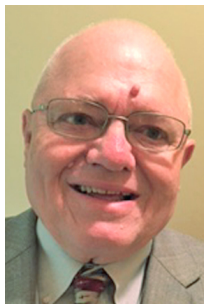


# Bible Studies for Life: June 11

*Moses and Joshua • Numbers 27:12-23*

*By Don Hicks*



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The focal Scripture passage for this lesson begins with Moses going up into a mountain of the Abarim range to meet one-on-one with God. God reminded Moses that he, like Aaron, his brother, was going to die before entering the “Promised Land.”

Back in the first 13 verses of Numbers chapter 20, Moses lost his temper and hit the rock that God was going to use to provide water for His people. Moses was just supposed to speak

to the rock and the people would know clearly that God provided the water and not Moses.

Moses knew that the nation of Israel would be like sheep without a shepherd if God didn't give them a new leader. God chose Joshua to be Moses' replacement.

If you remember the many stories about Joshua, you understand some of the many reasons God chose him to become the leader after Moses' death. Remember that when Moses sent the twelve spies out to report on the Promised Land, 10 of the 12 spies came back scared to death and reported they could not take it.

Joshua and Caleb came back and bravely reported that God would protect them and give them the Promised Land. Then, Joshua became Moses' general and served very effectively, fighting many battles.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of Exodus, the Amalekites attack Israel. "Moses said to Joshua, 'Select some men for us and go fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the hilltop with God's staff in my hand.'"

In Exodus 17:9, God won the battle using Joshua and his troops plus Moses, Aaron, Hur, and God's staff. This would be a good story for you to review for background as you prepare to teach this lesson.

There is a song with which you may be familiar that is often sung about General Joshua: Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho. See how many of your class members know it.

The people of Israel understood Joshua and Moses had certainly known of Joshua's rich qualifications for leadership, but Moses didn't pick Joshua to be his successor. Moses knew his successor would only come to power after he was dead and gone from the scene.

As we began this preview of our lesson, we noted Numbers 27:15

said, "So Moses appealed to the LORD." Verse 18 is Moses' answer: "The LORD replied to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man who has the Spirit in him..." (Numbers 27:18-20 CSB).

In my personal experience, I have never been able to pick my successor whether as a pastor, church staff minister, state convention consultant, or public school teacher. This may match your own life experiences but be sure to note in this Bible passage about Moses, God and not Moses choose Joshua as his successor.

Now is a good time to remember that Moses is on top of a mountain alone with God. How will the rest of Israel know what God said to Moses about who He chose as their next leader? Numbers 27:18 begins an account of the exact detailed instructions God gave Moses:

– "The LORD replied to Moses, 'Take Joshua son of Nun, a man who has the Spirit in him, and lay your hands on him'" (Numbers 27:18(CSB)).

– "Have him stand before the priest Eleazar and the whole community, and commission him in their sight" (Numbers 27:19 CSB).

– "Confer some of your authority on him so that the entire Israelite community will obey him" (Numbers 27:20 CSB).

– "Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua, had him stand before the priest Eleazar and the entire community, laid hands on him, and commissioned him, as the LORD had spoken through Moses" (Numbers 27:22-23).

We need to consider a public acknowledgement of the ministry role and authority of new church leaders, ministers, and pastors.

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