



## MONDAY 4 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

### Read: Joshua 9:1-15

#### Plug In...

The Gibeonites are being contrasted with the rest of the Canaanites. The story opens with “all of the kings” across the Jordan banding together against Israel (vv.1-2). The Gibeonites – in questionable manner – aim to align with the LORD of Israel. Their method is deceptive. Joshua and the elders get hoodwinked because they didn’t *seek* the LORD (v.14).

#### Chew It Over...

Verse 14 is important. The narrator injects his voice into the story with direct commentary. This takes us to the point of this story. The story is not primarily concerned with questioning the ethics of the Gibeonites in choosing to lie (although it does maintain a negativity towards the act). The primary concern is whether people submit to God or not. Here, we see a lapse in Joshua and the elders in showing submission by taking everything before the LORD.

Often, we can have the right motive but be badly mistaken in the way we go about things. The Gibeonites are mistaken in their method. So too the Israelites.

The Bible tells us upfront that we lack the clarity, foresight, discernment, wisdom to get through this world on our own. This is why we must pray about all things, all the time ([1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#); [Philippians 4:6-7](#); [Ephesians 6:18](#)). This is why we must *seek* God’s voice, His wisdom by meditating day and night ([Joshua 1:7-9](#)).

#### Prayer Suggestion

Lord help me to seek your face. May I lay before you more of the little things in life. I am so prone to making mistakes, I need you to show my path, guide my steps. I ask for wisdom today, for you have promised to provide it ([James 1:5](#)). Prevent me from being detrimental to my family, my church, your public name. Lead me away from succumbing to temptation or foolishness, or naiveté today I ask.



# TUESDAY 5 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

## Read: Joshua 9:15-27 & Romans 8

### Plug In...

Israel discover the deception of the Gibeonites. Israel go to the precipice of making another mistake. They're set to kill the Gibeonites. Then, they remember who they stand ultimately before: God – and they had made an oath before God.

The Gibeonites could have made a further mistake too. They could have continued the ruse. Instead they admit it openly.

### Chew It Over...

Reading this story may dredge up regrets, mistakes, past failings. We learn something about God here in Joshua. When walking with God, God powerfully turns around our mistakes and incorporates them into His overall plan to bring glory to Himself and good to those He loves ([Romans 8:28](#)). Amazingly, because Jesus covers all our sins, this includes our mistakes, regrets, failures ([Romans 8:1](#)).

This frees us to:

1. Not deny our mistakes, nor minimise them – rather own up.
2. Not live in regret. Constantly trying to pay for, or undo.
3. To trust that God will redeem the situation, thereby avoiding taking things into our own hands. Like the Israelites with Gibeon, figure out, what does God require of me today, in this present situation?

If you feel anchored by regret, devastated by past mistakes to the point of being paralysed and cannot move forward, then it is possible there might be truths from Romans 8 you need to drink deeply from.

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Pray handing your whole life – as you come, as you are, to God asking Him to redeem it. Be specific. Actually hand over every worry, regret, failure. Use Romans 8 to help you pray. [Romans 8:26-27](#) says the Spirit is given to us because we are *weak* (flawed, failing, prone to mistakes) people. The Spirit is given to help us pray.



## WEDNESDAY 6 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

### Read: Joshua 10

#### **Plug In...**

This story makes clear that the Gibeonites, although subordinate to Israel, are part of the wider community and so under the blessing and protection of the LORD. When the coalition of northern cities attack Gibeon, Israel protects them.

In the record of this battle there are several times the narrator jumps to the forefront to underscore that the LORD fights for Israel. Verse 11 says that the LORD's hailstones killed more people than the Israelites sword. Verse 14, the narrator gasps, "Surely the LORD was fighting for Israel!".

#### **Chew It Over...**

With our emphasis on grace, we can often think success and growth in our Christian lives is entirely passive. The examples in Scripture give a more complex involvement. Here in Joshua, the people have to engage in battle. They have to be brave, they have to come up with strategy. The narrative doesn't dismiss their bravery, strategy, and physical engagement but does show that it operates within the larger context of God first intervening. So, the Israelites only have success on the battlefield because the Sovereign Lord *fights for Israel*.

God still works the same. We have to repent, have faith. We have to put off evil deeds, put on good virtues. We have to meditate and pray. We must give, we must gather regularly. We have to run the race, run hard, run with discipline.

We actually have to will, desire, choose to do these things. Otherwise there is no progress, no growth, no success.

Yet we don't merely do this on our own. We do this in a larger context where *the Lord Jesus fights for us* ([Philippians 2:12-13](#)). Consider: He atones every blemish on us before God ([Romans 8:1-4](#)); He pours out His Spirit thereby dissolving our hearts so that we actually do will, desire, and can choose these things ([Romans 8:5-8](#)); He enters our hearts and lives in us, motivating, correcting, empowering, talking to us ([Galatians 5:13-26](#)); He prays for us to the Father ([Romans 8:26-27](#)).

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Ask the Lord to win the war in your life. Ask that you will submit to the Lordship of Jesus over every area. Ask that your time, energies, possessions, investments can come under His will. Ask that you will work more closely and more deeply in posturing your heart before Him alone.



# THURSDAY 7 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

## Read: Joshua 10:25

### Plug In...

Standing on the neck of kings was an ancient symbol of defeat. Joshua uses this occasion to rally confidence, encourage resolve and commitment to the battle ahead.

Encouraging words when facing hostility and danger occurs again and again throughout Joshua. The very phrase reiterated is, “Be strong and courageous”.

### Chew It Over...

The Book of Acts drums that because of Jesus’ resurrection a new age had dawned, therefore Christians can be bold. (See: Peter’s speech [Acts 2:14-40](#).)

It is an age where God will call many men, women, children, nations to Himself. Therefore, Christians can boldly speak of this message (e.g. [Acts 4:23-31](#)).

Have we become wimpy? Has the dominate message in our head, even as Christians, become, “Australia is hard soil”, or “The West is *post-Christian*”.

Think about what the resurrection of Jesus means for this time, this place, those people in your circle? Consider God’s mission, promises – the power of the gospel message ([Romans 1:16](#)). Let us test our courage over the next week. What do you do to create opportunity to share something of Jesus? Can you even have the very name ‘Jesus’ be part of your speech with someone not yet a Christian? Set a time to review after this coming week: start by bravely testing where the emphasis in the term ‘friendship-evangelism’ really is for you.

Also, who can we encourage who is sensing the hostility and danger of God’s mission?

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Use [Acts 4:23-31](#) as you pray for this.





The Lakes

FRIDAY 8 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise &amp; Courage

## Read: Joshua II & Acts 17:16-34

### Plug In...

The story of Joshua accelerates time now. There is a summary of all the conquests within the land of Palestine. The previous stories had been given much space to teach the meaning of the whole campaign.

### Chew It Over...

An interesting detail emerges in 11:19-20. It indicates that each city did have opportunity to make peace with Israel. But they didn't. Often the conquest parts of the Bible are depicted as barbaric, unjust, etc. However, it pays to read closely. And, read the whole story. When we do we learn the ways of God: He is long suffering ([Genesis 15:16](#)), offering mercy upon repentance (Rahab – [Joshua 2:12-21](#); Gibeonites – [Joshua 9](#)). All people and land are His, He's the Creator, so justice is measured not by our standards, but by His (the Bible shows God is taking back what has been stolen from Him; what has been abused and wrecked – [Genesis 1](#); [Deuteronomy 32:7-9](#)).

The conquest of Canaan with its judgement on the inhabitants is given to warn us with vivid picture that God has set a day. When that day comes, there is no more opportunity – and He will be righteous and just in what He does. But right now, there is opportunity to make peace, to enter the plea bargain God offers through Jesus ([Acts 17:24-31](#)).

## **Prayer Suggestion**

About whom shall you ask God to soften their heart. We become privy to mysterious behind-the-scenes work of God here in Joshua (11:20), so we should talk with our Sovereign Lord.



## WEEKEND 9-10 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

### Read: Joshua 12

#### Plug In...

We don't have much drama in this chapter for it is just an enumerated list. Yet it is set in a context. Verse 1 says it is a list of defeated kings whose territory Israel took over.

This list rounds out a broader context. [Deuteronomy 7:24](#) are words Moses spoke in light of the Abrahamic promise and the reality of the Israelites about to take the land.

The list stamps: God has been faithful to His promise. Look at the territory now in the possession of Israel! Abraham had no more than a skeleton-hold on Canaan, the only square a grave ([Genesis 25:7-10](#)), but now look at the view! God is faithful.

#### Chew It Over...

It is important to look at the view. Anything God asks us to do is based on what He has already done. This is the fuel, the inspiration for following through with our commitment to Jesus.

How do you savour, taste, dwell in what Jesus has done for you? The more we grasp the view, the more we will worship God. Just about any chapter in the book of Revelation takes you to a lookout for a panoramic – indeed cosmic – view of God's work on our behalf. You could look at [Revelation 18](#) or [Revelation 19](#) or [Revelation 20](#) or [Revelation 21-22](#).

#### Prayer Suggestion

Enjoy the view. Breathe it in. Let it cultivate words of worship and praise towards God.