

GOD FIGHTS FOR HIS PEOPLE

Opening: See slides from Elaine B

Text: Joshua 10: 40-43

2 Samuel 22:31 *As for God, His way is proven He is a shield to all who trust in Him.*

We've been studying Joshua these past 8 weeks

- He was assigned one of the most challenging tasks God has ever asked a person to do.
- Lead a nation of people without a country into the land that God promised to their ancestors.
- We identify with him.
- After death of Moses - Joshua had to move forward to receive God's promises
- After the sudden retirement of Pastor Jerry we need to move forward to receive God's promises

Joshua's life has been marked by great success and terrible failure, so has ours.

What made the difference between success and failure? Seeking God's counsel

Could it really be that simple?

Joshua 10: 40-43 MSG

⁴⁰⁻⁴² Joshua took the whole country: hills, desert, foothills, and mountain slopes, including all kings. He left no survivors. He carried out the holy curse on everything that breathed, just as God, the God of Israel, had commanded. Joshua's conquest stretched from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza and from the entire region of Goshen to Gibeon. Joshua took all these kings and their lands in a single campaign **because God, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.**

⁴³ Then Joshua, all Israel with him, went back to the camp at Gilgal.

They conquered this entire portion of geography in a single campaign

It's easy to come away with the idea that invasion into the Promised Land was a quick, short war ...

It wasn't!

When we pray we want fast results because it encourages and excite us to believe God for even more!

God hears and answers our prayers sometimes even before the words are cleared our lips.

But not all the time!

Sometimes God asks us to be **persistent** – “prayer warriors”

God has His reasons and ways of doing what He does –

Life’s struggle – battles – troubles bring out the best in us – make us into something – someone we couldn’t have been without the battle.

Consider this:

1. Beethoven’s teacher called him *hopeless* as a composer
2. Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor for lack of ideas
3. Isaac Newton did very poorly in grade school
4. Leo Tolstoy , author of War and Peace, flunked out of college - told he unable to learn
5. Henry Ford failed 5 times and went bankrupt before finding amazing success
6. Winston Churchill failed 6th grade –didn’t become Prime Minister of England until he was 66 his greatest achievements came as a senior citizen

I took Joshua 7 years to conquer the Promised Land

No wonder God repeated the promise– “*Don’t be afraid or discouraged*”

To give you some perspective

- WWI last for 4 years (only 1 year for the U.S.)
- WWII lasted went from 1939 - 1945 6 years (4 for US)
- US Civil War 1861 -1865 4 terrible years
- Spanish American War 4 months
- Am Revolution Lexington & Concord to Yorktown – 7years

Interesting: 7 means complete

After conquering an entire region in a single campaign, Joshua heads back to Gilgal for a time of **rest**

Understand that the war wasn’t over – but rest was needed

Rest is something I’ve been praying for ... for my family ... for you my church family - rest from all our battles and struggles

Listen to Jesus' idea of rest [Matthew 11:28, 29](#)

²⁸⁻³⁰ "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." MSG

God wants that kind of *rest* that kind of *peace* for us, you can have it before you leave this place today.

The fighting wasn't over for Joshua and Israel after their rest

Life's battles may stop for while, war goes on,

THE BURNING QUESTION IS: HOW YOU DEAL WITH IT, WILL IT BE ON YOUR TERMS OR GOD'S?

[Joshua 11: 1-5 NLT](#)

11 When King Jabin of Hazor heard what had happened, he sent messages to the following kings: King Jobab of Madon; the king of Shimron; the king of Acshaph; ² all the kings of the northern hill country; the kings in the Jordan Valley south of Galilee; the kings in the Galilean foothills; the kings of Naphoth-dor on the west; ³ the kings of Canaan, both east and west; the kings of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites in the towns on the slopes of Mount Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

⁴ All these kings came out to fight. Their combined armies formed a vast horde. And with all their horses and chariots, they covered the landscape like the sand on the seashore. ⁵ The kings joined forces and established their camp around the water near Merom to fight against Israel.

While Joshua and Israel are resting – Four kings organize a U N Security Council meeting

Dozens of kings decide to forget their differences and create a super alliance – Their armies stretch out across the horizon as far as the eye can see.

Strategy – The enemy of my enemy is my friend

Not the same strategy that Hivites who tricked Joshua into a peace covenant

Their strategy was ... If you can't beat em _____ .

I wonder what the first thing that went through Joshua's mind was when he saw an army that dwarfed his and had superior weaponry.

Did his heart faint?

It's a scary thing to see an enemy not only threaten to destroy you but see them right front of you ready to do it.

Our spiritual enemy always uses fear getting us to focus on the problem instead of God.

On February 14 there was another horrific act of violence in a Parkland Florida high school, 17 people killed by a 19 year old gunman.

Nine weeks into 2018 there have already been 12 school shootings, most of them have not been mass shootings and not all resulted in death.

Unless you've had your head stuck in the ground you hear the debating on the left and right side of political parties and government officials.

Gun free School zones – have teachers and school officials carry guns – the gun law debate is raging.

A feeling of helplessness has lead to frenzy of fear

Jim Daily from Focus on the Family writes:

We're living through a moral freefall, but few in positions of influence are willing to talk about it. Instead, we hear much talk about its symptoms (like gun violence), and many of these same people want to ban the very things that will lead to healing and revival.

Those with a fervent and sincere faith are mocked and marginalized rather than respected and uplifted for their deeply held religious convictions.

Vice President Mike Pence was maligned the other day by ABC television host for acknowledging that he prays for wisdom and waits to hear for guidance from the Lord.

I also can't help but note that many of those who are demanding more gun laws in an effort to protect innocent life find it entirely acceptable that 4,000 innocent lives are lost each day at the hands of abortionists. ... yet our societal elites seem genuinely befuddled why life is viewed so cheaply by those who resort to ...shocking incidents of violence.

What's more, those who champion the ideal of families with both a mother and a father are regularly dismissed as being hopelessly out of touch with modern mores. Yet, six of the deadliest mass shootings committed in the United States since 2005 were committed by young men without fathers in the home.

We have a tourniquet-level problem – a sick culture, crumbling families, and an abandonment of basic values and decency – and we're attempting to treat it with band aid solutions that do nothing to address the cause.

Questions abound and we shake our heads –God what do we do?

Listen to the lyrics of God is God

Stephen Curtis Chapman -

"God Is God"

And the pain falls like a curtain
On the things I once called certain
And I have to say the words I fear the most
I just don't know

And the questions without answers
Come and paralyze the dancer
So I stand here on the stage afraid to move
Afraid to fall, oh, but fall I must
On this truth that my life has been formed from the dust

[Chorus]

God is God and I am not
I can only see a part of the picture He's painting
God is God and I am man
So I'll never understand it all
For only God is God

[Chorus]

Oh, how great are the riches of His wisdom and knowledge
How unsearchable for to Him and through Him and from Him are all things

So let us worship before the throne
Of the One who is worthy of worship alone

How did Joshua deal with an overwhelming enemy?

Whatever initial fear may have gripped his heart ... God's Spirit quickly reassured him.

Joshua 11: 6, 7

⁶ Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them. By this time tomorrow I will hand all of them over to Israel as dead men. ⁷ So Joshua and all his fighting men traveled to the water near Merom and attacked suddenly. ⁸ And the LORD gave them victory over their enemies.

Joshua completely defeated the enemy that threatened to destroy them but he didn't do it alone. He had God's army and God fighting for Him.

As I prayed about these things this week God spoke to my heart

[Ephesians 6:12](#) ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

1. This is the power behind the violence and sickness of our society.

[Isaiah 40:31 \(KJV\)](#)

³¹ But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

2. We can't focus on the symptoms we need to seek God's council for the solutions

[2 Chronicles 7:14 \(NLT\)](#)

¹⁴ ...If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.

The sickness plaguing our land won't be solved by government officials, politicians or student protests –the responsibility falls to us as God's people

God gave Joshua victory over an entire region – but he didn't do it alone or in his strength

God fought for him !

What problems are you facing – let us pray for you and together

Let's Pray