

BACKGROUND:

God fulfilled God's promise to Moses. The people of Israel walked away from slavery, through the parted Red Sea, and to freedom. Yet the freedom did not feel as they had hoped. They wandered in a wilderness, scraping by as best as they could. Even though God led them, providing them a Law to live by and daily food (called manna) to eat, the wilderness proved to be a challenging place.

After 40 years in that wilderness, God prepared to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land. The promise to Abraham and Sarah would come to fruition. Joshua would lead the way.

SCRIPTURE:

After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, 'My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory. No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.'

- How do the people in the story hear God's call to them?
- How open are they to God's call?
- What might this passage say to our community of faith?