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The Book of Joshua
HOW I FIGHT MY BATTLES



**5 WEEK STUDY
WITH PASTOR JEREMY**

**MAURICE REFORMED
CHURCH**

DAILY DEVOTIONALS
Week of November 23-29

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23
How I Fight My Battles Series
Joshua 9 & 22 – Do Not Make Assumptions

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Sermon Doodles and Illustrations

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Joshua 9:1-2 – The Kings Prepare for Battle

This week as we join together, we are going to talk a lot about the idea of assumptions. Assumptions can cause lots of problems. I know for me I can either listen to what someone says or quickly read a text and assume I know what was just spoken to me or typed to me. If I respond without rereading or asking more questions, I may respond incorrectly based off what I assumed they meant when I quickly engaged with their message. Have you ever responded off an assumption rather than what was actually going on?

In these first two verses of chapter 9, the kings are acting as I would assume they would. They gather together to attack the Israelites. After all, the Israelites are a nomadic people with limited resources; they can't possibly keep up this winning streak. Just to be safe, the 6 kingdoms decide that they would be stronger together and would be able to overthrow this raiding army. You can read how this battle went in chapter 10. As you read it, think about the fact that this army marched all night to get to the battlefield and then the sun stayed up an extra 24 hours! I would assume these fighters would be exhausted, but God provided everything they needed to defeat these kings and their kingdoms.

If I confess, I assume every day that nothing bad will happen to me. I assume that life will continue on as it always has and life will be great. Unfortunately, this assumption may not always be true. What we need to realize is that there is a spiritual battle raging around us, to assume otherwise would be foolish and leave us unprepared. What we can trust though is that God will give us everything we need for the battle ahead, so we do not need to fear. Walk this day with your eyes wide open to what is going on and march boldly forward in the power of the most-high God!

SONG:

"You've Already Won" - Shane & Shane

KIDS QUESTION:

What is an assumption? Tell of a time you assumed something and it was right!

YOUTH AND ADULT QUESTION:

What assumptions have you made that were right?

PRAYER:

Lord, today we do not want to be misled about what is going on. Help us to see the battle that is raging.

[illegible]

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Joshua 9:3-15 – Why It's Important to Seek the Lord

Yesterday we saw a situation where our assumptions were right. The armies were joining together to try to overthrow the Israelites the best they knew how. The rest of the week we are going to take a look at what happens when our assumptions are wrong and what could've been done to help the situation. Oftentimes when our assumptions are wrong it leads to bad decisions, hurt feelings, and divisions in relationships. None of us desires for these things to happen, but unfortunately they happen far too often. One way we can combat this is by seeking the Lord.

While multiple armies are planning their battle tactics, one town is planning a more deceptive attack. Gibeon thought that if they could just get the Israelites to a treaty, they would be home free and so they make sure their food and their clothes match their made-up story and head to Joshua. The Israelites are skeptical at first and try to ask questions, but the Gibeonites have their story firm. As the Israelites check out their story, everything seems to fit, but what they fail to do is seek God. The Israelites rely on their own understanding and own wisdom and make an agreement of peace with the Gibeonites.

Have you ever made a decision without seeking the Lord? Maybe you were doing all the due diligence like the Israelites, and everything seemed to check out, yet things didn't turn out as they seemed. God is the one who knows all things and holds all truth. In Him there are no lies and no darkness. He alone can bring light into the situation and help us know what is true and what is not. This week before you make any decision, take a moment and consult God.

SONG:

[“Your Will Be Done”](#) - CityAlight

KIDS QUESTION:

Do you ask God before you make every decision? How has God saved you from making the wrong decision?

YOUTH AND ADULT QUESTION:

Share a time where you sought God and it saved you from a bad situation.

PRAYER:

Lord, we desire to be led by truth. As we seek you today, show us the way in every situation.

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

**Joshua 9:16-27 – The Consequence of
Assumption & Deception**

Joshua and the Israelites soon find out that they have been tricked. The Gibeonites are actually a group of people that live in the promised land and were to be a part of the people who were to be destroyed. The armies of Israel were ready to attack Gibeon for what they had done, but the leaders of Israel remind the army of the agreement that was made in the name of God. It would not be right for Israel to go against the promise of peace that they made to the Gibeonites, but there was another option.

Gibeon feared for their lives and so they tried every option possible. It is clear that this plan worked for them and now their lives will be spared. Israel doesn't let them off the hook completely, because now the people of Gibeon would become servants to the Israelites. This expectation was acceptable to the Gibeonites and so they became wood cutters and water carriers for the people and for God. This situation turned out well for the Gibeonites, but it was not what God had instructed for the people of Israel to initially do.

When we respond in assumption or deception, we can easily walk down a path that is not what God has instructed us to do. We can listen to some smooth-talking people on the internet that sound honest and genuine in everything they say and find ourselves well down a road of belief that we should have never gone down. This can cause a consequence for us personally and even for our families down the road. That is why we must check everything we hear through God and seek Him before making those decisions.

SONG:

[“The Way, the Truth and the Life”](#) - CityAlight

KIDS QUESTION:

Have you ever been told something untrue, but you believed it? How did you feel?

YOUTH AND ADULT QUESTION:

Share a time where you followed something that you found out to be untrue.

PRAYER:

Lord, we know that there is a consequence to going down a path that is not from You. Give us eyes to see if we are off the path so that we can get back on the road You desire for us.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Joshua 22:1-10 – The Actions of the 2.5 Tribes

We now fast forward to the promised land being mostly conquered and the 2.5 tribes being released to go home after being faithful to the duty they committed to. It has been a long journey to get to where they are now, but finally it is time to go home and be with their families once again on the other side of the Jordan. On their way to the Jordan river, they came up with one more activity they wanted to do before they left the Promised land on that side of the river.

The translation says that they built an imposing altar. I'm not sure if they call it imposing because of the negative response we will hear tomorrow, but the Hebrew word means large in appearance. We don't get much more information about this altar other than its size and location at this time, and so without any more information, I want us to think about what the next steps should be. Building an altar without any explanation would naturally bring some questions and building a large altar could cause some concerns.

Have you ever watched someone do something without any explanation? How did you respond? Did you ask them why they did that or make up a story in your mind for the reasons why they did that? The rest of this week we are going to again walk through the path of assumption and thankfully we will end on the road of understanding. When you think about a situation or a person, I want to encourage you to only believe what you know to be true. If you think about a situation and your reaction is based off of hearsay or a story you made it, then I encourage you to go to the person personally ask them why they did it.

SONG:

["Christ Our Wisdom"](#) - Sovereign Grace Music

KIDS QUESTION:

Do you sometimes make up a story in your head without checking the facts and know what is really going on? Do you make assumptions on what others are doing and why?

YOUTH AND ADULT QUESTION:

Why is it important to be clear in why you are doing things?

PRAYER:

Lord, help us to have a clear purpose for why we do things and help us to clearly state that purpose to others.

[illegible]

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Joshua 22:11-20 – The Assumption of the 9.5 Tribes

Welcome back as we look at the reaction of the 9.5 tribes left in the promised land as they watch the 2.5 tribes build a large altar by the river. Let's revisit the last part of the devotion of yesterday where we asked how you would respond. Let's remember a few of the past memories that the Israelites have had.

- Step 1: Be set free from Egypt
- Step 2: Build a golden calf to worship because Moses has been gone too long
- Step 3: Don't trust God to give you the promised land
- Step 4: Die in the desert
- Step 5: Step food into the promised land
- Step 6: Face defeat because of one person's sin
- Step 7: God won't go with us until we destroy the sin
- Step 8: Conquer the promised land

The Israelites have experienced the consequence of sin before and they are hypersensitive to anything that is not from God. Without asking questions they jump to the conclusion that the tribes are building an altar to worship other gods and break faith with God. The 9.5 tribes understood that all 12 tribes were God's children and that they would face consequences for their brothers' sins. So they were ready to go to war and kill every last one of them as they did Achan so that the curse from God would be broken. The 9.5 tribes justify their response based off of past experiences, but they forget to ask some clarifying questions first.

Again I ask, have you ever thought the worst of someone based off of previous experience? We may even feel justified in doing this, but this story is a good reminder to ask questions before responding with a perceived understanding. Just like the Israelites, I can think I'm doing things to defend God and still miss the important step of understanding the reality of the situation. Keep seeking God, keep asking questions and keep working towards the right outcome in every situation.

SONG:

["Open My Eyes That I May See"](#) - Joslin Grove Choral Society

KIDS QUESTION:

Do you ask questions before assuming you know what is going on? Have you asked God for help in doing this?

YOUTH AND ADULT QUESTION:

Have you ever tried so hard to defend God that you missed out on what was actually going on?

PRAYER:

Lord, teach me not to judge or respond based off of previous experiences.

[illegible]

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Joshua 22:21-34 – The Real Reason for the Action

The accusation has been made against the 2.5 tribes of Israel. They have been accused of worshipping other gods and being unfaithful to the God they had been faithful to the whole time they were battling in the promised land. The reason they were considered unfaithful was because they were building a large altar that could be seen from across the river. According to the 9.5 tribes of Israel this was not something that should have happened and meant that they no longer followed the one true God. Thankfully, the 9.5 tribes didn't shoot first and ask questions later, because the 2.5 tribes had a really good reason for what they were doing.

The 2.5 tribes were adamant that this altar was not for worshipping other gods. In fact, this altar was for all 12 tribes to remember that the people on either side of the Jordan were 1 people and not 2. On hearing this, the whole crowd rejoiced at the faithfulness of the 2.5 tribes. What they were doing was a good thing to help all people know who the people of God were. This was not for their own good, but for the good of the future generations that once again might forget the land promised to all of the Israelites.

What a relief. The perceived reason was not the reason at all. In fact, the 2.5 tribes had pure hearts to worship the one true God alone and to help the unity between all 12 tribes for years to come. Sometimes churches can be like this. A part of the church might try something different and without asking another group could get upset about it. Church, we need to do a better job at communicating with each other so that we can bring unity in the body of Christ rather than division. We also need to work on forgiving the past and working towards a better future. How will you do that this week?

SONG:

"Make Us One" - Chris Tomlin & Matt Maher

KIDS QUESTION:

Is there anyone you need to talk with to better understand a situation? Do you remember to ask questions before jumping to conclusions? We can learn from this story!

YOUTH AND ADULT QUESTION:

Who do you need to talk to so that you start living in the true story rather than a perceived story?

PRAYER:

Lord, bring unity in your people rather than division this week.

[illegible]