



# LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

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Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

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## FOUR-STEP METHOD

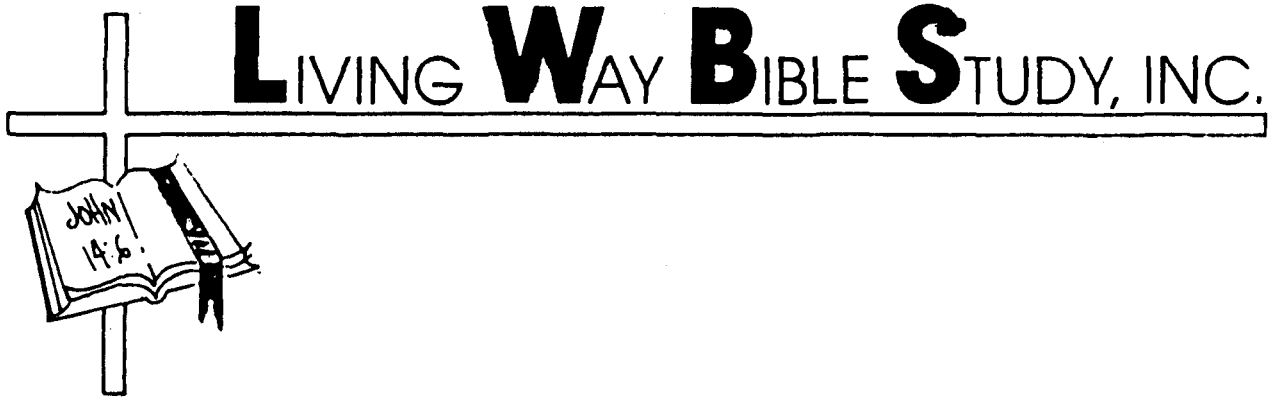
Living Way Bible Study suggests this four-step method:

1. PERSONAL - The student prays for guidance from the Holy Spirit and answers the Personal Application questions at home using only the Bible (no commentaries).
2. SMALL GROUPS – The class meets for an opening and divides into small groups of 8–10 people. The Small Group Leader guides the group through the P.A. questions encouraging each to share their answers and add discussion.
3. THE MESSAGE – The lecture or message is given by a Pastor or lay person who has researched the material and presents the study giving personal experiences and complimenting, but not merely duplicating, the author's comments.
4. THE NARRATIVE – The author's comments or narrative, along with the P.A. questions for the next lesson, are given out at the door as the student leaves the class. At the next class meeting, before answering the P.A. questions, the Small Groups review the author's comments of the last lesson, and share what each has high-lighted as meaningful or important.

The first meeting of the class is an introduction to the study. Since the members of the small groups have no PERSONAL APPLICATION questions to discuss at the first meeting, they may use the time to get acquainted or to tell what they hope to receive by studying this course. At the first meeting the Lecturer presents background information about the course using the INTRODUCTION lesson as a guide.

Each lesson should be stapled together using the number of the lesson in the right hand corner of the page. To keep the lessons in order check the Bible text listed at the top of each page. The PERSONAL APPLICATION questions are attached to the author's narrative and will be the home study for the next class session.

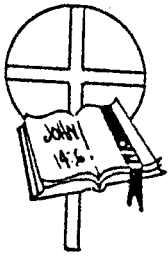
With this 4-step method the student has the opportunity to study the particular section of Scripture covered by this lesson from four different approaches. This emphasizes the Bible text and gives the student a feeling of understanding and ownership for each section studied.



**Rev, Martin E. Mayer - author of LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY courses on:**

**THE BOOK OF GENESIS  
GREAT PEOPLE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT  
EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS**

- son of Rev. Martin E Mayer, past President of the Nebraska District
- graduated from Concordia Seminary, in St. Louis in 1936
- served congregations in Ft. Lupton, Grand Junction and Denver, Colorado, and, in Wausau, Wisconsin, Minneapolis, Minnesota and Layton, Utah
- in his retirement he was assistant at Concordia Lutheran Church in Cerritos, California
- for many years he has been the radio speaker on the Tuesday Southern California Lutheran Program.
- called to glory on 6-80-08 at the age of 96 years



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

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THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Martin E. Mayer

Introduction - The Book Itself

We are going to study a book in which the author himself is a very fascinating person, but which also contains some tremendously interesting events from which we will be able to draw some valuable lessons. For many years I desired to make a careful study of this book, and then I had the opportunity to preach a complete series of radio sermons on the Book of Joshua.

The Book of Joshua follows immediately after the cherished Five Books of Moses, which for the Children of Israel had tremendous importance. Moses had described the manner in which their nation had developed. However, under the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Children of Israel were a nomad people with no permanent land-possession. They merely had the promises of God that He would give them such a land.

Then came that terrible interruption when the great famine occurred and as a result these people were compelled to move down to Egypt under the sponsorship of Joseph. Gradually the Children of Israel became totally enslaved. It was after four hundred years that Moses arrived to lead them out of that slavery and back to the land that the Lord had originally promised to give them. But because of the rebelliousness of the people another forty years had to pass before God's promise could come to pass. In the meantime Moses died, and Joshua assumed the command of the Israelites. It was Joshua who led them into the Land of Promise and helped them to establish themselves as a nation.

It is obvious why this Book is very important to these people. Knowing the attitude that the Jewish people had for their land, you can appreciate why they had such a high regard for Joshua, who was an outstanding man of God, a demonstration of supreme nobleness.

The Man Joshua

We have no information regarding his birth, except that he came from the tribe of Ephraim, and thus was a descendant of the devout man of God, Joseph. The name of his father was Nun. The name might as well have been NONE because we know absolutely nothing of him and his name would never have been recorded if it had not been for his illustrious son.

Joshua was among those who had come out of the Egyptian slavery, and so knew well the almighty power of God which, through the activity of Moses, brought the Children of Israel out of Egypt. It was this experience, no doubt, which influenced Joshua to a strong faith in God and a deep loyalty to Moses. In his

role as leader of the Israelites, Joshua went through a variety of experiences, all of which helped him to develop into a giant among God's people.

We first hear of Joshua when Moses decided to send a spy from each of the twelve tribes into the land of Canaan, to learn about the land. Moses wanted to fill his people with enthusiasm for the land that God had promised to give them. Joshua saw it was going to be a difficult task for his people to conquer this land, yet he had enough faith in his God to know it could be accomplished. He said so publicly to the chagrin of the other spies, except for his good friend, Caleb, who agreed with him.

After the report of the spies, Moses realized his people were going to have a difficult time with the various nations in their path. He selected Joshua to organize and train an army from this former slave people. Joshua showed real ability in doing this and was successful in a number of campaigns. But the Children of Israel were not a military people, and so the services of Joshua became useful to Moses in yet another capacity. Moses used him frequently as a type of prime minister. All of this was, of course, excellent training for Joshua for the role he would later have to assume.

It was only natural when Moses ascended Mount Sinai to confer with the Lord after the giving of the Ten Commandments, that he would take Joshua with him. How far Joshua went and what role he played at this time we are not told. But by now we begin to see that the Lord appreciated this man and that He was preparing him for a major role in the future history of His chosen people. Our study of this book will show us what a remarkable man he really was.

It is generally thought that Joshua was eighty-five years old when he succeeded Moses, and that it took him six years to subdue the land of Canaan. He then ruled over these people for a number of years as he organized and established them into a united nation. It was at the age of 110 that Joshua died and was buried in the land of his own tribe, Ephraim. His epitaph might well read: GREAT WARRIOR, DISCIPLINED LEADER, MAN OF PRAYER WHO TRUSTED IN GOD.

#### Joshua and His Relationship with God

We dare not lose sight of the fact that in his development for leadership Joshua was very intent on having a strong relationship with God. Recall that as the Children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, the Lord had given them the instructions in the building of a movable tabernacle which they could take with them on their journeys. It was, of course, too small for the entire congregation to enter for worship. So the people would stand around it while Moses and his leaders would go in and receive messages from God, which they would submit to the people.

We are told that when Moses left the tabernacle to attend his other duties, Joshua remained behind to continue his communication with God. Surely we have learned that if we are going to be strong and successful in the Lord we are not only going to need God's help but His continual guidance. This can come to us only as we regularly meditate upon His Word and seek His aid in our prayers.

As a person lives in this close communion with God, the Lord reaches out to him with the promises of blessing. Joshua, you can be sure, sensed that he was living under God's blessing. It gave him the courage and the willingness to proceed in the great task the Lord had placed before him, when He gave the command to cross the Jordan River and to go in and possess the land.

#### The Significance of the Book for us

By now our appetite for the study of The Book of Joshua should have been whetted. It is apparent that there will be many things that we can learn from Joshua, for in leading these people Joshua was in many ways a prototype of our precious Savior Jesus Christ. This is indicated already in his name, for the name Joshua in Greek is the same as the name Jesus. Joshua led his people into the earthly land of promise, the land of Canaan. Jesus will lead us into the heavenly land of promise, the new Jerusalem, which is the Father's house.

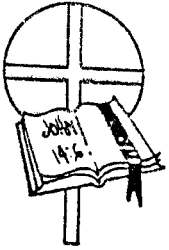
As we approach this Book we could almost say to ourselves, we ought to take off our shoes, for we are standing on holy ground. In this Book we are dealing not merely with the events of history, but with a major part of the great plan that God had for the salvation of the world. Jesus spoke of that plan in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." For God's plan of salvation to come to pass, it was necessary that the Children of Israel be a united nation that prospered in their own land. This Book tells us how this came about, and so plays a major role in the story of the accomplishment of the salvation for all mankind, when God's Son died on the shameful Cross of Calvary with the sins of the world resting upon Him. What happened in the Book was a major step in bringing about this great salvation.

Joshua was very intent on keeping His people close to God, and so in this Book we will find that he initiated a number of traditions which were very helpful in reminding the people of the great things God had done for them. We will be most pleased when we come to the end of the Book and we hear the words that this aged leader of God's people has to say to his people and also to us in our day. What characterized this man? What characterizes any true child of God? Listen to this aged saint: "Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God!" (Joshua 23:11). Love - that was it. He loved the Lord with all his heart, and so he had to reach out to his dear people with that love too. Again, what an inspiration this man will be for us! What a ring of godly nobleness will come through to us!

What gave this ancient man of God this kind of strength, for it was indeed an impossible task that was assigned to him? Joshua was to lead this non-military people, who had been slaves, and conquer a land where the people had been engaged in warfare for generations, and were trained in all the martial arts. What gave him this kind of strength? It was just as it had been in the case of Moses, Abraham, Noah, and those who lived before him. They had fully accepted the great truth of God's plan to send a Savior into the world who would make it possible for their people to find forgiveness for their sins and thus have a good relationship with God. This is the secret of godly nobleness. It rests in Jesus - the love that Jesus has for us - and the love which we have for Him.

Godly nobleness! Surely we need it too! And we want it! It is not ours by nature, but by the power of the Holy Spirit we can have it. We know that this is possible, for we see it in the dedicated people of God who give unselfishly of themselves and of their material wealth so that others may be benefited. We see this in the faith-filled people who go out to speak to those who do not know Jesus. We see this nobleness in young people who are determined to walk the ways of the Lord even though many go in other directions.

We become most impatient with those who are always throwing stones at the church and religion, because a few people do not live up to the precepts of their faith and a few churches and pastors go off the deep end and completely lose sight of their mission in the world. But this should not become a condemnation of all churches and of all religion. Think of what our country would be if it were not for the Christian influence which has generally guided our decisions. What would happen to the world if the many, many good people did not take seriously the words of Jesus that we must show love to each other? The wonderful things that happen in our nation, and there are so many which are never mentioned in our news media, are proof that divine blessing does indeed rest upon godly nobleness. Because God's love is shown around the world, people are still dedicated to the Lord and are seeking a good relationship with Him. May this study strengthen us in this purpose!



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Please read carefully Joshua 1:1-9 and pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to understand what is revealed to you.

Joshua 1:1-3

1. After reading the notes, explain: (a.) Your feeling about the man Joshua, (b.) Why you think the study is important, (c.) The characteristic of Joshua you would like to claim for yourself. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. As the book begins, what traumatic event happened that would effect the Children of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What description is given of Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_  
What does the word "minister" mean here? \_\_\_\_\_  
How could this word be used in describing the relationship of a pastor to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the very first command that the Lord gives to Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Which little phrase in verse 2 shows us the enormity of the task God has given to Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What prospect does God hold out to Joshua and the Children of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Note that God speaks of this as being already an accomplished fact. How can we apply this and be absolutely sure of our eternal salvation? (John 6:47, Ephesians 1:3-6) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Joshua 1:4-7

8. With the help of a map and verse 4, describe the boundaries of the land that God had promised to His people. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. It would be a land of mountains and valleys. How did the twelve spies that Moses sent out describe this land? (Numbers 13:27) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Examine the personal promise God made to Joshua in verse 5. List the assurances you find in this promise. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Recall some of the things God did for Moses to show that He was with him:

- Exodus 14:16 \_\_\_\_\_
- Exodus 15:23-25 \_\_\_\_\_
- Exodus 17:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_
- Exodus 19:20 \_\_\_\_\_
- Deuteronomy 34:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

12. State the Lord's words of encouragement to Joshua in verse 6 and tell what great task Joshua would have to perform for the people? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. What was to be Joshua's guide in all he did? \_\_\_\_\_  
How carefully was Joshua to follow this guide? \_\_\_\_\_

What promise would such obedience bring? \_\_\_\_\_

Joshua 1:8-9

14. Give one word from verse 8 that describes what Joshua was to do? \_\_\_\_\_

15. How frequently was Joshua to do this? \_\_\_\_\_

16. What does the word "meditate" mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

17. In what way could you improve your personal life in this connection? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

18. How do the words of the Lord in verse 9 effect you personally? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

19. In what words did David express this thought for us in Psalm 27:1? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

20. What does Paul exhort us to do in Ephesians 6:10-11? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

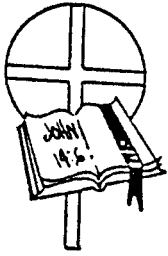
21. How do you suppose Joshua felt after he received this assignment from the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

22. Tell how this lesson has touched your life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Martin E. Mayer

As our Lord Jesus was about to ascend into Heaven He gave His Great Commission to the New Testament Church, saying, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (RSV). It is on the basis of this commission that the Church of Jesus Christ has gone forth through the ages to build His kingdom here on earth, which eventually will be fully translated into Heaven.

At the onset of the Book of Joshua we have the Great Commission that God gave His people in the Old Testament. We refer particularly to verse 2: "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." While this commission appears to be much more materialistic than the commission which Jesus gave to His disciples, yet really it isn't at all. In order to accomplish God's great plan of bringing salvation from sin to the whole world it was necessary for His chosen people to be an established nation. This nation must be unified until the moment when "the fullness of the time was come" and "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," as Paul wrote to the Galatians (4:4).

As we look at the opening verse of this book it appears that the underlying theme is STRENGTH IN THE LORD.

Joshua is Appointed to Succeed Moses - Joshua 1:1-4

The very first word in the book is the word "now." This word is the link between what has been written in the Books of Moses and what is going to be written in this book. As the people became convinced that the five books of Moses were the Word of God, this word "now" lets them know that so are the words that are written in this Book of Joshua. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The death of Moses was, of course, a traumatic experience for the Children of Israel, for he had been their leader for so many years, and they had come to depend entirely upon him. This was a time when their faith in God was really being tested. Yet we know from Holy Scriptures, and also from the example of Christian experience, that the death of a great spiritual leader does not hinder the work of the Lord from continuing. We think, for example of the premature death of Dr. Martin Luther. The work of the Reformation went on even though Luther was no longer there to lead it.

We must also note that, at the death of Moses, Joshua did not push himself into a position of leadership, but, as we read, he waited until the Lord spoke to him. It was because of this call from the Lord that Joshua, at the very onset, was assured that the Lord would be with him to strengthen him for the task which lay before him.

The appointed time had now come when, according to God's eternal decree, the children of Israel were ready to enter the land God had promised them. They had wandered in the wilderness for forty years because they had rebelled against the Lord and had refused to place their reliance in Him. Now every single adult who had thus stood in rebellion against the Lord was dead, except for Joshua and Caleb who had voiced their complete trust in the Lord.

Moses had exerted a great effort in leading these rebellious people, and had really laid the foundation for a great nation to develop under the direction of God. However, this was only preliminary to the real task that Joshua was to undertake; to occupy and conquer the land which the Lord had chosen for His people. But let us note that this Great Commission to take the land was not only given to Joshua, but to all of the people.

It is still true today. While the Lord does provide leaders for His people in the church, such as pastors and teachers, He surely does not intend that only they should build His kingdom. No, all of the people of God are to be a part of this great venture. Every man, woman, and child is to help in establishing the kingdom by witnessing to the Lord Jesus Christ and telling what He has done for the salvation of the world.

Observe also from verse 2 that the land that the Children of Israel were to possess was a gift from God. We surely are tempted to say that these people, with their constant complaining and their frequent rebellion against the Lord, certainly did not deserve that the Lord give them a land flowing with milk and honey. Yet this land was purely a gift God gave them.

What shall we say of ourselves? We hope to cross the Jordan River of death sometime and to possess the land that is our eternal inheritance in Heaven. Have we deserved it? With our sins and our lapses of faith, do we have a right to say, "God owes it to me?" Of course not! Our eternal salvation is entirely a gift of God's grace. It is possible only because of God's Son, our Savior Jesus, who went to the cross in our place, and also rose again so that He might give us the promise, "Because I live, you shall live also."

Even though this land was to be a gift of God to these people, the Lord did not simply allow them to cross the Jordan river and take possession without any effort on their part. They were going to have to fight battles and then repair the destruction those battles caused.

Our faith, too, must be obedient. It is faith in Jesus and His work that saves us, but that faith needs to be exercised. After the Holy Spirit has worked faith in us to receive the Lord Jesus, we must show forth the fruits of faith. The Holy Scripture is constantly emphasizing that we must live our faith. Abraham did acts of dedication, but it was his faith that was counted to him

for righteousness. Now the Children of Israel must go forward in faith leaning on the strength of the Lord. So also we must go forward in faith, believing the promise of Jesus, "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Verse 3 makes us aware of yet another truth. The success of Israel was to be progressive. As they marched through the land, every place that the soles of their feet tread upon would be given to them. It was to be a progressive victory over all of their enemies. By now we have discovered that our victory over our many spiritual enemies is also a progressive one as we gradually grow daily in grace through our relationship with our wonderful Lord and Savior. That is why the quality of patience is very important to us, and why we must persevere in prayer. We need to remember the words of St. Paul, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12).

Observe in verse 4 how carefully the Lord had plotted the land that was to be His peoples' land. It was a vast land with every possible resource they would need. Surely, as we read this verse, we cannot but think of how wonderfully God has also planned the land which He has promised to give us in eternity. We are reminded of the words of Jesus, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; so that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:2-3).

#### God Promises to Assist Joshua and His People - Joshua 1:5-9

Verse 5 brings us a wonderful promise that God made to His people, "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." It appears that God addresses these words to Joshua, but He does it in the hearing of all the people. So it's a promise that applies to all of God's chosen people. Already at the very onset Joshua and the people knew that they would succeed, because the Lord would give them the victory. This is a most important realization for us. No matter what the struggles in our lives today may be, we already know that we too shall succeed. At the end all our enemies will be vanquished, and we will march victoriously into the halls of Heaven to stand before our Lord and Savior.

In verse 6 and 7 we have God's injunction to the people, and again especially to Joshua, "Be strong and of good courage, for unto this people shall thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and courageous." Joshua and his people must act. God's promises do not set aside His precepts. The plans that God made for His children, He expects them to carry out.

As God's children, who have by faith found forgiveness for our sins in Jesus and have the hope of Heaven because of our Savior, we still must carry out the responsibilities the Lord has given us. God has a plan for the salvation of the whole world, and it is His intention that He will use us to help bring that plan to fruition. What is more, we have His promise that we shall succeed. But we must move in and conquer the land. It will not be ours simply by sitting at home and praying.

We are here to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. We are to light the way for others by word and deed. Our religion is not an "arm-chair" religion permitting us to sit on the sidelines and applaud those who are waging the battle in the arena. No, each one of us is a warrior for the Lord in our small area of activity.

In verse 8 the Lord tells Joshua and his people what the source of their strength would be. They were to be guided by the Word of God which was the Book of the Law, written by Moses under the inspiration of God. They were not to let the Book of the Law depart from them, but were to meditate on it day and night.

For these people it was indeed a great battle; for us the battle is even greater. They needed courage to wage their warfare, we need it even more. Only God could give them courage, and only He can give it to us. He always provides courage by the power of the Holy Spirit as His people meditate upon His Word. It was for that reason that He also preserved the Book of Joshua for us.

Even though Joshua was very close to the Lord, and the Lord was constantly in some way communicating with him, yet he was not given any indulgence when it came to the use of the Word of God. It was only as he meditated upon that Word day and night, that the Lord assured him that he would be prosperous and have good success. We see again, while the world may change, our God is completely unchangeable in all His ways.

As Joshua was given the command to obey "all the law" or God's Word, so are we. As children we may have indeed received a solid instruction in the Word from our parents, and our pastor, but that does not remove the need for us to continue to meditate upon His Word day and night, and to accept what it says as a guide for our life. The Lord wants more than an-hour-a-week-on-Sunday-morning-Christian. Only as we follow the Lord's injunction will we come to understand what it means that we are saved alone by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. As we walk this path, guided by the Word of God, we can be assured that we will prosper in the way that God intends.

In the final verse the Lord calls to Joshua three times to tell him to be courageous, not because He thought that Joshua was a timid man for his previous record had shown that he was indeed a man of courage and valor. But even a man like Joshua could easily become discouraged when the task proved to be very difficult. So the Lord wanted Joshua to know that even as He gave him the command to be courageous, He was going to provide that courage for Joshua. God's plan for His people would be carried out.

### Conclusion

What then can we say to you? A life of faith, which strives to do the will of God calls for a stout heart which will not be daunted by difficulties. God is there to provide the necessary strength for us, and so He wants us to "be strong and of good courage." You shall succeed with God's blessing.



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Review:

1. What was the Great Commission that God gave His people at the time of Joshua? (1:2-6) \_\_\_\_\_

2. According to your notes, what is meant by an "obedience of faith?" \_\_\_\_\_

3. What knowledge should have been a great incentive to the Children of Israel as they began their huge task? \_\_\_\_\_

Read verses 10-18 with great care and pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to understand what the Lord is saying to you in these verses.

Joshua 1:10-11

4. Having heard the task that God had assigned to His people, what action does Joshua take at once? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How does Joshua show that this is not going to be a one-man operation? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What was the first thing that needed to be taken care of in preparation for the undertaking? \_\_\_\_\_

7. We know that the Jordan River at this time was at flood-stage, yet what assurance does Joshua give his people? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the journey upon which all Christians find themselves? (Philippians 3:20, NIV) \_\_\_\_\_

9. We also need provisions of nourishment for this journey. What are they? (Matthew 4:4) \_\_\_\_\_

10. How can we also apply the assurance that Joshua gives his people to ourselves? (John 3:36) \_\_\_\_\_

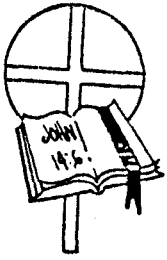
11. Note that God did not hand this land to the people on a silver platter. What did they need to do? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Heaven is assured for us, but what does the Lord want us to do? (John 9:4) \_\_\_\_\_

Joshua 1:12-18

13. To whom in particular did Joshua address himself and why was this necessary? (Deuteronomy 3:12-18) \_\_\_\_\_

14. Whom does Joshua quote and how does he describe him? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. If we would, today, honor the Lord, what must we do? (John 8:31) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. What temptation might there have been for the people of these tribes? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. List the incentives mentioned that would assure their return back to the land on this side of the Jordan. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. How are the warriors of these tribes described and how long were they to stay on the other side of the Jordan? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
19. What was the response of faith on the part of these people? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
20. What does the word "commitment" mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
21. Mention some ways in your personal spiritual life where you might increase your commitment. \_\_\_\_\_  
Mention some things that can be a hindrance to commitment. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
22. How can you apply the first phrase in verse 17 to your life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
23. Rather than to sit on the sidelines and pass judgment upon what our pastor is doing, what are some helpful things we might be doing? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
24. How did the men of these tribes say they would treat those who rebelled against Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
25. What words of encouragement did they give Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
26. Give your opinion on the manner in which Joshua prepared his people. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Martin E. Mayer

Introduction

The Twenty-Third Psalm according to the Living Bible reads like this: "Because the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need! He lets me rest in the meadow grass and leads me beside the quiet streams. He restores my failing health. He helps me do what honors Him most. Even when walking through the dark valley of death I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me, guarding, guiding all the way. You provide delicious food for me in the presence of my enemies. You have welcomed me as your guest; blessings overflow! Your goodness and unfailing kindness shall be with me all my life, and afterwards I will live with you forever in your home." It is a bit different, but it reads very well. It also sets the mood for the lesson before us.

Joshua at Once Implements God's Command - Joshua 1:10-11

We now know the Great Commission God gave Joshua and his people as they were standing on the banks of the Jordan River ready to enter the land God had promised them. Behind everything recorded in our lesson today is the theme: The Response of Faith. How do we deal with the injunctions God gives to us?

Joshua heard the Great Commission, "Arise, go over this Jordan River thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give them." Note that Joshua did not immediately call a conference of all the leaders to sit down and discuss exactly what the Lord meant and how best to go about doing what the Lord had ordered them to do. Often such conferences actually hinder and interfere so that the work of the Lord does not get done. Do we have so many conferences and meetings that we do not have time for doing the actual work?

Verse 10 begins by telling us, "Then Joshua commanded." He gave the order to proceed with the task that God had given them, and to do it at once. There was no vacillation on his part. He may have halted for a moment in order to consider the size of the task that lay before him and his people. Joshua had a grasp on what it meant by, "Strike while the iron is hot." The fact was, that, having heard the word of the Lord, the people were ready, they were excited, they were inspired, and it was time to move.

How often do we have a feeling deep within us that there is something we know the Lord wants us to do, but we delay as we say, "I have to think about it." Such delay, most often, results in non-performance. Weak faith on our part may cause us to say, "I am willing to do whatever the Lord wants me to do" and then delay in doing what we know is the Lord's will.

Just think of what could happen in the church today if each person would

recognize his duty, and start to act at once. We can be sure that there would be a revolution in the church, yes, in the world. The fact is that our readiness to act, or our tardiness in acting, reflects the true nature of our heart. That is quite an indictment, but we surely need to take it seriously.

How different it is when it comes to praying! We have a need, and we know that we have the instruction to bring that need to the Lord, for He says, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Psalm 50:51). In our time of stress we say, "Lord help me speedily!" We want no delay on the part of God, and we are disappointed if there is not a swift answer. But, if we are so slow to God's call to duty, what right do we have to expect an immediate response from Him to our call for help? It may well be that God has to delay His answer in order to teach us to be more ready in our response of faith to Him.

Joshua directed his command to the officers of the people. He was not officious in doing that, but clearly showed them that he was acting by the direct command of the Lord. He was very specific. God had commanded him, and he was commanding them, and they, in turn, would command the people. By now we know that the Children of Israel were a mighty host and a chain of command was necessary.

Here again we can learn something that is very essential to the work of the church today. Our pastor is well within his rights when he tells us the commandments of the Lord and **expects** our response of faith. In many instances, the Lord opens a vision to him of what He wants to see done in His Kingdom today, and it is the right and the duty of the pastor to bring this to his people, and to expect them to act. This writer knows from his own experience that it works just that way. The people did not see the need to act, but, because the pastor is so close to the situation, he sees the need. He should go without hesitancy to the people and tell them what needs to be done. Usually the people will respond in faith, and God will bless them for it.

To make this very clear, consider as an example the fact that the Lord has given each of us the definite command to witness to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Surely a pastor must bring this command to the congregation. He is certainly within his right to command them to do it, and to tell them that they have no choice in this matter. The pastor is not the pope, that is true, but he also is not a figure-head. He should not beg the people for a response, but should tell them the need and expect they will respond in faith, because they are people who love the Lord, and know how much the Lord loves them. When this happens it creates a joyful atmosphere.

We now need to look at the command Joshua gave his officers (verse 11); "Pass through the host, and command the people saying, prepare your victuals." It was a big journey and a huge undertaking that was ahead of them. It would take them over many miles and through very rugged country. In a short while the manna which fell from heaven each day would cease. They had to make provisions for this journey. They needed an adequate supply of victuals or food.

The spiritual application of this command should be obvious to us. We also

have a big journey ahead of us, the journey through this life on our way to heaven, and we need victuals for that journey. A christian poet reminds us, "And nightly pitch my moving tent a day's march nearer home." God has provided the victuals but we must prepare them. That really is the whole purpose for which the Lord has established His church, that it may be the kitchen where the victuals are prepared for His people.

The church is to see that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed, so that all the world may know that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." The church is there to teach little children, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." But the church is also to bring to the adults the promise of Jesus, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." And again, "Because I live, you shall live also."

The responsibility of the church is also to offer baptism to all who would receive it, and to administer it according to the instructions which the Lord Jesus Himself gave. She is also to see to it that the Lord's Supper is provided for all who seek the assurance of forgiveness of their sins and who are eager for the strength of faith they will receive as they partake of the true body and blood of the Lord.

Perhaps if you had been there that day on the over-flowing banks of the Jordan River, you might have expected a command like this, "Prepare some boats, because we have to cross over these flood waters." Joshua had given the command that in three days they would cross the river, and they knew the flood waters would not recede by then. There was no bridge on which to cross. This was the time when the faith of these people was to assert itself. They were to remember that there had been no bridge at the Red Sea either. No thought was given as to how they would get across the Jordan River, but they were to prepare for the journey that was beyond the river. "Prepare your victuals!" You see, the Lord wanted them to trust Him implicitly.

The command of Joshua continues, "Go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it." It was the land of Canaan, yes, the land of which they had been dreaming all these years, and now they could view across the flooded Jordan the land that God had promised them. Our Canaan today may be more the dream of a home than of a land, for we love to speak about the "Father's house." It is our Canaan because it has been purchased for us by Christ with His holy precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

God had promised this land to His people ever since Abraham first set foot upon it, and now He was going to fulfill this promise. They would go in and possess the land. Similarly God has promised us, "He that believeth in the Son...hath life," and that promise, too, will be fulfilled. Jesus tells us "In my Father's house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you...and I will come again and receive you unto myself, so that where I am you may be also" (John 14:3).

But God was not handing this promised land to His people on a silver platter. They were going to have to exert a strenuous effort in order to possess

the land, as we shall see from our study of this Book of Joshua. It is also evident to us, as it was to the people of that day, that God was going to make it possible for the promise to be fulfilled.

Once again all this applies so beautifully to us. The end of our journey, our goal of heaven, is assured. We know that Christ purchased it for us and the Holy Spirit opened our hearts to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We know that when the time comes, we will pass over the Jordan of death into our promised inheritance in heaven. But on the way, we, as children of God, are going to have to exert the effort of Christian dedication. This is not to assure ourselves of the final victory, for that already has been gained for us by Jesus, but to prove and strengthen our faith in Jesus, and to be of assistance to others that they, too, may find faith in the Savior. We already have the victory given us by our wonderful God!

#### Joshua Seeks Support - Joshua 1:12-18

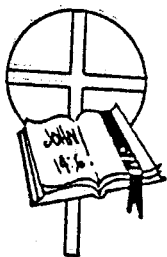
The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh had already claimed their portion of land on the side of the Jordan River on which the Children of Israel now stood. They might well have turned their backs on the rest of the people and said, "We have ours, you see to yours!" But Joshua wanted to make sure they would not do that. He reminded them that they were also a part of the chosen people of God; they were a part of God's whole plan for the salvation of the world. So Joshua reminded them that they had promised to give their support until the final victory and the land had been procured. He did not plead with them, nor did he appeal to them in behalf of the others as a matter of fairness. No, he said very plainly, remember what the Lord told you through Moses.

What a lesson that is for us! If we today would honor our God, then we must honor His Word by doing what it tells us to do. This truth is certainly brought home to us as we read that very lengthy Psalm 119. In verse 97 we read: "O how I love thy law; it is my meditation all the day."

We have the response of faith on the part of these tribes beginning at verse 16. They gave their commitment. Joshua had reminded them of their duty by saying, "Until the Lord giveth your brethren rest." Joshua was showing his unwavering faith in their success in the effort to conquer the land for the Lord.

It was through that expression of faith on the part of Joshua that the men of these tribes were now inspired by the same Lord graciously to incline their heart to a full cooperation with Joshua and the other tribes. "All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go." What a commitment! Are we committed - committed to the Lord and His cause?

At the conclusion of this lesson these people say to Joshua, "Only be thou strong and of good courage!" Thus they assured Joshua that they would do nothing that would weaken his hands, but would do all they could to bring about the success of the venture in which he was leading them. Surely this must be the attitude of all Christians toward those who lead them as the ministers of God. By word and response they should be saying, "Only be thou strong and of good courage, for we are behind you."



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY  
PERSONAL APPLICATION

Review:

1. What did you read in your notes that particularly impressed you about Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the act of commitment on the part of the three tribes? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Define what is meant by a response of faith. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Prayerfully read the verses covered in these questions and seek guidance for your understanding from the Holy Spirit.

Joshua 2:1-3

4. What precedent did Joshua have for sending spies into Jericho? (Numbers 13:1-2) \_\_\_\_\_
5. From past experience what kind of men do you suppose Joshua chose as his spies? (Numbers 14:6-9) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How is Rahab described? \_\_\_\_\_
7. The presence of the spies was not a secret. Who even knew about them? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How was this whole incident a test of faith for:  
The spies? \_\_\_\_\_  
Rahab? \_\_\_\_\_

Joshua 2:4-11

9. Explain why it was right for Rahab to defy her government. (Acts 5:29) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What is actually written about Rahab in Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25-26? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Turn to Romans 13 and observe some basic principles:
  - a. Who establishes the government? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. What actually is an act of resistance to the government? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. What is the injunction in verse 5? \_\_\_\_\_
12. List some points the Bible tells us about lies: Ephesians 4:15 & 25 and James 3:14. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. What did Rahab show about her faith in telling the lie? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. How do you feel about the principle: "The end justifies the means?"  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. Why do we pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil?" \_\_\_\_\_
16. In the overall picture we have to remember that Rahab was one of the elect of God. What great truth about God do we discover in Isaiah 55:6-7; Ezekiel 33:11; Acts 3:19; 2 Peter 3:9. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. Repentance includes not only the sorrow over sin, but also what important thing? (Matthew 3:8) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. When the guards were gone, what did Rahab do at once? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
19. Examine Rahab's confession of faith in verses 9-11.
  - a. What does she believe about the future of her nation? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Why does she believe this? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. How do all the inhabitants of Jericho feel? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Why do they feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. How does she regard the God of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
20. How according to Romans 10:17 does faith come about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
21. Who alone can work that faith? (1 Corinthians 12:3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
22. Rahab really had very little upon which to base her faith; only the reports she had heard about what God had done for His people. Yet she had a strong faith. What are the first two words she speaks in verse 9? \_\_\_\_\_
23. How does Paul express the same thing in 2 Timothy 1:12? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
24. What did you learn from Rahab that would be beneficial for your life?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_