

COURAGE to move FORWARD

Joshua 1:1-9

FOR OUR CONSIDERATION

“Courage is the embrace of strength amidst adversity. It is to enact hope amidst despair.”

Brandon Moore

- GOD comes to Joshua in the wake of the death of Moses. After acknowledging his passing, GOD tells Joshua that it is time to move on.
 - Note: The ceremonial period of mourning has ended prior to this moment (see Deuteronomy 34:8)
- The journey FORWARD is one of necessity. It is borne out of TRANSITION.
 - In the case of this passage, both the leader and the people had time to find closure and to process what has been lost.
 - However, in many instances, the journey FORWARD may require us to be unsettled within transition until the time we are allowed either
 - A place (moment) of rest to regroup, grieve, reflect, etc.
 - OR
 - Until we reach the expected place.
- Another facet of the need for courage is the matter of *ENTRUSTMENT* and *ACCOUNTABILITY*
 - Prior to the mantle of leadership for the nation of Israel being bestowed to Joshua, Joshua's primary responsibility was loyalty to Moses. Though his work included the people now his elevation all about the people.
 - Courage is essential because we cannot neglect ourselves while being engaged and involved with the welfare of others!
 - Before this moment, he was accountable solely to Moses. Now, his sole supervisor and leader is GOD.
 - Joshua adhered to the GOD in Moses. Moses was led by GOD. Therefore, the people of GOD could be entrusted to Joshua. In part because GOD knew it would not be an issue for Joshua to the level of accountability required.
- GOD had plans for Joshua and the people. GOD has plans for you and I.
 - These plans are hopeful and wholesome.

- Therefore, we must see the direction FORWARD as an opportunity to increase our level of trust in GOD.
 - There are several connected to us who depend on this.
- GOD tells Joshua the parameters of the land (territory) which will be given to the people. It is significant to point out that in the description and the Divine charge being given, GOD shares two things:
 - You'll have water to cross.
 - You'll be given land that is currently occupied by others.
- Courage is required in the journey FORWARD because we too will have challenges before us. Sometimes challenges appear as obstacles and opinions.
 - Courage then, creates within each of us who decide to take it, a level of Focus becomes a great tool in it is critical to how we pray, prepare and pursue.
 - Don't allow what people say, think or do to override what you and GOD have an understanding about.
 - Environments are subject to change. Learn when to adapt and when to exit!
- There is a rich blessing not to be overlooked in Verses 5-7. Let's look at some of its' dimensions:
 - GOD promises a continuation of Divine Presence.
 - Remember: *the journey FORWARD at times may become frustrating and lonesome. GOD is ever-present.*
 - GOD promises success and provisions.
 - With GOD, all things are possible. Even if you don't have all the answers or resources, your connection to the Source will make all things well.
 - Our obedience to the WORD ensures we will win!
 - GOD is never detached from GOD's Word!
 - Our devotion to GOD cannot be separate from (a) devotion to what GOD has said. What GOD says is a reflection of who GOD is!
- On the third and final exhortation to be "*strong and courageous*", GOD refers to it as a command. Why?
 - After telling Joshua what to be, GOD tells him what not to be.
 - "don't fear or be dismayed"
 - Most of us are familiar with fear but dismayed is unique yet not unheard of.
 - To be dismayed is a consequence of fear. To be dismayed - according to the passage is to literally become *shattered*.

- In closing, please note: the journey FORWARD includes breaks, tears, dents, bruises and scraps however, know that the LORD is with us. The LORD loves us and wills for us to prosper. Take courage! Stay with GOD even as GOD has committed to stay with us.