



MONDAY 18 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

Read: Joshua 21

Plug In...

Every tribe except the Levites received a territory in the Promised Land. Yet every tribe had to set up Levitical cities – cities run by the Levites. Time and time again God says the Levites have no territory because “the Lord is their inheritance” (e.g. [Deuteronomy 10:9; 18:2; Joshua 13:33](#)).

The background is the Levites are given to all of Israel to minister at the tabernacle. [Numbers 3:9-13](#) explains that anyone who approaches the tabernacle will be put to death. However, the Levites are the only ones who can be priests and serve close to the heart of the tabernacle. The reason given is they replace the firstborn of every Israelite.

Vividly the Levitical cities remind all the tribes that whatever land they possess is because the LORD redeemed them from Egypt. Why did the Israelites not see their firstborn sons perish? Because the Lord redeemed them through the sacrifice of a lamb. Ongoing in their existence is this picture that they only stand in the Land because God atones for their sins. The Levitical cities dotted across the Promised Land said to each Israelite, the LORD is your portion ([Psalm 16:5](#)).

Chew It Over...

Reflect on all the good things you currently have. Notice how they point to how Jesus owns everything and has promised to share this inheritance with all His people ([Ephesians 1:18](#)). Reflect on how our lack and sufferings because we follow Christ also point to receiving the total inheritance ([Romans 8:17](#)).

How can you generate constant reminders that Jesus is your inheritance?

Prayer Suggestion

Use [Psalm 16](#) to thank God, praise Him, and ask from Him.



TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

Read: Joshua 21:43-45

Plug In...

God has done everything He said He would. For easier reading style the NIV reduces the number of times the word “all” is used. In Hebrew, “all” is repeated six times to totally underscore that God fulfilled what He promised.

We’ll see other statements showing that more land needed to be taken and that there were still some battles ahead, but this passage declares the Promised Land is under Israel’s control, precisely because God had fought for them.

Chew It Over...

It’s been said, “What we anticipate tomorrow changes who we are today”. Imagine what this entire Joshua story meant to the Israelites going forward as they received grander promises than just land: complete restoration to the favour of God where He permanently forgives sin and removes sin and death; the pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

Every single promise given to Israel has been totally fulfilled in Jesus. Every promise to Israel flows from the overarching promise God gave to Abraham’s seed. That seed, this true Israelite, is Christ and upon His resurrection He was given the fulfilment of every Old Testament promise ([2 Corinthians 1:20](#)). As we unite ourselves to Christ by faith all those promises that are *already* ‘yes’ in Jesus’ experience will be ours in the future.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray to the God of all comfort. Thank Him for all promises fulfilled in Jesus. Ask that God keeps us strong and courageous as we wait for all promises to be realised for us.



WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

Read: Joshua 22

Plug In...

The Israelite tribes on the western side of the Jordan see this altar built and fear that the Transjordan tribes have abandoned the LORD. The Transjordan tribes say they built the altar fearing the western tribes might cut them off from the main land and that would lead them to eventually forsaking the LORD.

Both sides have proper motivations. Both seriously want to make sure that they stay worshipping the LORD alone.

[NB: There was nothing inherently wrong with the altar, it didn't breach the rules laid down for sanctuaries, e.g. [Leviticus 17:8-9](#); [Deuteronomy 13:12-15](#).]

Chew It Over...

Both recognise their human sinful nature. One person even laments that maybe the root evil that caused the idolatry and sexual immorality at Peor ([Numbers 25](#)) still lurks.

This passage teaches us that along with praying and meditating on the Word of the Lord we should get very practical in throwing off sin ([Hebrews 12:1](#)). Not recognising that sin lurks within leads to apathy, which could lead to total abandonment of God.

What things are you involved in that create extra temptations, that cultivate sin, and that you know keep entangling you? What practical things can you do to get away from that? Do you have to physically move away from triggers? Does it involve using your computer only in a shared room? Does it involve changing the amount of time

with certain company? Do you have to align your natural body mechanics to improve godliness: Sleep more? Exercise more?

Be serious. *Throw off* sin. Be practical.

Prayer Suggestion

Ask for God to give you wisdom on what must be your next move. And let us rejoice as we see God produce wins in our lives – today we know that the Lord is among us (v.31).



THURSDAY 21 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

Read: Joshua 23

Plug In...

Towards the end of this book we have record of Joshua exhorting the people. God has fulfilled all His promises. In this chapter, three times, Joshua calls the people to a wholehearted love of God.

Chew It Over...

Notice some of the intense wording in each call to wholehearted love of God (some more literal translations retain the intensity (NSV; NASB; HCSB):

1. Vv. 6-8 – ‘Be very firm’; ‘cling to the LORD’.
2. V.11 – ‘So be very diligent to love the Lord your God for your own well-being’ (lit. ‘forcefully care for your life by loving the LORD your God’).
3. V.14 – ‘And you know with all your heart and all your soul that none of the good promises the Lord your God made to you has failed.’

Deep within the core of their being the things God has done for them is to dominate their existence.

We thank God that Jesus provides that wholehearted commitment we cannot attain ourselves, so that none of the judgements of God happen. Jesus achieving this on our behalf in no way lowers the standard of wholehearted commitment.

Prayer Suggestion

Thank Jesus. Forcefully care for your life by praying for the Spirit's continuing work in creating a heart that does not falter.



FRIDAY 22 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

Read: Joshua 23:6 & Hebrews 9:11-14

Plug In...

This call is reiterated throughout the Old Testament: “Be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left.” It echoes the type of *walking* Abraham was called to: “Walk before me faithfully and be blameless” ([Genesis 17:1](#)).

Chew It Over...

The standard for Abraham was to be *blameless*. The standard for the Israelites with Joshua is to be *blameless*. That standard is never dropped for God’s walk is blameless ([Psalm 18:30](#)). That standard doesn’t drop in the New Testament either, for again God is blameless/perfect (Matthew 5:48 – “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”).

In both the Old Testament and the New, God’s call to be perfect and blameless comes within His provision of a ‘blameless’ substitute to atone for the reality that we are imperfect and at fault with our sins. With this blessed provision, the standard still doesn’t drop. We are to obey Jesus’ commands, we are to do what He says, we are to walk the blameless life relying on Jesus’ covering of our debts.

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God for the blameless Jesus Christ. Ask that in light of His work to ‘perfect’ our consciences we will walk in the way of the Living God!



The Lakes

WEEKEND 23 JUNE 2018

SERIES: Joshua – Promise & Courage

Read: Joshua 24

Plug In...

Verse 14. Joshua says, serve the LORD with all faithfulness (lit. 'blamelessly'). The people say, "We will" (v.18). Despite the enthusiasm and the healthy response, Joshua pushes back, "You are not able to serve the LORD" (v.19).

The standard is 'blamelessness', just like Abraham was called to ([Genesis 17:1](#)). Joshua has just said it is impossible to meet or maintain that standard.

Chew It Over...

Let's see a little how the Bible hangs together:

It is significant that this covenant renewal takes place at Shechem, and that a memorial stone is placed under a tree at Shechem. After receiving the promises from God, Abraham went to Shechem where God further said it will be to Abraham's *offspring* that He will give this land. Abraham responded by building an altar under a tree at Shechem ([Genesis 12:1-7](#)).

This should trigger for the Israelites in Joshua's day – certainly it should for anyone reading the whole sweep of Joshua as an entire book – that God promised Abraham that He would give to His offspring the content of the promise.

Abraham and his seed are promised great things ([Genesis 12:1-3](#)).

Abraham believes God and God reckons Abraham righteous ([Genesis 15:6](#)).

God commits Himself to be the sole person that will achieve this covenant ([Genesis 15:9-21](#)).

Yet, Abraham was then told that the *content* of the promises will only be delivered if he walks 'blamelessly' before God ([Genesis 17:1](#)).

The stories of Abraham's life show he certainly was not blameless, likewise Noah, who was nonetheless described as 'righteous' and 'blameless' ([Genesis 6:9](#) – almost synonymous terms). And for those in Joshua's day most of the time the language of 'blameless' is associated with the 'blameless' substitutes God provided in the Passover and the sacrificial system (e.g. [Leviticus 17:11](#)).

God had promised to Abraham that He would provide the blameless seed that will receive the content of the promise. When Abraham trusted he was reckoned as blameless.

When Joshua at Shechem declares the people cannot serve the LORD, they cannot be blameless (24:19; *cf.* 24:14), the person of faith will say something like, 'I cannot be perfect like God, but God will provide what I need for He has said He will'. This will not minimise the standard of blamelessness and they will seek to serve the LORD and obey Him (24:24).

Prayer Suggestion

Praise God for your complete righteousness provided in Jesus – a righteousness *from* God ([Romans 3:21-31](#)).