Joshua became a ***warrior*** with a prayer warrior. Exodus 17:9-24

Joshua was prepared by ***a vision of God*** as he went up the mountain with Moses and also dwelt in the tent of meeting in God's presence continually. Joshua became a ***worshipper*** who loved abiding in God's presence. Exodus 24:13 and 33:11

Joshua was prepared by **seeing the Promised Land** as one of the 12 spies and came back full of faith and convinced God would keep his word. Joshua was a **witness** to God's promise. Numbers 13:8, 14:6

Joshua was prepared by **learning to deal with disappointment** as the nation rebelled and he had to walk with his complaining people for 40 years in the desert. Joshua was a **weary** yet faithful follower of the Lord. Numbers 14

The Passing of Moses

God begins the book by a seemingly unfeeling announcement... "MOSES MY SERVANT IS DEAD!" But if we go back to Deuteronomy 34, we see that Israel had been mourning for 30 days. God seemed to have set a time limit for mourning and weeping over the past. The time for dwelling on the past and grieving the loss had come to an end. Grieving was necessary... but it was also limited. Grieving was essential to the process of acceptance, but it was now time to move ahead.

Only God saw Moses die. Only God knew where Moses was buried. It was an unmarked grave! There was no trace, no evidence, no return! God told them Moses was dead since He alone was the witness. God was giving them the closure they needed. The past was past. It was time to move ahead into the future.

The Prophet was gone. GONE! God's word. Their leader, intercessor, spokesman, and judge. The Staff was gone. GONE! God's power had been demonstrated again and again thru this staff. The Pillar was gone. GONE! God's visible presence seen every day for 40 years was gone. The Manna was soon gone. GONE! God's provision that sustained them for 40 years was gone.

Moses was a man used by God for a season.

A Leader Moses was known. Joshua always under orders. Could he lead? Was he strong enough?

An Intercessor his prayers speared the nation again and again... what would happen now?

A Spokesman – face to face with God, bringing God's word to the people...uniquely gifted prophet.

A Judge – settled disputes, knew the Word of God and how to apply it.

God puts people in our lives for a season. Be grateful for them, but don't be dependent on them. We must learn to find our sufficiency in God alone!

MOSES... his history – drawn out from the Nile

MY SERVANT... his calling – to do what God called him to do, to lead the people out of Egypt

IS DEAD... his finish line – a race completed – every servant of God dies until Christ's coming

The Purpose of God

ARISE AND GO OVER THIS JORDAN...30 days of mourning ended! Now, time to move ahead!

No *Prophet*, but God's word still here Joshua 1:8 "This book!"

No *Staff*, but God's power still here Joshua 1:5 "Do not be afraid..no man will stand!"

No *Pillar*, but God's presence still here Joshua 1:5 "I will be with you"

No *Manna* but God's provision still here Joshua 1:6 "this people will inherit the land"

Oh how we resist change! Often our resistance to change is a stubborn self-pity and akin to idolatry, an excuse for disobedience to Christ and inactivity for God in this new day.

The early church faced huge changes! They moved from law to grace, from predominantly Jews to predominantly Gentiles, from temple sacrifices to house churches, from Jerusalem to the world, from apostles and prophets to ordinary leaders with a completed New Testament. They had to learn of the sufficiency of the Word, without the support of signs and wonders. Like Joshua, like the early church, so we need to accept the changes of our day and move ahead in obedience and faith with confidence in our unchanging Christ!

What hadn't changed? GOD! Heb. 13:8 James 1:17

Changing Times with a Changeless God – Times change, God doesn't! Psalm 90

MOSES IS DEAD! GOD ISN'T! SO GET UP AND GET MOVING!

A new day... a new battle... a new opportunity to experience an old promise with a renewed faith!

Self-Check

- 1) Have you been guilty of wishing for the past, complaining about the present and worrying about the future?
- 2) Where does God want you to embrace His promises today and move ahead in confident faith and obedience?
- 3) Are you trusting more in human leaders than in God's faithfulness?

For Further Study

Read Joshua thru, event by event, and note the lessons they had to learn about complete obedience in a new day. It is filled with challenging reminders of the necessity of walking by faith in full obedience.

"Lord, You have put me in this this day by Your divine providence. You have called me to believe You today. You have called me to obey You today. You have called me to rejoice in You today. You have called me to get up and follow You today, in full dependence, full obedience, full delight. Forgive me for wishing for the "good old days" which really weren't all that good! Forgive me for my selective memory that tends to see the past in a positive light an today in a negative light. I know that human nature is the same, You are the same, Your mission is the same, Your sufficiency is the same, and Your promises is the same now and forever. Renew my heart to believe, love, and follow You into this day with the joy and confidence You are ever worthy of. I pray in Your changeless Name, Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.
Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4 Ron& Val

Seeing The Invisible,
embracing The Unapproachable,
declaring The Unexplainable,
changed by The Immutable,
running after The Irresistible
with inexhaustible joy
in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity,
owning nothing yet possessing everything
that matters and lasts.
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.
Welcome to THE JOURNEY