



WOW: Word Of the Week

Courage (Old Testament book of Joshua)

July 14, 2021

Courage. What is it? Where does it come from?

The word used in Joshua is interesting.

The Septuagint, Greek translation of the Old Testament, uses a verb form of the word for man. You may remember older translations of New Testament passages where the same word is used: Quit ye like men, be a man.

So what does this word, courage, mean? To be sharp, strong, confirmed, Hebrew *amats*. Courage is the result of confirmed hearts. Amos 2:16, “even the one who is stout of heart will flee on that day.” Joshua 1:6, 7, 9, 18. After the well-known instructions to (Joshua 1:9), the book of Joshua is a primer on how not to be courageous, how not to live with a confirmed, dedicated, heart.

A quick survey—problems in Ai, disobedience in making a treaty with the Gibeonites, yet God was at work, hesitancy to break up the travel group and divide the land.

Joshua’s final words are telling, suggesting already Israel’s tendency to walk away—their failure to confirm their hearts (even after Deuteronomy’s theme was “whole-heartedly”).

Joshua 24. The renewal of the covenant, a word from the Lord. After recounting the history of God’s interactions with and protection of Israel, Joshua challenges the people: 24:14.

The entire story is worth reading—Joshua 24:14-24. Here is courage from a slightly different perspective—yield your hearts to the Lord!