

Quarter Four: Lessons of Faith from Joshua

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Lesson 2—Surprised by Grace

Thursday: Surprising Grace

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- **Last Week:** “Recipe for Success”
 - Joshua 1
 - Leadership transition to Joshua; outline of book; God’s promise to be with him
 - Call for people to enter the Promised Land, after 40 years of wandering
- **This Week:** “Surprised by Grace”
 - Joshua 2 & 9
 - Joshua’s preparation to enter the Promised Land
 - Spies at Jericho (Rahab’s house)
 - League with the Gibeonites

Memory Text: “By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace” (Heb 11:31, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** Second Chance (SQ)
 - Josh 2:1 – God of 2nd chances: spies sent from Shittim (location of 1st sending of spies; location of violation of the covenant with Israelite men & Moabite women)
- 2. **Monday:** Value in Unexpected Places (James)
 - Josh 2:2 – 11 – Rahab’s faith in the midst of a sinful culture & lifestyle
- 3. **Tuesday:** New Allegiance (John D)
 - Josh 2:12 – 21 – Rahab, a Canaanite, claiming the promises given to the Israelites; red cord & connection to the Passover
- 4. **Wednesday:** Conflicting Values (John L)
 - Josh 9:1 – 20 – Gibeonites desire a treaty with Israel under deceptive means; comparison between Gibeonites & Rahab; Joshua’s mistake in not asking God for wisdom
- 5. **Thursday:** Surprising Grace (Jill)
 - Josh 9:21 – 27 – Joshua’s answer to the Gibeonites subterfuge & combination of justice & mercy

Thursday: Surprising Grace

Joshua 9:21 – 27; Judg. 11:29 – 40; Ps 15:4; Ps 24:4; Eccl 5:2, 6; 2 Sam 6:11; Neh 7:25;

- Why do people make the choices they do?
 - Why do people do what they do?
 - 1. Selfishness – thinking only for themselves

- 2. Self-preservation – trying to protect themselves or someone they love
- 3. Good of others – trying to do what’s right for everyone involved
- 4. People pleasing – trying to make someone else happy
- 5. God-pleasing – thinking of God’s principles & values
- Gibeonites vs Joshua
 - Gibeonites deceived the Israelites
 - Self-preservation?
 - Selfishness?
 - Vs 4 – “they (Gibeonites) worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors...”
 - Joshua & leaders did not consult the Lord
 - Independence?
 - Self-sufficiency?
 - Vs 14 – “...but they did not ask counsel of the Lord.”
- Leadership caught between a rock & a hard place because of their own mistake
 - They were supposed to conquer the land & destroy idol-worshipping inhabitants
 - They couldn’t go back on an oath made in the name of the Lord
 - Even though it was with an idolatrous nation that they were supposed to destroy
 - 2 Pet 3:9 – “God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”
 - Did God want to save the Gibeonites?
 - Even though they were deceptive?
 - Rom 8:28 – “All things work together for good, to them who love God...”
 - Even when leadership makes a mistake, can God turn it around for good?
 - Gen 50:20 – what Satan intended for evil, God turned for good...
- Vs 21 – “And the rulers said to them, ‘Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had promised them.’”
 - Doesn’t destroy the oath to God
 - Had just decided to let the Gibeonites live, because of the oath sworn to them
 - Still has consequences for idol-worshipping inhabitant
 - Make them a servant / slave
 - Woodcutters & water carriers
 - **Takeaway #1: There is always a solution**
 - Even when we mess up; make mistakes; don’t consult God
 - He can overturn things
 - Give us a solution
- Vs 22 – “Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, ‘Why have you deceived us, saying, “We are very far from you,” when you dwell near us?’”
 - **Takeaway #2: Sin has consequences**
 - Israel reaped what it had sown
 - Sons of Israel “spoke deceitfully” to the Hivites while Jacob was still alive

- Gen 34:13 – rape of Dinah by Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite
 - Joshua 11:19 – says the “Hivites” were the “inhabitants of Gibeon”
 - Simeon & Levi deceived the Hivites & then killed them
 - Now, the Hivites descendants deceive the Israelites
- Gal 6:7 – “Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”
 - Law of sowing & reaping
- Vs 23 – ““Now therefore, you are cursed, and none of you shall be freed from being slaves—woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.””
 - Joshua speaking – they would be slaves in God’s house / tabernacle
 - Why?
 - Justice & Mercy of Joshua
 - Consequences for their deception
 - Blessing in being close to the sanctuary – close to God
 - To keep the Gibeonites idolatry from defiling the Israelites – they would daily be brought in contact with the worship of the one, true God
 - Mercy of God
 - Both for His people & their identity
 - But also for the salvation of the Gibeonites
 - **Takeaway #3: Sometimes, what seems like punishment, is the means to bring us to God**
 - Becoming a slave became their salvation
 - Phil 1:19, KJV – “For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”
- Vs 24, 25 – “So they (Gibeonites) answered Joshua and said, ‘Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore, we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. (25) And now, here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us.’”
 - Comparison of Rahab & Gibeonites
 - Both were liars
 - Both, in the midst of their idolatry, had heard of the mighty acts of Israel’s God
 - Both willing to leave their ties with their countrymen & join God’s people
 - Both brought “into the midst of” the people of Israel
 - **Takeaway #4: Be willing to leave yourself in God’s hands**
 - Here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good & right to do to us
 - Surrender of Gibeonites
 - Jer 26:14, NLT – “As for me, I am in your hands—do with me as you think best.”
 - Jeremiah appealing to the people bent on killing him

- Vs 27 – “And that day Joshua made them woodcutters & water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, in the place which He would choose, even to this day.”
 - For many years after this, there was war between the Canaanites & invading Israelites
 - Never once do we hear any record of any Gibeonite defecting to his original side
 - Instead, the Gibeonites became servants at the tabernacle
 - Gibeon became a priestly city; the ark of the covenant stayed at Gibeon often in the days of David & Solomon
 - One of David’s mighty men was a Gibeonite
 - God appeared & spoke to Solomon at Gibeon
 - Gibeonites were among those who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem with Nehemiah
 - **Takeaway #5: Redemption is possible**
 - The sinner became the servant
 - The heathen became contrite
 - God redeemed & restored them