

2162 - ARISE, GO OVER THIS JORDAN - Josh 1.1,2,9

The first word is 'vau' - a **conjunction!** What a proof of inspiration that **God** is really the Author of the whole of Scripture! Whoever started a Book with the word 'and'? What is happening? This: God is **continuing** to tell us the story of His covenant people Israel! How He saved them and by what means. Moses himself wrote the 1st 5 Books but God was the real Author, and God is **continuing** to author His Book of Holy Scripture! We are not sure who wrote Joshua, but we know that God is the true Author. And God still builds up His people through **various** means - and people.

Although Moses was dead - God wasn't! God's **long term plan** was still to be accomplished. It is still going on **today** all over the world! God **continues** His work through a series of different personalities. The Lord's work requires **different skills!** Moses was the man to lead Israel **out** of Egypt and through the desert, but He did not have the skills to lead them **into** the Promised land. **Particular** gifts for particular **callings!** There are different **aspects** of ministry. Paul: *there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit...varieties of service but the same Lord...varieties of activities but it is the same God who empowers them all* [1Cor12] **Both** gifts were needed - Law before Gospel, John Baptist before Christ. Luther before Calvin! One **prepared the way** for the other. One made the other more relevant.

APP I like to think **that** is what God is doing here at Dens Road. He is **continuing** a ministry - not stopping one! There **were times** when some of us thought this ministry would stop! But *God has done great things for us* [Psas 106;126] God started His Church with **one man** - Abraham, and he **grew** - and his seed **will be more** than the **grains** of **sand** on the seashore! That is how Scripture **perceives** the Church! A **growth** movement! **Stephen** (Acts 7), **Paul** Athens (Acts 17), **Heb** (11:12) *Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.* God is **with us here!**

The Lord said to Joshua ... 'Now therefore **arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people' [1,2] Ie, **forget about Moses!** Moses...is **dead** Look, I have **raised up** Joshua for you! **APP***

Friends, God has done very wonderful things for us as a congregation! He has. For such a small number with such few resources, it is nothing less than the **Divine purpose** that enables us to continue worshipping together with a settled ministry. Whatever **emotions** and **apprehensions** there may be about **new circumstances** and new **leaders** coming on the scene, **God** has set us an **agenda** - we must begin **work** - the work of spreading the gospel - and begin **in faith!** Trusting in **God's promises** - not in people! **That is God's agenda!** Just as Israel here, **God** has brought about this new situation we're in

A time comes when **meditation** and **prayer stops** and **action begins!** Stop dreaming about the past! *arise, go over this Jordan.* We must never forget the **goal** of the Church! To spread the Good News far and wide, and to **worship** and **praise God** - as **Lord of all things!**

Remember Moses at the Red Sea and the **paralysed** Israelites complaining? 'Did you take us out to kill us in the wilderness?' *And the Lord said to Moses...'Tell the people of Israel to go forward* [Ex 14:15] We **must move on!** The disciples at the **Ascension** *Why do you stand looking into heaven* [Acts 1:11] Go to Jerusalem! You are to be **My witnesses in Jerusalem** - you are to be witnesses in Dundee

*Yes, we must enter **enemy territory!** The world out there is really enemy territory! If we are not careful we too will be **sucked** into its **humanistic culture!** But we are **called** as Xns to **change their** culture and make it a Xn culture. We will only do it if we **meet** them **face to face.** So we have to speak with people and tell them the good news of Jesus Christ as **you/I** are empowered by the Holy Spirit! But we have to **win** their **trust first.** We must show the compassion of X!

The **whole land** is for the taking! *Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon!* [3a] Yes, the **home, the school, work place, community,** these are places that once had the gospel but have now **lost** it to secular culture. The world needs the gospel! **Every** believer has a role to play wherever he/she is. This is the work of the Church - to Xnise the nations! X=*Go into all the world and preach the gospel!*

Not just **selected areas** but **all** the world. How wonderful to read of people like **Jackie Pullinger** giving up their careers and literally 'taking a slow boat to China' (no Xn Society willing to pay her fare)!

She **established** Xn drug clinics/hospitals/care homes. Marvellous!

Away back in [Gen] God told Adam and then repeated it to Noah, *have **dominion over...every living thing!*** Yes, we today have to bring X/Apostles' teaching to **every area of life!** Education, environment, media, trade, commerce, science, business, medicine, politics, arts - **all** to be **regulated** with **Xn thinking/principles/values/ideals!**

It **will** take a **long time!** *I will **not** drive them out from before you in **one** year...**little by little** I will drive them out from before you* [Ex 23:29] We must remember that it takes **years** to **conquer** some sins. It takes years and years to change some **cultures!** **Jackie Pullinger** 'We learned it was a long term job to turn an addict into a responsible member of society...At first we thought 3 months...Then at least 6 months for their **thinking** to change - until they actually **forgot** their former **pattern** of cheating, stealing and blackmailing...we are **not** a **drug treatment** centre, we are a group of Christians who are concerned that your **whole life** should change. If you simply want to get off drugs I can recommend a centre...!' The **goal - salvation!**

*The **promise!** *the land that I am **giving** you* [2] [**Heb participle**] 'in the **process of giving!** And then in *I **have given** you!* [3] Isn't that **encouraging!** Almost in the **one breath!** And yet there were **years/struggles** before the whole land was taken. You'r given it, yet you have to have to **win** it! God has **given** it yet you have to **fight for it!** There is no escaping the tension between God's **sovereignty** and man's **responsibility**. Both are **revealed** in Scripture. Both are **true!**

Of course, it is **not physical fighting**. As Jesus told Peter *Put your **sword** into its **sheath*** [J18:11] Did He not say *Do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and he will at once send Me more than **twelve legions** of angels?* [Mat 26:53] You see, *the weapons of our warfare are **not of the flesh*** [2C10:4] We do not fight as the world fight! We do **not** actually fight **people**. It is there **ideologies**, their false **thinking** which we destroy! *We destroy **arguments** and every lofty **opinion** raised against the **knowledge** of God...against **authorities, cosmic powers, spiritual forces of evil*** [Eph 6:10]

But some of you are going to say 'Did God not **command** Israel to **kill** people in OT? Yes He did. But people **belong** to God and it was

God who gave these people life, and **God has a right** to take it away! These Canaanites **sinned** against their **own consciences**! They broke their **own principles** of right and wrong. They all **knew** they were doing wrong, as [Rom 2] teaches! *You have no excuse O man...you condemn yourself...you are **storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath** when God's righteous judgment **will be revealed** [Rm 2:1-5]*

Israel were **never** to go to war **unless** God commanded them! When they did, they were **defeated**! [Num14; Josh 7; 1Sam28] *The question of **how do you know** if it really is **God** that is commanding us, is **another** question which we are not going to discuss!!

We might ask, **Why did God** give the command? Because the Canaanites were the **greatest sinners** in the earth at the time! God **had** to remind Israel, It was *Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the Lord your God is driving them out* [Deu 9:5] I, Almighty God, have to remove them from that place. The Canaanites had **2 great sins**! (a) They freely boasted of their **perverted sexual** activity as [Lev 18:22].

Archaeology supports this claim by the shrines/images of perverted sexual acts! **APP** the UK? (b) Offered their children as **living human sacrifices** as [2Kg16:3] **APP** re **abortions** in UK! God **waited** a very long time before He punished the Canaanites - announced **400yrs before the iniquities of the Amorites is not yet complete** [Gen 15:16-18]! God is very **patient** and slow to anger.

Warfare? Talking about **innocence, suffering, punishment, injustice?** The Bible has something to say about that! It tells us about the **innocent Son of God** coming down to **suffer for our sins**! God has **allowed** that injustice - yes God **arranged** it! So that **you/I** might **escape justice** for our sins - **Jesus Christ accepted the greatest injustice** the world has and will ever see - so that you/I might be saved! The whole creation went into mourning because of the injustice of Calvary's Cross! And yet, it was **best** thing that ever happened! **Jesus Christ has won** the victory for us! **You have God's Word (promises)! God is with you and will be with you. Arise... Be strong and courageous, do not be frightened, do not be dismayed for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go** [9]