

Joshua 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

Analysis

This verse contains one of Scripture's most cherished promises of divine presence and sufficiency. The Hebrew *lo-yityatsev* (לא־יִתְּצַבֵּ, 'shall not...be able to stand') uses a reflexive form meaning no enemy can maintain their position or resist Israel when God fights for them. The promise 'all the days of thy life' extends divine protection throughout Joshua's entire leadership, not merely during the conquest but in all seasons. The comparison 'as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee' assures Joshua he will receive the same divine companionship that empowered Moses. The dual promise 'I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee' uses two Hebrew verbs: *raphah* (רָפַח, 'fail') meaning to sink or weaken, and *azav* (אָזַב, 'forsake') meaning to leave or abandon. God promises neither to weaken in His support nor to withdraw His presence. This promise is cited in Hebrews 13:5 and applied to all believers, demonstrating its transhistorical application to God's people in every age.

Historical Context

This promise came at a critical transition point as Israel prepared to enter Canaan without Moses. Joshua needed assurance that God's presence—not merely Moses' leadership—had been the source of Israel's success. The promise addressed Joshua's natural fear and insecurity about filling Moses' irreplaceable role. Ancient Near Eastern warfare was brutal and uncertain; victory depended on numerous factors including troop strength, weaponry, strategy, and the favor of deity. God's

unconditional promise of victory and presence provided Joshua with confidence no human leader could give. The fulfillment appears throughout Joshua's campaigns—no enemy successfully resisted Israel when they obeyed God. The promise's New Testament application (Hebrews 13:5) shows that God's faithfulness to His covenant people transcends Israel and extends to all who trust in Christ.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise never to fail or forsake you change your perspective on current challenges that seem overwhelming?
2. What situations in your life require you to trust God's sufficiency rather than your own ability or strength?
3. How does understanding that the same God who was with Moses is with you affect your approach to leadership responsibilities or difficult callings?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	יִתְאַצֵּב	אִישׁ	כִּי	לִפְנֵי	יְמִינֶךָ
H3808	be able to stand	There shall not any man		before	H3605
	H3320	H376		H6440	thee all the days
					H3117
לֹא	עַמְּךָ	מֵשָׁה	לֹא	עַמְּךָ	אַתָּה
	כִּי	יָתַיְתָּ	כִּאֵשׁ	כִּי	יָתַיְתָּ
of thy life	H834	H1961	H5973	as I was with Moses	H1961
H2416				H4872	
אַרְפָּךְ	לֹא	אַלְזַבְּךָ			
so I will be with thee I will not fail	H3808	thee nor forsake			
H7503		H5800			

Additional Cross-References

Romans 8:31 (Parallel theme): What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Matthew 28:20 (Parallel theme): Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Joshua 1:9 (Parallel theme): Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Deuteronomy 20:4 (Parallel theme): For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

2 Timothy 4:17 (Parallel theme): Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

Psalms 46:11 (Parallel theme): The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

Hebrews 13:5 (Parallel theme): Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Exodus 3:12 (Parallel theme): And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

Joshua 3:7 (References Moses): And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

Romans 8:37 (Parallel theme): Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

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