

The role of faith in spiritual work and endeavour. That's really the theme of the book of Joshua. It is a literal history with many, many lessons or parallels with church life throughout the gospel age. **These lessons are for us.**

Joshua begins in the year 1405 BC, covering up to three decades following that date. It is possibly written by Joshua himself, although nowhere in the book is it explicitly stated that Joshua was the author (certainly the author was an eyewitness of the events) – but as with all Scripture it is inspired directly by God.

It is a book of history. Chapters 1 to 5 cover the **crossing of Jordan**, chapters 6 to 12 cover the **conquest of the land of Canaan**, 13 to 22 are **all about the dividing of the land among the tribes**, and 23 to 25 describe the end of Joshua's life.

Our Subject is the importance of faith in our Christian walk.

We see 'Moses my servant is dead' but there is still a work that must be completed, there is still land to be occupied. No man is indispensable, we see that God's work goes on. Moses is dead, so does this paralyse the marching of the tribes into the promised Land. No the Instrument God had used is dead, but His arm is still strong, the master's hand, sets one instrument aside and takes up another. The immediate installation of his successor, and the uninterrupted continuance of the advance, do not mean that Moses is not honoured or is forgotten, for the narrative lovingly links his respected title, *'the servant of the Lord,'*

Joshua is given the promise of victory, *'every place you shall set your foot I've given it unto you'* - as I promised Moses I promise you - Joshua all the days of your life no one shall be able to stand against you. I will not forsake you I will not fail you. God's all-sufficient, God's more than enough companionship will be with you. Only be very courageous. Be firm and steadfast. **Be mindful** to do all that is written in the book of the Law. **Never turn from it** to the right or to the left then you will succeed then you will prosper wherever you go. The book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth. The Law you have in writing must govern every utterance from your mouth. You must think on it day and night. (it must also govern your every step and action your whole life)

Joshua steps into the empty place, Moses is dead. He receives the same great promise, is assured of the same Presence, and is to obey the same law. The **change of leaders** is a great change, especially for some of faint hearted people, but nothing

really has changed; let them remember, **the real Leader still lives**, and Moses and Joshua are just the transmitters of His Word and His help to Israel. What makes a leader is that God is with Him. I will be with you as I was with Moses. **And then for us today**, For He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU."

Our first heading is the Authority - Assurance and Zeal depends upon Authority.

Why was Joshua bold and corragous? By what authority Joshua did he do all these things - *Joshua 1:1-2 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, [2] Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.*

The LORD SPOKE. This is his authority for everything. He did not innovate He obeyed what the Lord spoke to Him. He was 84 years old at this point yet a man of such energy and tremendous intelligence. He could have easily innovated but Joshua was like Moses. He carried out the Lords commands.

Joshua is told arise, go over the Jordon. *This Jordan; this* which is now near to you, which is the only obstacle in thy way to Canaan. **Which I do give**, I am now about to give the actual possession of it, as I formerly gave a right to it by promise.

But although it's a promise. Although the Lord had spoken It is going to take great faith. **The Jordan is in flood!** *Joshua 3:15* There are no boats to take them over. And even if there were they would surely be seen by the enemy. To cross the river Jordan in flood would be very difficult for even a modern-day army. Possibly - 40 to 60 meters wide and about 3 to 4 meters deep. It would have been very difficult for Joshua and all the people the wives the little children the calttle. **Yet Joshua had Faith in Gods Promise**, He believed that God was with Him, **this made Him ready** to cross Jordan in flood, and to meet the enemies that are waiting on the other side. **If he did not have trust in God, he would have had no courage and boldness to cross**, nor succeed in what God had said.

But God had given His promise and that was enough. The Lord had given His command and that was all He needed. **No Joshua didn't take the initiative.** He didn't decide by himself. He was commanded by the Lord. **He saw His calling as**

simply putting into practice what God had revealed unto Him not more and no less.’ He carried out very carefully everything God spoke. **Joshua was content to be SERVANT of the Lord**, With the tremendous promise, every place on which the soul of your foot shall tread.

We too are Servants of the Lord. (What an honoured title-) Servants with the exceeding great and precious promises. Yet We too sometimes to face difficulties which we can’t see how to get through; but knowing, and having the assurance that the path is one **appointed, and commanded** by God, **we have faith** and will boldly carry on. KNOWING THAT GOD said it I can trust Him, He is trustworthy faithful and true. Also, we can boldly go to the throne of grace with confidence asking for help **to carry out what He has commanded**. We can be quite sure, confident that when we are on a God ordained path, when it seems there is no way, that when we get to the obstacle in the way, it will somehow open for us as we advance. We may not know how. But ‘**One step at a time for me**’ should be our motto. **When we think about Gods faithfulness**, we ask ourselves would our God, command a path we couldn’t possibly walk, would He lead us into a *dead end*. *No He is Faithful and true*, His grace enables us to be mindful of His ways even if we can’t see how. He fills our hearts with trust and belief. Even if its difficult.

V5. I Will not fail you nor forsake you- *Joshua 1:5 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. I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee; I will not leave you destitute either of inward support, or of outward assistance.*

We too have this promise for us quoted in Hebrews - *‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’*

V6 Be strong and very courageous- Requires **Faith and Effort-** Be strong- (*to seize*). Strong getting hold of the task, let your mind be alert and watchful and determined. Some say all that is needed is faith, others say all that is needed is effort, but we need both. **Faith and effort** are not separate they are side by side. Faith and works. **Faith and effort are essential** to take the Land. Some complain that the church is always working always trying and expending effort. Well, we should be. Faith and effort go hand in hand; Faith in the Promise and effort, and also obedience. Joshua did not think -“These covenant engagements will surely be fulfilled, and I can sit still and do nothing.”

We would sin against The Lord, most ungratefully and detestably were we to say to ourselves, “God will not desert his people; therefore, let us go into sin and continue in sin.” And we are almost equally wicked if we whisper in our minds, “God will certainly fulfill his own plans and save who He has predestined to save, therefore, let us do nothing and not Preach and share and witness the glorious Gospel.”(it’s wrong to say, let’s just pray for revival but not preach) We are exhorted always be at work for Christ, since we are saved in order that we may serve him in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The promise to Moses {Deu 2:24} is repeated almost exactly in Jos 1:4. The boundaries of the land are given as from ‘the wilderness’ in the south to ‘this Lebanon’ in the north, and from the Euphrates in the east to the Mediterranean in the west. Huge and vast boundaries. **But these wide boundaries were not attained till late in the history**, when King David took them and then they were not kept very long. Did the promise, then, fail? No, for it, like all the promises, was **dependent on conditions, and Israel’s unfaithfulness cut short** its extent of territory. Faith Action and Obedience are all required.

We, too, fail to possess all the land, or promises destined for us. The promises are much wider and bigger than our actual wealth. God gives more than we take, and we are content to occupy just a little corner of the broad land which He has given us.

Faith has to have a focus. It’s got to be in something or its not present.... Faith in a promise of God. Faith in Gods integrity to keep His promises. In His Power to do it. If we say we have faith it must be in something specific. Not vague - Oh I have faith in God, no we have faith specifically in one of Gods Promise or in one of His attributes. Or I have faith in one of Gods commands. **We have faith in every pure word of God** *Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

V8. This book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth- teach these things Joshua. Instruct then people out of the Law of God. Make sure the Law is taught. Speak it constantly. Meditate therein. Study it with constant effort and consider what your duty is both privately and publicly. **OBSERVE TO DO.** Then your way will be prosperous- **There must be application-** what are we to do - it’s not enough to learn facts and theory and history. **We should always ask what’s our response and duty.** What wrong does it correct. Are there changes I need to make in

my life. Asking these questions helps us to be doers and not hearers only. **We also apply Gods word when we are low** and doubtful, attacked, exhausted, **we call to mind its comfort and help.** For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. God's word is so multifaceted that it meets all our needs through all our situations of life. It shall not fail. It changes not, it is settled forever in heaven. An anchor to our soul that holds steady in every storm. Hold fast yes but also remember you are His child and he holds even more fast. – little child walking with the mother crossing a dangerous road... the mother holds tightly and won't let go. He holds our hand and won't let us go. And in the storm we meditate upon His word, His promises, His covenant which He has made. Peace and encouragement floods our hearts. Where we are weak, we feel strength and hope returning. Oh, what life flows to us when we think on His word and His ways.

V9. Have not I commanded you- **Be strong and of good courage;** do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go."

'**Be strong.**' This being strong and having strength is a duty; it comes by application and doing and trusting and believing, and relying upon Gods word. The opposite of being strong is weakness and comes by neglecting Gods Word, neglecting the grace available, neglecting being nourished by all Gods means of Grace.

Then the amount of strength that we possess and wield is regulated by ourselves. We have our hands on the sluice gate. We may open it to let the whole full river run in, or we may close it till a mere trickle reaches us. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. **Let Christ's strength in.** Open the heart wide that it may come. **Keep yourself in continual touch with God,** the fountain of all power. **Trust relies upon Him -Trust is strength,** because trust looks to the great Power and strength of our Lord and savior. He is the **true bread** which came down from heaven; **the true rock whose streams flowed** in the wilderness; **the true tabernacle** "which the Lord pitched, and not man;" **the true mercy-seat.** Care for **our Soul,** but also care for **our bodily health,** Looking to the Lord, acknowledging Him, Fearing Him - *It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.* Oh evermore give us this bread, let us long for a fuller portion of this bread, let us eat this bread.

Courage that does not rest on Christ's presence, and Christs covenant is overconfidence rather than courage, and this kind of courage is sure to collapse. When we face the battle in our own strength we are unable to fight, we are un-equal

to the fight. But if we face the battle with the Lord, and in the Lord How strong we are. He is the mighty conqueror, our faith is in Him, the Lord our God is with us wherever we go.

V10-V11. Joshua commanded the people Look how sure he was - for within three days **you will cross over this Jordan**, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess. **He says this with such confidence and authority because God had said it.** He greatly honors the word of truth, the truth of God.

These orders, must have been given after the return of the spies that were sent. He gives directions to prepare supplies. Not to prepare boats to cross. Israel will be borne up on Eagles wings to Caanan. Joshua shows a remarkable degree of faith and courage to which he had just been exhorted.

The fast flowing Jordan, in full flood, is before him, and he has no boats, no bridge, no ferry like at Likoni, but he assures that vast host that they and their wives and children and flocks shall, within a few days, safely cross that angry torrent.

Yes Joshua had confidence and faith in Gods Authority. But He also did everything did His part. **V12** He reminded the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying,

v13 "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you. **V14** Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them. The land was to be taken by faith and effort, not in the simple exercise of divine power, as that which will take place at the end, but in the energy of the Spirit and in connection with the responsibility of man.

V16 The people responded positively with a willingness to follow Joshua's command. Oh may we respond positively and possess yet more of the promised land.

Have you considered this eternal inheritance a Canaan prepared by God for you, a final home. May all who have no promised land that they are marching to - May they place simple faith and trust in Christ Jesus our Joshua. Who says, John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

There is a promise of life... put your trust in Jesus Christ. Repent of your sins - alas none of them will be allowed to enter the promised land - you must be washed that heavy burden must be lifted.

You must receive pardon. You must become a new creation in Christ Jesus. You must be born again. You must turn- you must repent its crucial and you must believe the Gospel and you will enter this Canaan land and enjoy eternal life.