

STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

JOSHUA: INTRODUCTION



T. M. Moore

A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe

Strong and Courageous
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Joshua: Introduction

We begin our study of the book of Joshua by getting to know the main character and looking at the impact of his work on subsequent generations of the people of God.

The book of Joshua is in many ways like the book of Acts, introducing a new era in the history of God's covenant and show the enormous potential for blessing to those who follow God and keep His covenant.

Joshua succeeded Moses after 40 years of serving the lawgiver of Sinai. When Israel needed a leader to take her into the next stage of her covenant relationship with God, Joshua was the logical choice. He would not disappoint.

We're pleased to make this resource available for personal or group study at no charge, and we hope you will find this series helpful in realizing more of the presence, promise, and power of the Kingdom of God.

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1 Joshua: Son of Nun

Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed." Deuteronomy 31.7, 8

Reflect and discuss.

1. What was Moses' charge to Joshua? On what was that charge based? Faithfully carried out, what would that charge accomplish?
2. What's the difference between being afraid and being dismayed? Why must we overcome each of these in doing the Lord's work?

Think about it.

We begin our study of the book of Joshua by meeting him who is the central character of this story. For nearly forty years, Joshua served as an assistant to Moses (cf. Ex. 17.9-13; 24.13). He would have seen the glory of God many times over and would have understood well the challenges involved in leading the people of Israel into the land of promise. An entire generation grew up seeing Moses and Joshua together, and they would have recognized him as the logical successor to the lawgiver of Sinai.

Joshua seems to have had a bent for battle (Ex. 32.17), and thus he was the logical candidate for Moses to appoint in leading the people against the Amalekites in the wilderness (Ex. 17.9-13), and as part of the team sent to spy out the land of promise (Num. 13.8). His name originally was Hoshea, but Moses changed it to Joshua – "He delivers" (Num. 13.16). Moses seems to have understood that God had great plans for his young assistant.

It was probably no surprise when Moses appointed Joshua to lead the people across the Jordan in conquest of the land of Canaan (Deut. 31.1-8). Shortly before Moses' death, he charged Joshua and installed him as leader of Israel in the presence of the Lord in the tabernacle (Deut. 31.14-23). It was evident to all the people that Joshua was not only an effective military leader, but he "was full of the spirit of wisdom" as Moses had been (Deut. 34.9). They readily and wholeheartedly embraced him as the one to lead them into the land of promise (Deut. 34.9).

Joshua was a great man, but like all men, he was flawed. We'll try to learn from his example and his flaws how we should follow the Lord in realizing more of His promised deliverance. Joshua succeeded in the task to which he was appointed, and thus the people of God moved one step further along in their covenantal journey with the Lord.

But Joshua's greatest achievement was to point forward to a coming day when a greater Joshua would deliver all who believe in and follow Him into the eternal promises and rest of God, into the Kingdom and City to Come, where all the blessings promised to Abraham and typified in the land of promise would finally be realized (Heb. 4.1-10).

As we study the book of Joshua, we'll look forward to Jesus and the promises He delivers His people into in the new covenant.

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Meditate and discuss.

1. Moses changed Hoshea's name to Joshua. What significance should we attach to that? The book of Joshua is the first book in the Bible that carries the name of a main character. Why is this important?
2. In many ways, Joshua symbolizes Jesus and Jesus fulfills the promise of Joshua. Explain.
3. The story of Joshua is a continuation of God's covenant as given to Abraham and Moses. Which aspects of each of these periods – Abrahamic and Mosaic – should we expect to see continuing in Joshua?

“And the same [Moses] by divine inspiration foresaw the name Jesus very clearly and again also endowed this with special privilege. The name of Jesus, which had never been uttered among men before it was made known to Moses, Moses applied first to this one alone.” Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 AD)

Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You have set Your Name – Christian – on me. Help me to fulfill the promise of that Name by...

Pray Psalm 105.1-12.

Thank God for His covenant, judgments, faithfulness, promises, and power, as these were realized in Moses' and Joshua's day, and as you anticipate realizing them today.

Psalm 105.1-11 (*Warrington: Give to Our God Immortal Praise*)

Give thanks unto the Lord Most High; call on His Name, before Him cry!
Make known His deeds in every land; sing praise for all the works of His hand.

Glory in God, rejoice in heart, all you who seek His holy part.
Him and His strength and presence seek; His works proclaim, His judgments speak.

You holy children of Abraham, you chosen ones of Jacob, stand!
He is our Lord, of wondrous worth; His judgments are in all the earth.

He will His covenant faithfully guard – His oath, the promise of His Word.
That which He to our fathers swore, He will perform forevermore!

2 Joshua: Power and Promise

“If you should say in your heart, ‘These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?’— you shall not be afraid of them, but you shall remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt...” Deuteronomy 7.17, 18

“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God...” Deuteronomy 28.1, 2

Reflect and discuss.

1. As we come to the beginning of the book of Joshua, God instructs His people not to be afraid, but to *look back* and *remember* His mighty works in the past. Which mighty works? Is it important that our faith be grounded in such works as these? Explain.
2. At the same time, as we shall see, God commands His people to *look forward* and *long for* the precious and very great promises He holds out to them. Those promises are outlined in Genesis 12.1-3. Are these same promises ours as well? Explain.

Think about it.

Read Deuteronomy 7.17-24. As they waited on the plains of Moab, east of Canaan, the people of Israel knew that the task before them would be difficult. Many great nations inhabited the land of Canaan, and they were well trained in war and in defending their own lands. But Moses called them to set their doubts and fears into the larger framework of God’s power and redemption. They must remember all God had done for them, and go forward in faith, believing that God would do similar great works for them in dispossessing the nations of Canaan.

Read Deuteronomy 28.1-14. At the same time as God instructed His people to look back and remember His mighty works in the past, He pointed them forward, in practical and material terms, to the realization of His promised blessings, once they had accomplished their mission. The LORD their God would be with them in the land of promise, to sustain and bless them in line with the promises given to Abraham (Gen. 12.1-3).

Joshua would have taken these lessons to heart. As leader of God’s people, his faith and courage would have been bolstered and sustained by this “double look” – back to what God *had* done, and forward to what He *promised* to do. Each look requires faith. It takes faith to believe that God has really done the extraordinary works reported in Scripture. And it takes faith to believe that God will not fail in carrying out all His precious and very great promises.

Joshua would have to exemplify that faith, reminding the people of God and His works and calling them to struggle toward the promises yet to be realized. He was just the man to lead Israel into the next stage of their covenant relationship with God. Joshua embodied the work of God in the past, as he served with Moses to sustain Israel in the wilderness. And, as Israel’s new leader, he embodied the hopes of the future in his own name: “he delivers.”

In this, Joshua is like Jesus, Who accomplished God’s greatest work – redeeming His people and His world – and Who is the fullness of God’s promises, daily realized as we increase in Him, but only fully realized when we see Him face to face (2 Cor. 1.20; 3.12-18; 1 Jn. 3.1-3). And, like Joshua, Jesus’ names – Jesus and Immanuel – declare God’s work and promises in bringing the fullness of His covenant to those who believe (cf. Matt. 1.21-23).

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Meditate and discuss.

1. How does the idea of the “double look” apply to us as believers today?
2. Joshua is a *type* of Christ. A *type* is something that is real and has significance in its own place and time, but it also points beyond itself to something yet to come. In what ways is Joshua a *type* of Christ?
3. The land of promise (Deut. 28.1-14) is a *type* of God’s covenant, specifically, the New Covenant into which Jesus delivers all who believe in and follow Him. Explain.

The name of Jesus [Joshua] was a type. For this reason then, and because of the very name, the creation revered him. What then! Was no other person called Jesus [Joshua]? But this man was on this account so called as a type; for he used to be called Hoshea. Therefore the name was changed: for it was a prediction and a prophecy.” John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)

Lord, help me to contend each day by living in Your truth – all Your truth, including the Law and the prophets and...

Pray Psalm 105.42-45.

As you pray these words, recall as many of God’s precious and very great promises as you can, and thank Him for the ways He has fulfilled these promises for you in Jesus (Gen. 12.1-3; 2 Pet. 1.4).

Psalm 105.44, 45 (*Warrington: Give to Our God Immortal Praise*)

To them He granted the promised land, the portion of His gracious hand.
Though they were few, and wandered far, He kept them close within His heart.

So let us all in our Savior confide, and in His holy Law abide.
Let us observe His glorious Word, and praise our sovereign, faithful Lord!

3 Joshua in God's Covenant

*For He remembered His holy promise,
And Abraham His servant.
He brought out His people with joy,
His chosen ones with gladness.
He gave them the lands of the Gentiles,
And they inherited the labor of the nations,
That they might observe His statutes
And keep His laws.
Praise the LORD! Psalm 105:42-45*

Reflect and discuss.

1. God's covenant unfolds in stages throughout Scripture. Two of those stages are recalled in our verses for today. What are they? How do these covenant stages differ? How are they the same?
2. God blessed His people under Joshua by giving them the lands and wealth of the Canaanite nations. Why did He do that?

Think about it.

The Scriptures tell the story of God's plan to bring glory to Himself by saving and blessing a people of His own choosing. To accomplish this great plan, God entered into a covenant relationship with all creation, but especially with the people He had chosen to redeem, ultimately through the work of Jesus Christ.

In the Scriptures, this covenant unfolds in stages. Each stage features some different components, but each stage is identifiable as fitting within God's overarching covenant by the appearance of similar themes and motifs: God promises to bless His people, but they must obey Him (for He is all-wise and all-good), or they will come under His loving discipline.

It's important to understand the place, of whatever we're reading or studying in Scripture, within the covenant framework of God. Psalm 105 may have been written around the time of Joshua, since it ends abruptly with the people having inherited the lands of the Gentiles. Our verses indicate that, in bringing the people into the land, God was *looking back* to the promises He had made to Abraham (Gen. 12.1-3) and the law He had given to Moses, while at the same time He was *looking forward* to Israel's obedience in the land of promise, and beyond that, to God's promised rest under the new covenant and our Lord Jesus Christ.

God, of course, sees all of time, and everything in it, in one comprehensive glance. And all of time holds together and unfolds in stages within the framework of the covenant God has made with all creation, and especially with His chosen people.

The book of Joshua thus brings forward two periods of God's covenant-making with His people and shows us the unity of God's covenant throughout Scripture. First, God's covenant with Moses is mentioned. God brought His people into the land so that they would keep the Law He had given them, because that Law would be their very life (Lev. 18.1-5). Second, God gave them the lands of the Gentiles because this was part of what He had promised to Abraham (Gen. 12.1-3).

Joshua thus marks an important stage in the unfolding of God's covenant, for we can learn from this book the blessings and obligations of God's covenant as these develop through every stage of the unfolding of the

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covenant within the Word of God.

Meditate and discuss.

1. The Hebrew word *remember* means something like, “to attend to continuously.” God hadn’t forgotten His covenant with Abraham. Under Joshua, He was merely continuing to unfold it. Explain.
2. Verse 43 recalls Exodus 15. Why should God’s “chosen ones” rejoice with such gladness? How does their rejoicing instruct us?
3. God *chose* His people, *promised* to bless them, *saved* them from Egypt, and *gave* them His Law. Then, having *sustained* them through forty rebellious years in the wilderness, He *brought* them to the land where He *promised* to bless them abundantly (Deut. 28.1-14). What was the role of the Law of God in this? Was it to *save* Israel? Or was it to *bless* them whom He had already saved? Explain. What should we, who live within the framework of the new covenant, learn from this?

“From this heavenly treasury he gives rain to his earth ‘to bless all the works of your hands.’ The rain is this: ‘the utterance’ of the law, which falls like dew upon the soul that is fecund and fertile with good works, so that it may possess the moisture of grace.” Ambrose of Milan (333-397 AD)

Your grace has come to me, Lord, through the saving work of Jesus, and I thank You. But Your Law is also a means of grace to me, so that I might...

Pray Psalm 105.8-11, 26-45.

Meditate on as much as you know of God’s covenant – both its promises and commandments – from Adam to Jesus. Thank Him for *remembering* that precious covenant so that you could enter fully into it through Jesus.

Psalm 105.8-11, 26-45 (*Warrington: Give to Our God Immortal Praise*)

He will His covenant faithfully guard – His oath, the promise of His Word.

That which He to our fathers swore, He will perform forevermore!

He brought His people from Egypt alive, and made their joy and song revive.

He made the nations’ land their own, and all the wealth that they had known.

To them He granted the promised land, the portion of His gracious hand.

Though they were few, and wandered far, He kept them close within His heart.

So let us all in our Savior confide, and in His holy Law abide.

Let us observe His glorious Word, and praise our sovereign, faithful Lord!

4 Joshua: Motivating the Nation

*The LORD gave the word;
Great was the company of those who proclaimed it:
“Kings of armies flee, they flee,
And she who remains at home divides the spoil.
Though you lie down among the sheepfolds,
You will be like the wings of a dove covered with silver,
And her feathers with yellow gold.”
When the Almighty scattered kings in it,
It was white as snow in Zalmon. Psalm 68:11-14*

Reflect and discuss.

1. The greatest achievement of Israel in the Old Testament was building the temple of Solomon. Why was this so significant?
2. Solomon built the temple, but his father, David, made the necessary preparations. Explain.

Think about it.

David was facing the greatest challenge of his life. He had resolved to build a house for God, a dwelling place where God would meet with His people and receive their worship.

But God prevented David from carrying out the project, commanding instead that Solomon build His temple (1 Chron. 28:1-6). David knew that Solomon was “young and inexperienced” (1 Chron. 22:5) and that the materials and laborers required for building the temple would be more than he would be able to muster or manage. David needed to rally the people to the project, and enlist them in the work, in giving of their possessions to make the materials and furnishings for the temple. 2 Chronicles 22-29 provide the details of all the preparations David did, and how all the tribes and families of Israel contributed to the work.

Which begs the question: How did David do that? How was he able to get people from every part of Israel to take part in providing the resources which would be necessary for building the glorious temple for which God had given him the plans in writing (1 Chron. 28:19)? How did he inspire the whole nation to rally to this great work?

I think he wrote a song – Psalm 68 – to project a vision of the temple and its impact as the dwelling place of God. Copies were perhaps distributed throughout the land and sung in synagogues from Dan to Beersheba. Psalm 68 ends with the temple – yet only in prospect – as the centerpiece of divine worship. The people of Israel brought their gifts to God for this great work (v. 18). The nations brought their gifts and offerings as well, following the people of Israel as they entered in procession to worship Him (vv. 24-32). The end result was the nations of the world gave honor and glory and praise to God, Who is even more excellent than His glorious dwelling place (v. 35; cf. 1 Kings 10).

And this psalm, which rallied the nation to the most ambitious and significant project of Israel’s history, was based on Joshua’s conquest of the nations of Canaan (cf. vv. 11-23). As God had vanquished the nations by military might under Joshua, now He would subdue them by glory and splendor in the temple Solomon would build. David cast a vision for this project, and rallied the people to contribute liberally to it, by giving them a song to sing, recalling the work of Joshua and the generation that served with him.

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Meditate and discuss.

1. What do you find inspiring about the story of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua? Do you think that might have inspired the people of David's day? Why?
2. Does music have the power to cast vision and motivate people to action? Can you give an example?
3. The period of David and Solomon represents a further development of God's covenant with His people, in which God promised a King to sit on the throne of David forever. David shows us that this new stage in the development of God's covenant is a continuation of all its previous stages. Explain.

"As a man of blood, David was prevented from constructing it; he seems, at least, to have been occupied concerning the gathering of the material of the temple" Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)

Lord Jesus, You have commissioned us to build Your house by making disciples and...

Pray Psalm 68.24-35.

Praise God that He is building His Church even today, and rejoice in the vision of all nations flowing up to His house to worship and serve Him (cf. Mic. 4.1-8).

Psalm 68.26-35 (*O Store God: How Great Thou Art*)

Bless God in all His holy congregations,
Even the Lord, the Fountainhead of grace;
He calls His people forth from all the nations
And gathers them before His glorious face.

Refrain

Sing to the Lord, O kingdoms of the earth!
Ancient of Days – praise Him on high!
Behold He speaks; His Word is going forth;
Ancient of Days – praise Him on high!

To You, O God, are strength and exaltation,
You fill the skies and dwell in holy awe!
To us You give strength, pow'r and full salvation,
Blessed be Your Name, our strong, majestic God!

Refrain

5 Joshua, Renewal, and Hope

*“And they took strong cities and a rich land,
And possessed houses full of all goods,
Cisterns already dug, vineyards, olive groves,
And fruit trees in abundance.
So they ate and were filled and grew fat,
And delighted themselves in Your great goodness.”* Nehemiah 9.25

Reflect and discuss.

1. What were conditions like in Jerusalem in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah? Do you think the people might have considered that the task before them was impossible? Explain.
2. Surrounded by enemies and possessing only the barest minimum of resources, the people of Ezra’s and Nehemiah’s day rebuilt the city and the temple. Why? What was so important about this in the ongoing history of God’s people?

Think about it.

The people who returned to the land of promise under Ezra and Nehemiah were not the battle-ready multitudes Joshua commanded. Nor were they the prosperous and feared nation David and Solomon brought into being. They were a few thousand priests and farmers, dependents of the Persian king, opposed by fierce enemies, prone to compromise, infighting, and neglect of duty, and doubtful that they could succeed in their assigned task.

But they were led by men such as Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Zerubbabel, men who had no doubt about God’s call, no fear of God’s enemies, no hesitation in confronting and rallying the people to work, and no lack of strength to lead the people in reclaiming their covenant heritage.

As the temple and wall of Jerusalem came to completion, the leaders rallied their people to renewal and hope by placing their situation firmly within the heritage and legacy of men like Moses, Joshua, and David. As God had been good to His people in Joshua’s day, He would be good to them again. The leaders called the people to renew their covenant with the Lord, and they sang with thanksgiving on the walls of the city, facing the very temple which would one day welcome the “Desire of all nations” (Neh. 9.38; Hag. 2.6-9).

Anchored in the example and achievement of Joshua and the people of Israel, this humble band of devoted disciples completed their task, renewing their covenant with God and looking forward to the promised day when God’s covenant would embrace all nations, and God’s glory would cover the earth as the water covers the sea (Hab. 2.14).

As the story of Joshua motivated the nation under David, so it sustained and energized the returning exiles under Ezra and Nehemiah. We are called to a similar task today: build the Lord’s city (Matt. 16.18; Eph. 4.11-16) and raise up with His Spirit a glorious temple for all the nations (Eph. 2.19-22). Perhaps we can find in the example of Joshua and the people of Israel renewed hope and vigor for the work we’ve been given to do.

Meditate and discuss.

1. In what ways is the task to which we have been called like that of the people under Nehemiah and Ezra? How is it similar to the challenge facing Joshua and the people of Israel in his day?
2. The people under Joshua and the people under Ezra and Nehemiah had to overcome considerable

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challenges in fulfilling their calling. Such as? What challenges do you face in fulfilling your calling from the Lord?

3. We are the people – the Lord’s temple (1 Cor. 6.19, 20) – to whom “the Desire of all nations” has come. What do you hope to learn from Joshua, and the people who first subdued the land of promise, for gaining more of God’s promises in our day?

“It was said above that they were confessing their sins and the sins of their ancestors; here, when Ezra prays, it is shown more fully how this was done. But where he says at the end, ‘Because of all this, therefore, we ourselves are making a covenant and writing it down, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are signing it,’ and so on, it is shown more clearly with what gracious devotion all the various persons made a new assembly after the Feast of the Tabernacles, namely, so that after purging themselves with resolved purpose from the contagions of their wrongdoings, they might unite themselves to the divine covenant and confirm its terms by word and in writing.” The Venerable Bede (672-735 AD)

Thank You, Lord Jesus, Desire of all nations, for making me a chosen vessel for Your...

Pray Psalm 72.

Be sure to thank God for the many promises of blessing that accompany the coming of His Kingdom. Ask Him to show you how you might know more of those blessings, and be more of a blessing to the people around you today.

Psalm 72.1-8 (*Martyrdom: Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed*)

O give the King Your judgment, Lord, and righteousness Your Son;
And let Him judge by Your good Word the need of every one.

Let now the mountains ring with peace, the hills in righteousness.
Let justice rise, oppression cease, and all the needy bless.

Let nations fear You while the sun and moon endure on high;
Refresh, renew us, every one, like sweet rain falling from the sky.

Let righteousness abundant be where Jesus’ reign endures;
Let peace increase from sea to sea ‘til moonlight shall be no more.

6 Joshua and Acts

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant... Joshua 1.1

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach... Acts 1.1

Reflect and discuss.

1. How does the book of Joshua relate to the promises God made to Abraham? To the Law He gave through Moses?
2. How does the book of Acts relate to the promises God made through Jesus? To the Law Jesus fulfilled and commanded us to keep (Matt. 5.17-19)?

Think about it.

In many ways, the book of Acts seems to have been arranged to mirror the book of Joshua. Acts relates the continuing work of Jesus as He, by His Spirit, led His people into the promises of God – much as Joshua relates the work of God as He, through Joshua, led Israel into the promised land of Canaan.

Acts and Joshua begin with God speaking to the main character(s) about what to expect and what they must do (cf. Josh. 1.1-9, Acts 1.1-8).

In each, a period of intense preparation of the people and leaders serves to focus and ready everyone for what God was about to do (cf. Josh. 1-5 with Acts 1.9-26).

In each book, a dramatic work of God, issuing in a major initial victory, launches the people into His promises, and into the further work of laying hold on more of His promises (Josh. 3, 4, 6; Acts 2).

Early and dramatic victories encourage the people of God and cause their enemies to go on the alert (Josh. 7 and 9, Acts 3 and 4).

Early setbacks and mistakes seem to threaten the success of the project in each case, but the people look to the Lord and are delivered (Josh. 7 and 9, Acts 4-6).

The conquest of Canaan unfolded in a series of strategic campaigns against different sectors of the land. In the book of Acts, the Gospel spread according to the Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and uttermost parts strategy articulated by the Lord Himself (Acts 1.8).

The emphasis in Joshua is on how he and all Israel labored to gain the promised land; in Acts we see all believers actively involved in spreading the Good News (cf. Acts 4.23-31; 8.1-4; 19.1-10).

Each book concludes with the work of gaining the promises unfinished, thus looking forward to a further work of God on behalf of His people.

Thus, if only indirectly, the New Testament points us back to the book of Joshua and encourages us to find instruction for our calling to seek the Kingdom, righteousness, glory, and promises of God. In each book, God is the primary Actor, Who accomplishes His promised work through His chosen covenant people. The main difference for those of us living in the continuing story of the book of Acts, however, is that the New

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Testament Joshua – our Lord Jesus Christ – has brought us the final and complete rest that the Old Testament Joshua and Israel tasted, but failed to achieve (Heb. 4.1-16).

Meditate and discuss.

1. What makes the book of Joshua so important for us as we work to fulfill our calling as witnesses for Christ (Acts 1.8)? Do you think it is merely chance that Acts has so many parallels with Joshua? Explain.
2. The book of Joshua concludes with more work to be done, thus pointing forward to the rest of the Old Testament and the coming of the Messiah. The book of Acts concludes with more work yet to be done. To what does it point us?
3. What goals will you set for our study of the book of Joshua? What do you hope to learn that will help you in laying hold on the promises of God and fulfilling your calling as His witness?

“What is the special excellence of Joshua? His generalship, and the distribution of the inheritance, and the taking possession of the Holy Land.” Gregory Nazianzus (329-389 AD)

Pray Psalm 44.1-8.

Can you see how these verses link our calling as witnesses to the work of Joshua? Spend some time in silence over these verses, responding to the Lord as He leads, teaches, and prompts.

Psalm 44.1-8, 23-26 (*Faithfulness: Great is Thy Faithfulness*)

O God our ears have heard, ancients have taught us,
All that You did for them long years ago,
How by Your hand You defeated the nations,
And to the promised land let Israel go.

Refrain vs. 23-26

Rise up, awake, O Lord! Hide not Your face from us,
See our affliction, our suffering and pain!
See how our soul is sunk down with oppression;
Rise up and help and redeem us we pray!

Not by their sword did they drive out the nations;
Not by their arm did they settle the land.
Your saving mercy and light triumphed for them:
Victories for us, our King, please now command.

Refrain

Through You shall we all our enemies vanquish;
Them will we trample in Your mighty Name.
We will not trust in our strength or our wisdom;
Jesus will save us; we'll boast of His fame!

Refrain

7 Joshua: Overview

Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel beeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. Deuteronomy 34.9

Reflect and discuss.

1. Review [each of the studies](#) in this introduction to the book of Joshua. Why is this an important book for Christians?
2. How will you know when the message of Joshua is having God's desired effect in your life? What will be the evidence indicating that you have learned what God wants you to learn from Joshua?

Think about it.

Our study of the book of Joshua will follow a five-part outline:

1. Preparation 1-5: This section includes God's commission to Joshua, Joshua's instructions to the leaders of Israel, the sending of spies to Jericho, the crossing of the Jordan and the placing of memorial stones, and the circumcising of the second generation of males. The Preparation concludes with Joshua's dramatic encounter with the Commander of the army of the LORD in chapter 5.
2. Initial Victories and Setbacks 6-10:27: The purpose of this section is to show us how Joshua and the people of Israel learned to trust in God and not in their own best ideas. Following an overwhelming victory against the city of Jericho, a setback occurs before Ai is conquered, and then another setback comes when Israel's leaders fail to recognize the ruse of the Gibeonites. The high point of this section is the renewal of God's covenant that occurs in 9.30-35.
3. Campaigns and Conquests 10.28-12: The writer summarizes the conquest of the land, showing how Joshua "and all Israel with him" (a refrain repeated for emphasis) overcame the people of the land, first in the south, the mountains, and the lowlands, then in the north. The section ends with a recap of the conquests of Moses and Joshua.
4. Division of the Land 13-21: After a beginning reminder that the work was not quite finished, this section records the dividing of the land for the various tribes. The purpose is to outline the fulfillment of God's promises, just as He had spoken through Abraham and Moses.
5. Settlement 22-24: The concluding section sees the tribes beginning to settle in their appointed sections of the land and Joshua charging them not to become complacent but to finish their God-appointed task. The covenant between God and His people is renewed at Shechem just prior to Joshua's death at the age of 110.

Meditate and discuss.

1. The longest single section of Joshua is the first one, when God and Joshua are preparing the people for the conquest of the land. How should this counsel us about the importance of daily preparation for serving the Lord? Of what should that preparation consist?
2. Early setbacks and failures serve as a portent for the book of Joshua as a whole. It will end with the work not quite finished, and with no one in place to lead the people into the next phase. What setbacks and failures can keep us from fulfilling our calling to lay hold on the promises of God? How can we overcome these?
3. How can Christians encourage one another in the ongoing struggle to gain the promises of God?

*Strong and Courageous
Joshua: Introduction*

“It is written, ‘Now Joshua, the son of Nun, was filled with the Spirit of wisdom, since Moses had laid his hands upon him.’ Note the same ceremonial everywhere, both in the Old and the New Testament. In Moses’ day the Spirit was given by the imposition of hands; and Peter imparted the Spirit by the imposition of hands. Upon you also, who are to be baptized, the grace will come.” Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386 AD)

Lord, You hold out Your precious and very great promises to me every day, and every day I...

Pray Psalm 105.1-12.

Commit your study of Joshua to the Lord. Tell Him what you hope to learn. Ask His help in teaching you and leading you deeper into His promises and love, and in equipping you for your daily walk and work.

Psalm 105.1-11 (*Warrington: Give to Our God Immortal Praise*)

Give thanks unto the Lord Most High; call on His Name, before Him cry!
Make known His deeds in every land; sing praise for all the works of His hand.

Glory in God, rejoice in heart, all you who seek His holy part.
Him and His strength and presence seek; His works proclaim, His judgments speak.

You holy children of Abraham, you chosen ones of Jacob, stand!
He is our Lord, of wondrous worth; His judgments are in all the earth.

He will His covenant faithfully guard – His oath, the promise of His Word.
That which He to our fathers swore, He will perform forevermore!

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Questions for reflection or discussion

1. What has been your acquaintance with the book of Joshua to this point? What makes Joshua an important book? What have you learned from Joshua in the past?
2. The book of Joshua is about laying hold on the promises of God. Which promises?
3. The promises of God are fully realized in Jesus (cf. 2 Cor. 1.20; 2 Pet. 1.4). Should we expect the book of Joshua to teach us anything about our relationship with Jesus? Explain.
4. What goals have you set for this study? What do you hope to learn? How will you know when you are learning what God has for you in the book of Joshua?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from this introduction to the book of Joshua? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

For prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.