

Joshua 07-02-02b

Let's pick up our study now in the book of Joshua. We have tried to take a little bit different approach in our introduction by looking primarily at the significance of this book for the church age believer. And that is, I think, an interesting aspect and is going to be an interesting aspect for us because these are the overcomers.

Symbolically speaking, metaphorically speaking, typologically speaking, these are the ones who fulfill the potential and seize and lay hold of the inheritance by faith, by patience, by obedience. That's the picture in the Old Testament that serves us in the New. So, when we study this book, this is the manual for the overcomer.

This is how to do it right. And I'm kind of glad to be skipping the numbers in Deuteronomy, this is how to do it wrong phase, and just move straight to the good stuff. And Joshua is going to be a very uplifting and exciting book.

It's one of the high points of the Old Testament because this is one of the few times where you find the people of God doing it right. It's not without its bumps and momentary failures. We're going to see some failures, but the progress is onward and upward.

At the beginning of the book, they're not in the land. At the end of the book, they have largely conquered the land. They have substantially fulfilled the charge that God gave to Moses to go in and drive out these godless, pagan, idol-worshipping, child-sacrificing, immoral, ungodly people, and replace them with the people of God.

And it is ruthless, and it is judgmental, and it's great. And that's what we're going to get to see in this book. It is the victory of the people of God.

There's nothing wrong with celebrating the victory of the people of God over the nefarious purveyors of evil and darkness. We all cheer when the guys in the white hats shoot all of the guys in the black hats. I saw The Professionals the other night, just a little bit of it.

I was studying away, and I looked up, and here was this, it had Lee Marvin and a couple of other guys in it, but it was one of those good guys shoot up the bad guys. Jack Palance was the bad guy, sort of. Anyway, it was one of those white hat, black hat, old-fashioned westerns where people are tempted to be bad, but the good guys in it being good.

The bad guys in it getting their comeuppance, and all is well that ends well. And that's the great thing about the book of Joshua. That's how this is going to be for us.

And it has the additional bonus of being more or less directly applicable to us. This is what we are supposed to do. Do not harden your hearts.

Don't drop in the wilderness. Don't get distracted by the Meribah. Enter into God's rest.

We cease from our own works, and we enter into the works of God. And what does that mean? What does the author of Hebrews mean in chapter 3 and chapter 4? This book is going to show us how it's done. Without further ado, if we go to the book of Joshua, and we have seen the lead up to this in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses is dead.

He dies at the end of Deuteronomy, and he's going to die a couple more times in the first few verses of Joshua. The book opens with death. And this book is going to end in death.

Why? Because this is the shadow. The shadows are the temporary forms. And they die.

You don't get eternal life out of the Old Testament. It comes in the New. The law came by Moses.

Grace and truth come by Jesus Christ. Joshua 1.1 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, saying, Moses, my servant, is dead. Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, the children of Israel.

Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given you, as I said to Moses, from the wilderness and this Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the great sea toward the going down of the sun. What sea is that? Mediterranean Sea. All the way to the Mediterranean coast, all the way to the Euphrates.

Now, when's the last time you saw the borders of Israel extend all the way to the Euphrates? Where is the Euphrates River today? What country? And what's on the other side? Yeah. So, all of these speculators and schemers and threateners and nuclear and terrorist thinkers, who's going to end up with that ground? It's not going to be the Iraqis, and it's not going to be the Iranians. Do you ever wonder why we don't call them the Iranis, or the Iraqians? Iran and Iraq are very similar words, but they parse out differently.

Neither one of them are going to get that land. God has already given it to Israel. The Iraqis are trespassing on Israelite soil.

They are living on a borrowed, illegitimate lease. That land has been promised by God to Israel. And woe unto those who are sitting on it, because the time is coming when God is going to make good.

He is going to turn them out, and put His own people in. Every place the sole of your foot will tread upon. And this is an important statement.

It isn't everything that your eye looks upon. Go back to Genesis 3. He will bruise your

head. You will bruise His heel.

Why is it that the serpent is going to bruise the heel of the seed of the woman? Because the seed of the woman is going to tread him into the dust. And all he is going to be able to do is bite the heel. And this is what you find in the New Testament.

Reiterated. You will tread upon them. You will tread down your enemies.

From the wilderness all the way to the great sea shall be your territory. Verse 5. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Now, the you there in verse 5 is singular.

We saw the you when God was talking to Moses, and He said, You did not hallow me in the midst of the Israelites. You disobeyed in the midst of the Israelites. But here, God speaks to Joshua, and He says, No one will be able to resist you personally.

Literally, He says, A man will not stand before you, Joshua. No one can stand. What a great promise from God.

Nobody is going to be able to stop you. No one is going to be able to stand in front of you and prevent you from going forward. You remember, Balaam and his donkey, the angel of the Lord stood in the path and can't pass.

Turn to one side, turn to the other. Nobody is going to be able to stand in front of Joshua. When Joshua decides to go, God says, Nobody can stop you.

All the days of your life, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not abandon you. I will not leave you alone.

Be strong and brave. You must lead these people in the conquest of this land that I solemnly promised their ancestors I would hand over to them. Literally, you will cause these people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.

You think about the Lord Jesus who is going to bear this very same name. No one is going to stop the Lord Jesus from accomplishing deliverance. No one is going to stop Him from dividing the inheritance.

Remember in Romans 8, for whom He foreknew those He predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son so that His Son could be the firstborn among many brethren. Divide the spoils. Share the inheritance.

To this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand.

Do not turn from it to the left so that you may prosper wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate in it day and night. How many times in the Gospels do you see the Lord Jesus out in the middle of the night meditating on the Word, praying to His Father.

And prayer is, of course, a cycling through, an application of the Word of God that we know. It's not just a string of wishes. It is the application.

Effective prayer is bringing before God a biblical argument. That's what prayer is. Bring God a biblical argument.

That's what He's waiting for. Show me that you know My Word. Show me that you know how to make a request that is grounded in doctrines and principles and promises.

That's why Jesus said, when you go to My Father, when you know My Word and keep it, you can ask what you will and it will be done for you. Why? Because your requests will be rooted and grounded in the Word of God and you will know how to ask in such a way that God can grant that request and answer that prayer. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate in it day and night.

Now, we always talk about you observe what is in the current passage in its context. You do eisegagos. You do exegesis.

You make sure you understand the original intent and the original meaning of a passage. Then, from that, you arrive at an interpretation. What are the timeless truths and the timeless principles and the application that transcends that initial, immediate moment? And then, from those timeless truths, what is the application now? We ask ourselves the question, so what? How should I live? Why should I live any differently in the light of this passage? So, look at this.

There is victory available. God is not telling Joshua, you can't cross the river. God is not telling Joshua, climb the mountain and look across, but you haven't hallowed Me and you haven't obeyed Me, so you're not going in.

Just the opposite. Now is the appointed hour. Now is the day of deliverance.

Now we're going to go in and seize and lay hold and we're going to get the fulfillment of God's promises. What is the means? What is the means for Joshua to never have an enemy stand before him all the days of his life? What is the means for Joshua to lead the people and divide the spoil? What is the means? This is a timeless truth. It does not change.

The Word of God does not depart from where? Don't let the Word of this Law depart from your book. Don't let it depart from your notes. Don't let it depart from the margin of your Bible.

Don't let it depart from your mouth. Why the mouth? Why doesn't He say don't let it depart from your heart? What is Joshua's role for the people of Israel? He is the commander. He has been the commander of the army.

Now he's the commander of the entire nation. And what is his job? He tells them what to do, when to do it, where to do it, how to do it. He is God's spokesman.

Remember when God told Moses, I'll send you Aaron. You say your slow speech and have a slow tongue. I'll send you Aaron and he'll be your mouth.

I will give him to you for a mouth. And he can speak well. As it turns out, Moses didn't need him after all.

You don't see Aaron saying boo to anybody. Moses does all the talking. But God talks about what the mouth does.

Somebody's got to be the communicator. We have the opportunity to communicate the truth of God. And it should not depart from our mouth.

What comes out of our mouth? What kind of communication characterizes us? I always think of this. I've done, as you know, several funerals. And when somebody's corpse is laying in the coffin there and you're standing up saying pretty much the final words that are going to be dedicated for that person in terms of a large group gathering, what is the summation of someone's, in some cases, decades on this earth? What do you say? What is remembered? What is the impact and the lasting memory that prevails and goes forward after that person can no longer make any more memories? Wouldn't it be great if we were notable for, if we were remembered for, if the impression that was left by us in the souls of people who knew us was that person was the embodiment of the Word of God.

Their life was lived in the light of the Word of God. You could tell they were a Christian and it made a difference. Wouldn't that be a wonderful testimony to leave behind? The light of God's glory shined through that person and their life and their decisions all the time I knew them.

Be strong. Be courageous. Now we think, well, but I'm not strong by nature.

I'm not courageous by nature. I'm like the cowardly lion. I wish I only had a heart or a brain.

I forget which thing the lion didn't have. It didn't have any courage, whatever it was. But God does not command us to do a thing or to have a thing that we're incapable of doing.

You can't walk up to somebody and say, fall in love with me. You can't charge up to someone who's in despair and say, be happy. You can't sing the little tune, don't worry,

be happy.

And they just say, oh, okay. And the light of happiness suddenly shines. There are certain things that you cannot command.

If God gives us a command, it's doable, right? God doesn't give a command that you cannot fulfill. If God says, be strong, guess what? Whether you think it or not, you can be strong. If God says, be courageous, that is a decision and a policy that you can implement and you can follow as a believer.

Be strong. Be very courageous. God's going to say this to Joshua more than once, isn't he? And you get the idea that Joshua has been operating for years.

How many years in the shadow of Moses? Forty years. For forty years, he's been drafting comfortably behind Moses. Moses has been leading the way.

Moses has been the point man. Moses has been in the hot seat. Moses has been waving the staff.

Moses has been the object of everyone's complaint and everyone's attention. Now Moses is dead. And God says, Joshua, you've got to step up.

You have to be strong. You have to be courageous. You can't just get sucked in behind the giant 18-wheeler of Moses' courage and Moses' strength.

That truck has pulled off. Now you're making your own way. Be strong and courageous so that you may observe to do the law.

The law that Moses communicated. God gave the law to Moses. Moses brought it down.

And Joshua heard it from that communicator. And he says, you've got to be strong and courageous so that you can apply it. So that you can obey it.

So that you can fulfill it. Now, what does this tell us? What is the application? It is a choice that we make. It's not a happenstance.

It's not an accident. It isn't something that someone else does for us. We choose to apply the word of God.

We have to be strong. We have to have some fortitude. What is courage? Does courage mean that you're not afraid? Most men who have done some sort of a courageous act and they interview them later or they write about it later and someone says, where do you get that courage? Where do you get that ability to function in these dire, dangerous, threatening circumstances? Weren't you afraid? You seem so courageous.

And the person says, I was scared to death. I was not fearless. I was fearful.

What's the difference between someone of courage and someone who lacks courage? It isn't whether or not they're afraid. It's your response and your reaction under that pressure. What do you do when you're afraid? I had a memory verse when I was a little boy that said, what time I am afraid, how does the rest of it go? I will fall apart.

What time I am afraid, I will fall on my face and fail. What time I am afraid, I will run in the opposite direction. What time I am afraid, I will head for the center of the crowd and hope I'll be lost in anonymity.

The Bible says, what time I am afraid, I will trust. When fear comes, we have a choice. When threatening circumstances, when discomfort, when challenge, when testing comes, we have a choice.

God's command is, when the choice comes, be strong. When the choice comes, be courageous. When the choice comes, He doesn't say that you're going to have to wait for a supernatural lightning bolt to strike.

This is an imperative. Observe to do the law. Men who are courageous under fire, remember their orders.

Somebody said, take the hill, but there's a hail of machine gun bullets coming from the hill. The order is, take the hill. You're afraid, you think you might die, you're probably going to die, other people around you are dying, but men of courage, men who win the silver star and the medal of honor, go and do what they have been tasked to do.

They do their duty. They go above and beyond the call of duty, even though they're afraid, even though they are threatened. That's what courage is.

Be strong. Be courageous. Do according to the law.

Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left. Don't modify it. Don't water it down.

Don't amalgamate it with something else. Don't reformulate it. Don't throw it in the blender and make some kind of a weird concoction out of it.

Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left. What the Word of God says, that's what you do. And you will prosper wherever you go.

No man will stand before you. No one can stop you if you're obedient. This is a principle of the Word of God.

It is timeless. It applies just as much to you and to me as it does to Joshua. If we are obedient, if we are strong and courageous, because we know who God is and we know what He has promised and we avail ourselves of His grace and His resources, nothing can stand in our way.

Who is under the curse? Cursed is the man who does what? Trusts in man. Cursed is the man who makes flesh his strength. It's not just any old kind of strength.

It's not just any old kind of courage. Do according to the law. Do according to the Word of God.

Now you're on solid ground. Now God will be with you and you will prosper wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth.

If it's not going to depart from Joshua's mouth, if he's going to speak it and implement it in all of his commands to the people, what does that presuppose? If I am going to give a lesson on the book of Joshua, what do I have to do before I begin? I have to hopefully have already studied and prepared and learned it. It has to be in my soul before I can speak. You cannot stand up and give a lecture or a speech or any other kind of presentation if you don't know what you're talking.

Well, you can, but you're going to make an idiot of yourself. You're going to make an embarrassment of yourself if you stand up to speak about something and you know nothing about it. In order for the law to not depart from Joshua's mouth, he has to know it.

He has to remember it. It has to be fresh in his mind. It has to be ready so that he can speak it.

You shall, in order for that to take place, meditate in it day and night so that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. Then you will make your way prosperous. Who decides if your way is going to be prosperous or not? Remember what is said in Hebrews? God has already ordained these wonderful things.

It's already done. The rest exists. The covenant blessings and promises are there.

You will make your way prosperous. You make your own way by being obedient, by being knowledgeable, by being strong and being courageous. And you will have good success.

Now, if I were to go to some big auditorium full of people, thousands of people like you see on TV, and I would say, hands up, everybody who doesn't want to be prosperous, everybody who doesn't want to have good success, everybody who doesn't want to be strong and doesn't want to be courageous, doesn't want to conquer the challenges that face them, want people to stand up in front of you and just divert you and distract you, everybody that's for that, raise your hand. Well, unless someone is insane, they're not going to raise their hand for failure and defeat and sorrow. Well, here is a clear, unmistakable formula for success.

Do you want a successful life? Do you want a prosperous life? Do you want a life that

God blesses, that God is pleased with, that God approves of, that accomplishes God's purpose, that not only reflects His glory, but allows you to seize and lay hold of His promise, be strong, be courageous, keep His word on your lips, keep His word in your heart, meditate in it day and night, then you will make your way prosperous and you will have good success. It just doesn't get any clearer than this, anywhere in the Word of God. Jesus is going to tell His disciples the very same thing in the Gospel of John.

Look at verse 9. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you, whithersoever thou goest, as it's said in the Old King James. Why should I fear what man can do unto me if the Lord your God is present? The Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

If God be for us, who can be against us? If it is God's plan and program, if God says be strong and of good courage, if we're meditating in His word, if we're being obedient and being faithful, that is success. That is happiness. That is entering into His rest.

It's kind of an irony, isn't it? It's almost an oxymoron that Joshua and the people are going in with swords at the ready and the author of Hebrews says this is entering into rest. On to the conflict, soldiers for the right. We're going to go attack Jericho and Ai and all these other cities.

We're going to go burn them to the ground. We're going to slay this, that and the other. We're going to drive out all of these ites out of the land.

And yet the Bible says in so doing you're entering into God's rest. You're seizing and laying hold. And the great thing is when you think of it in terms of the church age and this being a picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ, the New Testament Yeshua does for us and leading us into that place of victory, it is a battle and it is a rest and a conquest.

It's both at the same time. We thrive on opposition. We build muscle when we push against weight.

We build up cardiovascular strength when we struggle to run a little further and a little faster and a little harder. It is in conflict that we improve. It is against resistance that we build and grow.

Our human body tells us that. Bone growth is stimulated by stress. People who never walk, their limbs atrophy.

If you get crippled up, even for a few weeks, you find that your body starts to wither and atrophy. Just the daily exercise of moving your own weight around and for some of us that's more exercise than for others. I find my scale slowly creeping up about five pounds per five years or so.

It's hard to believe that I was my same height and weighed 135 pounds when I went to

college. I don't weigh 135 pounds anymore. But the exercise that we get just from our daily movement keeps our muscles toned, keeps our bodies ready for action.

And ceasing that activity, part of the problem with obesity in the United States as an endemic problem is we have become so sedentary. We have machines that chop our grass and wash our clothes. I'm all in favor of technology and machines doing things.

But you have to then take steps to make sure that you still get the kind of exercise that our body is designed for. Spiritually, it's the same thing. Even when we rest, isn't it great at the end of the day if you have done something where you exerted yourself.

You went out and did the lawn or you cleaned the house from top to bottom or you washed the car or you did whatever you did and you got out and stirred around. And then in the evening, your rest is pleasant and you have a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment and your rest is sweet when you know you have worked hard and you have successfully accomplished your goals and you just feel great. That's the way we are built, spiritually as well as physically.

So, do not be afraid, do not be dismayed. The Lord your God is with you wherever you go. So, what is Joshua's response? Joshua does an about face and he commands the officers and the people saying pass through the camp and command the people saying.

Now, before we get any further, structure and authority is a biblical concept. God could have parted the skies and stuck his face through and spoken to all the assembled people of Israel directly. But he didn't.

Who did he speak to? Joshua. Joshua is the commission leader. God issues the command to Joshua.

Joshua turns around and issues it to the officers of the people. The officers of the people are going to about face and address the people. There is a chain of command.

It is God ordained. Authority structure is God ordained. People who buck authority, people who try to function without authority, you see companies that try to level everything and oh, the president and CEO are going to take off their tie and wear polo shirts and hobnob and have a picnic and throw frisbees and just be one of the guys and we're going to just kind of all be level and we're going to wear inline skates to work and we're going to throw frisbees and nerf footballs and we're just all kind of one big creative team.

This stuff doesn't last. You try to find the companies that project that sort of corporate image, they're gone. Every company I've ever seen try that has either gone under or they've gone back and put on their ties, put away their skates and gone back to a structure because that's the way it works.

That's the way God set up life. The family has an authority structure. Business, agriculture, civilization has an authority structure.

Take away the structure, it will collapse. Families will collapse. By the way, if you want to know one of the least employed arguments against homosexual marriage, think about the authority argument.

Who's the authority? What is the authority model for a homosexual home? There isn't one. Who's the designated head guy? Well, we're going to take turns. It's not biblical.

For about six reasons I can think of off the top of my head and if I think very long I can think of a lot more. There is a model. God has designated, in the same way that he designated the Levites to be a spiritual authority in Israel, for no good reason.

It's not like when I say no good reason, not based on what the Levites were. They weren't smarter. They weren't more spiritual.

They weren't better at slaughtering sacrifices. They weren't better at cleaning up cow manure. If you think about it, all that processing of animals and rams and stuff, a lot of those Levites were cleanup detail, like those guys in the parade right after the horses go by.

Somebody's got to keep that stuff clean. It's a holy precinct. You can't have cow piles all over the precincts of the tabernacle.

And there were Levites that did nothing but run around with a little shovel and keep that area clean. Well, are they better at that than other people? Are they better at slashing arteries and cooking meat and cleaning brass implements and so on? No. Why do they have that authority? Why do they have that responsibility and the privilege that goes along with it? For no other reason than God said it.

God designated it and said, you are the guys, and these other people aren't. And the sons of Aaron are going to be the priests, and the other Levites are not. Nothing qualitatively better about the sons of Aaron.

Some of them are real scalawags. But God designated it, and that's the way it is. When it comes to a household, the man is the head of the house.

Not because he's smarter. Not because he's superior. Because God says so.

It's authority. Joshua is in charge of Israel because God says so. The officers of the people are in command and are elders because God says so.

It is an authority structure. It is a patriarchal structure. It is a man-staffed structure.

There aren't any women who are officers of the people. Joshua is not a woman. Moses

was not a woman.

None of the prophets in Israel when Israel was obedient were women. The only time you find women in any position of authority is when people are apostates and God calls their attention to their apostasy by saying, essentially, the Marines are looking for a few good men. Well, God can't find any good men.

Then he has to raise up a Deborah to shame the men of Israel. Look at Barak. What a wimp.

And it's a shame to Israel that Deborah had to be raised up. Bless Deborah. She's a wonderful woman.

But if she had her brother, she never would have been a prophet in Israel because it spoke of the depths to which the nation had sunk that God couldn't find a man to serve. So, pass through the camp and command the people. There is an authority structure in life.

Whatever that authority is, we have a responsibility as believers. This is part of the Word of God that we are to meditate in day and night. It is part of the truth that ought to be on our lips.

And when it comes time to vote for somebody to be in authority in our government, think about the Scriptures. Think about God's design. I don't care how nice they are.

I don't care what their record is or how attractive they look on posters. There is a design that God has ordained. And that's the way it is.

Prepare provisions for yourselves is the command. Prepare provisions for yourselves. God makes provision in the grand sense.

There is food and water available. But God does not drip water into each tent in Israel. He doesn't drop cooked pieces of meat and baked loaves of bread into each tent in Israel.

Angels don't come and hand the people their packs. Do they? You prepare provisions for yourselves. This is a reminder to us as believers that the Word of God is available but we have to take it and make a meal out of it for ourselves.

We have to pack it for travel ourselves. We have to go and get it and make it useful for our purposes ourselves. You can't sit around and wait for a word.

You can't sit around and wait for God to speak a word over your life. You prepare provisions for yourselves. 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.

As ever, you find that three day interval. It's so interesting to think about the other three day intervals. What is the interval between the fulfillment of the law on the cross, the perfect sacrifice, the fulfillment of all of those Old Testament shadows and the first fruits of the new age and the new order.

It's three days. When the Lord Jesus Christ is raised from the dead, Paul says that's what makes our faith worthwhile. If Christ is not raised, you're dead in your sins and your faith is in vain and we are of all men most miserable.

But Christ is risen. That is the basis for our victory. That is the basis for our advance.

That's the basis for the fulfillment of God's promises to us. 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. Now, this is the same kind of thing.

God is giving them the land but what do they have to do to receive it? They've got to go in and swing some swords and hurl some rocks and kill some people and burn some stuff. God is giving it to them in the same way that he gives them their provisions. It's available.

Go get it. It's available. Make it happen.

Now, here's what's interesting. Verse 12 To the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua spoke, saying, Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, The Lord your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land? Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. Now this harks back if you're familiar with the events.

These people, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassehites, were big-time cattle grazers, cowboys. And they loved the lush grazing lands on the east side of the Jordan. And when they got there, they said, This is good enough for us.

We like this here. And Moses said, Okay. On one condition.

When the rest of your brothers, when the other nine and a half tribes get ready to go into the land, you've got to supply militia. You've got to supply fighters who are going to go across the Jordan and help drive out and conquer the current ingrate inhabitants of the land. You can't just sit over here grazing and let your brothers go fight the battle.

If you want to live on this side of the Jordan, fine, but you've still got to fight the battles that belong to the other side. And they agreed. So Joshua reminds them of this.

Your wives, your little ones, your livestock can stay here, but you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them until the Lord has given

your brethren rest as he gave you. And they also have taken possession of the land which the Lord your God is giving to them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it which Moses the Lord's servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise.

Now this is a real interesting circumstance. Why are there two and a half tribes who stay on, as it were, the wrong side of the Jordan, on the sunrise side? They of course agree in verse 16, all that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go, just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you, only the Lord your God be with you as he was with Moses. Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words in all that you command him shall be put to death.

Only be strong and of good courage. These are the eastern side of the Jordan people telling Joshua, be strong, God be with you, and we'll put to death anybody who doesn't obey your command. But you've got to be strong and of good courage.

And you get the idea that Joshua looked like he might need a little bucking up, and understandably it's a formidable task. Well, what's going on with these two and a half tribes? And what is the situation as we enter chapter two and see the whole episode with Rahab and the spies? That's where we'll pick up next time and we'll see if we can grasp the significance of which side of the Jordan you end up on. But let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth contained in this great book. Thank you for the illumination that it sheds on our lives as church-age believers, body and bride of Christ. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will give us perception and understanding and the insight to be able to apply these truths to our lives.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.