



KINGDOM PROGRESS

PART ONE

Forty Daily Devotionals
from the Book of Joshua
(Based on the NKJV)

Introduction

The opening words of Joshua, “After the death of Moses” (Joshua 1:1), make for a perfect transition from Deuteronomy to the Book of Joshua. This story picks up where Deuteronomy ends and tracks the movements of the 12 tribes of Israel as they marched forward in the conquest of the lands that God had promised to them. After 40 years of making repeated laps around the wilderness, Israel is finally ready to move forward! “Kingdom Progress” is an appropriate title for a devotional study from this very enlightening Joshua of the Bible.

Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	Joshua 1:1-9	5/28/20
2	Joshua 1:10-18	5/29/20
3	Joshua 2:1-7	5/30/20
4	Joshua 2:8-15	5/31/20
5	Joshua 2:16-22	6/1/20
6	Joshua 2:23-3:5	6/2/20
7	Joshua 3:6-11	6/3/20
8	Joshua 3:12-17	6/4/20
9	Joshua 4:1-7	6/5/20
10	Joshua 4:8-13	6/6/20
11	Joshua 4:14-19	6/7/20
12	Joshua 4:20-24	6/8/20
13	Joshua 5:1-7	6/9/20
14	Joshua 5:8-15	6/10/20
15	Joshua 6:1-7	6/11/20
16	Joshua 6:8-14	6/12/20
17	Joshua 6:15-23	6/13/20
18	Joshua 6:24-27	6/14/20
19	Joshua 7:1-6	6/15/20
20	Joshua 7:7-13	6/16/20

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	Joshua 7:14-19	6/17/20
22	Joshua 7:20-26	6/18/20
23	Joshua 8:1-8	6/19/20
24	Joshua 8:9-14	6/20/20
25	Joshua 8:15-22	6/21/20
26	Joshua 8:23-29	6/22/20
27	Joshua 8:30-34	6/23/20
28	Joshua 9:1-6	6/24/20
29	Joshua 9:7-13	6/25/20
30	Joshua 9:14-20	6/26/20
31	Joshua 9:21-27	6/27/20
32	Joshua 10:1-4	6/28/20
33	Joshua 10:5-10	6/29/20
34	Joshua 10:11-14	6/30/20
35	Joshua 10:15-26	7/1/20
36	Joshua 10:27-32	7/2/20
37	Joshua 10:33-39	7/3/20
38	Joshua 10:40-11:5	7/4/20
39	Joshua 11:6-11	7/5/20
40	Joshua 11:12-17	7/6/20

Day 1: Joshua 1:1-9

“After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, saying:” (Joshua 1:1)

“The Servant of the Lord”

As Christians, we desire to see our churches and nation prosper and grow spiritually. However, the progress of a people is measured best by the progress of each individual person. The best thing that I can do to help my church and nation grow is to grow personally and be the best person that I can be for God. Moses learned this lesson – and Joshua was to learn it, as well. For Moses, to grow spiritually meant that he had to be humbled and become a servant. The first time that the Hebrew word translated “servant” in Joshua 1:1 is found in the Bible is in Genesis 9:25. There is no doubt that the word means to be humbled as a servant to others because there we find that Noah’s youngest son was made “a servant...to his brethren.” In these first few words of Joshua, we find that Moses, the man who had once ruled over Egypt, was made a servant. But whose servant was he? He was “the servant of the LORD!” This phrase is first found in Deuteronomy 34:5 and has become part of the epitaph of Moses. Although Moses was referred to as a “servant” many times in his life, the phrase, “The Servant of the LORD” was saved until the day of his death. Watch for this phrase throughout our walk through this book of the Bible and you will find God constantly reminding Joshua of the humble service that Moses provided to Him and his people.

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to show you the true meaning of humility and service. **Realize** that the only way up with God is down. Humbly **serve** the LORD today as you **provide a humble service** to someone else.

Day 2: Joshua 1:10-18

“Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,” (Joshua 1:10)

Great Followers Make Great Leaders

Yesterday’s reading ended with God giving a command to Joshua. This is our first hint that Joshua is now assuming Moses’ role as the humble servant-leader of God’s people. He had earlier been a servant *to* Moses (see Exodus 33:11) but he was now to be the servant-leader that would *replace* Moses. To do this, Joshua would have to, “Be strong and of good courage” (1:9). This is another phrase that you might want to track faithfully as we make our way through this wonderful book. Note that today’s reading begins by saying “Joshua commanded the officers of the people” (v.10). He who had humbled himself as a servant to Moses had now been promoted to become the servant-leader himself. We never see Joshua aspiring to hold this position. He is only here because God has appointed him to lead his people. Humble service as a follower is the best school for those who will be used as leaders in God’s Kingdom! Yesterday, we found God informing Joshua of what was expected of him as a leader: He was to “Be strong and of good courage”. Be what God has *called* you to be and you will, without fail, be what your family and friends *need* you to be!

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to use this study to help you see that we are all called to lead at some level. **Respond** to God’s call on your life and **humbly submit** yourself to Him. **Lead** your family and friends by being a faithful follower within the roles God has placed you in this world. **Shine** for God where you are and **allow** Him to take you to where He wants you to be!

Day 3: Joshua 2:1-7

“Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly...So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.” (Joshua 2:1)

Meet Rahab

Joshua sent out two spies with the command to check out the land, especially the city of Jericho. During the course of this secret mission the two men met a woman named Rahab. She hid the spies in her home and protected them from the king of Jericho and his men. Some try to soften the story of Rahab by insisting she was actually an innkeeper and not a harlot. However, God does not seem to be ashamed of Rahab and what she was (note the past tense) so neither should we! Take a moment and read Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25 and see how the Holy Spirit chooses to describe her in the New Testament. Although there was much shame to be found in what this woman had been, there was now no shame in what she had become. True Kingdom Progress can begin at any level and take one to levels of service that you might never imagine. Who among us would seek a servant of God among sinners like Rahab? It is a good thing that the call to service is God’s doing and not our own or few people would ever be included. The story of Rahab teaches us to embrace any and all who have placed their faith in God. It helps us see that we are not only to help others in their walk with God, but that God has also sent them into our lives to help us. Kingdom Progress is realizing that God desires all people – from every walk of life – be allowed to find their place in the body of Christ and to serve Him there.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that the God who is not willing that any should perish is the same God that desires that all people know and serve Him. **Invite** someone into your small group and **expand** the circle of your Christian friends to **include** someone who is new among us. **Encourage** a new member today.

Day 4: Joshua 2:8-15

“For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt...” (Joshua 2:10)

“We Have Heard...”

Two very important phrases are found in today’s reading and both come from the mouth of a woman with whom few of us would have associated. First, Rahab tells the spies, “I know that the LORD has given you the land” (v. 9). And how did she know? Look at the first part of verse 10 and you will see that Rahab stated that she, and others, had “heard” of the many things God had performed for His people as He led them out of Egypt! We are not told how this word came to the people of Canaan. We can assume, however, that God intended for them to hear so that their hearts could be prepared for the things that were to come. What Rahab heard *with her ears* helped her to know *in her heart* that the God of Israel was at work! We would all be wise to walk with the knowledge that God is going ahead of us, and His Holy Spirit is using God’s Word to prepare the hearts of those we will meet. The very people that we may think are the most disinterested in the things of God may be the most desirous to hear them!

Prayer Emphasis: Trust God to prepare the heart of someone that you will meet today. **Be faithful** to **share** a witness when the opportunity arises. **Ask** God to place a divine appointment on your schedule today and **trust** that He has already opened someone’s heart to hear about the Savior!

Day 5: Joshua 2:16-22

“And she said to them, ‘Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way.’” (Joshua 2:16)

Three Days

I find it interesting that we find the phrase, “three days,” twice in our reading today! Both times the words were used to describe a time of hiding from enemies to escape danger. Hiding away from the enemy must have been a humbling experience for these men. However, this marks the third time that we find them hiding, or being hidden, since we began to read this book (see Joshua 2:4). These same men who were humble enough to hide were also humble enough to hear the words of Rahab as she told them to, “Get to the mountain” and “hide three days.” Needless to say, these men were not accustomed to taking orders from women, much less women like Rahab. However, they did as she said and they were not discovered by their enemies. At the same time, Rahab did as she was ordered by the spies and tied a scarlet cord in her window so that her home would be identified as one that should be spared in the coming invasion. The life that follows God and His Word will be a life that is marked by both the blood of Jesus (scarlet cord) and death to self. (Jesus was hidden three days in the tomb.) Neither of these things are natural to us but both are required if we are to live lives that are marked by Kingdom Progress!

Prayer Emphasis: Trust God to speak to you and guide you in ways that you might never have imagined! **Listen** for His voice as you go about your daily routine and **be obedient** to whatever He asks you to do. **Practice** immediate obedience and you will be blessed abundantly.

Day 6: Joshua 2:23-3:5

“and they commanded the people, saying,” (Joshua 3:3)

Amazing Things!

Read Joshua 3:2 again and notice that Joshua and the people camped “three days” at Jordan before the plan was revealed and the orders given that would see them beginning their conquest of the Promised Land! Three days seems to be a waiting period prior to some of the most victorious moments in the Bible story! Since the Ark of the Covenant was representative of God’s presence, the people were “commanded” to watch the Ark and follow it as it was carried forward by the priests. By doing so, they could know the time and direction for their every move. The people had only two commands upon which to focus: 1) they were to watch and follow the Ark of the Covenant, and 2) they were to “sanctify” themselves to the LORD (3:5). Read Genesis 2:3 to see the first time this Hebrew word that is translated “sanctify” is used in the Bible. There it refers to God “blessing” the seventh day and “resting” after He had completed His creation. As God’s people, we are to “rest” from our own works and trust wholly in His completed work of redemption, following His leadership and path through this world. When we follow One whom the Ark of the Covenant represented, then we will make true Kingdom Progress in this world.

Prayer Emphasis: Pray for our leadership as they lead our church in its daily operation. Like the priests of today’s story, they bear a burden for the Lord and His work. **Ask** God to guide them by His Word and **commit** to follow as God shows the way. **Trust** God to be working in your best interest at all times!

Day 7: Joshua 3:6-11

“And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.’” (Joshua 3:7)

“As I Was with Moses”

Notice that it was only after Joshua clearly humbled himself to God’s leadership by commanding the people to be consecrated to the LORD that God promised to “exalt” him in the eyes of the people. The word translated “exalt” here is first found in Genesis 12:2 where God promised Abram to make of him a “great” nation. The word is used in only one verse in Exodus where it describes the growth of young Moses after he was rescued from the river (Exodus 2:11). It was immediately after this “growth” in the life of Moses that we find him first noticing the burdens of his fellow Israelites. We will only see this word used twice in Joshua (here and Joshua 4:14). Here we find Joshua being “exalted” or “growing” in the eyes of the people when he begins to lead them and act in their best interest. The leaders were to lead the people by going “before” or “ahead” of the people. When leaders follow the Lord in *consecration* it clearly helps the people to follow God as a *congregation*. In verse nine, the Israelites were told to, “Hear the words of the LORD your God.” Just as surely as God was known to Rahab by what she had “heard,” so would the inhabitants of Canaan continue to hear of God’s presence among Joshua and the Israelites. We are wrong to think that God is not the same today as He was then. He is as interested in our Kingdom Progress as He was in the progress of these early followers.

Prayer Emphasis: **Pray** specifically for someone in leadership today. **Pray** specifically for your deacon and **ask** God to bless him and his family. There are many leaders in our church. All workers are leaders! **Encourage** someone in leadership today by letting them know that you are praying for them.

Day 8: Joshua 3:12-17

“Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.” (Joshua 3:17)

“Dry Ground!”

Don’t you grow weary of people trying to explain the miracles of the Bible by simply explaining them away to some natural occurrence? The Bible clearly states in verse 15 that the waters of the Jordan River had begun to “overflow all its banks” as it traditionally did at harvest time. Note that the waters were flowing normally and were “cut off” (v. 13) and made to stand “as heap” so the people could cross over on dry ground. These are the same words used to describe what happened at the Red Sea back in Exodus 15:8. Surely God wasted no time in proving His promise to be with Joshua as He was with Moses! The Ark of the Covenant stood still halfway across the dried riverbed until all the people safely crossed over. By standing there, the priests stood with the Ark in a place of danger until everyone reached a place of safety. May we all stand on our own ground for God and His Word until all have had an opportunity to hear and heed the call to follow Him!

Prayer Emphasis: **Commit** to leading by example and **model** true Christian faith to the world around you. **Risk** all in obedience to God’s commands and **know** that He will never fail you. **Recognize** that God is with you as much as He was with Moses, Joshua, or any other person who has ever followed Him.

Day 9: Joshua 4:1-7

“... Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.” (Joshua 4:3)

“Twelve Stones”

After all the people had safely crossed the river, 12 men, one from each tribe, were chosen to return to the middle of the riverbed where the priests stood with the Ark and then take up large stones from the place where the Ark stood. These were large stones that had to be carried out on the shoulders of these men. From these stones, a memorial was built on the shores of the river. This memorial was to be a reminder for generations to come of what the LORD had done for Israel on this great day. Just as these people had their questions about God and following Him, so would the next generation. However, these people were well equipped to answer the questions of the next generation because they had created a memorial that would not allow them to forget what God had done. Crossing the Jordan River does not typify salvation, but rather the Christian life that is found in full surrender to God’s will. The Promised Land was not a type of Heaven, but a type of God’s perfect will for His people while here on earth. Just as each of the representatives of the people were asked to bear their stones to the Canaan side of the river, Jesus has commanded us to, “Take up His cross daily and follow (Him)” (Luke 9:23). When people see our “memorial” (the cross) they will undoubtedly have some questions as to why we carry it. I pray that we will be prepared to give them the right answers.

Prayer Emphasis: Boldly answer the questions of the world today by **telling** them what the cross means to you. **Prepare** yourself to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

Day 10: Joshua 4:8-13

“And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan...and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged...” (Joshua 4:8)

The Memorial

Just as they were commanded, the Israelites sent representatives from each tribe back into the middle of the riverbed to bring 12 stones from the place where the Ark of the Covenant had stood while they all safely passed over to the Promised Land. Notice that these men first crossed over themselves and then returned to the riverbed to retrieve a stone for the memorial. No one can lead God’s people until they have first committed themselves to “crossing over” into God’s will for their own lives. It is only in the dictionary that you find the word “service” before “surrender.” Nowhere in the Bible do you find anyone prepared to serve the Lord prior to their own, personal surrender to His will. As we live for God, we are all building “memorials” for those who will live after us. Each of us is called to leave a legacy of love and surrender to those who will follow. Verse eight reminds us that the building of this memorial was done, “As the LORD had told Joshua.” Obedience is the key to all Kingdom Progress.

Prayer Emphasis: Live the kind of life that you would be proud to see in your children or grandchildren. **Obey** God at every opportunity and **build** “mental memorials” in the hearts and minds of those who follow you in this life. **Be** a living reminder of what God can do when we place our faith in Him.

Day 11: Joshua 4:14-19

“Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.” (Joshua 4:19)

Remember When?

There are certain days and events that mark our lives to the point that we never forget them or where we were when they happened. For me, those days include the assassinations of President Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., both explosions of the space shuttles, and, most importantly, the day I was saved! Notice that the specific date of the crossing of the Jordan River was noted and recorded for all time. We are still reading about it today! The Bible refers to this day as “that day,” in verse 14. It was surely a day to be remembered. After all of the people safely crossed the river, and those who returned to gather the memorial stones were once again on the far shore, the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant were finally commanded to come up out of the Jordan and into the Promised Land. Immediately after their feet reached a safe place, “the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before” (v. 18). Do not allow the intellectuals of this world to rob you of believing that you worship, serve, and follow a God of miracles! Don’t ever forget the “stones” and from whence they came! Kingdom Progress is moving forward while never forgetting what is behind.

Prayer Emphasis: **Thank God** for your *salvation* but also remember to **thank** Him for your call to *surrender* and *service*! Grace is just as important in these days of service as it was on the day you were saved. **Seek** God’s grace for your life as you **follow** Him today.

Day 12: Joshua 4:20-24

“that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.” (Joshua 4:24)

Two Good Reasons

It is beyond us to explain what God does or why He chooses to do things in the way that He does them! That is why we need to establish good memorials for those who will walk this path after we have made our final crossing in this life. Even though we do not always receive explanations sufficient to define the power and purposes of God, we do receive good reasons for why we should be totally obedient to Him. Here we are told that the people were again reminded that God had just done for them at the Jordan River exactly what He had done for His people earlier at the Red Sea. Two very good reasons for His doing so are recorded for our learning. He did it so: 1) “all the peoples of the earth” might know that “the hand of the LORD is mighty” and 2) that God’s own people might always “fear” (respect) Him “forever.” Notice that verse 21 says “when” the “children” ask about the meaning of the memorial and not “if” they ask. People are always going to have questions about God. It is only natural. We can be prepared to answer those questions through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. It is only in the supernatural that we can be equipped to do so.

Prayer Emphasis: **Ask** God to prepare you with supernatural answers for the questions that are to come. **Connect** with someone who needs to hear the Gospel and **be ready to share** when the time is right! Lead your children to know God as a great and “mighty” Father.

Day 13: Joshua 5:1-7

“At that time the LORD said to Joshua, ‘Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time.’” (Joshua 5:2)

A Strange Command?

At first glance, we might wonder why the LORD would order Joshua to circumcise the sons of Israel before going to battle. Circumcision would incapacitate these men for several days during their recovery period while the people were still living in what had to have been considered a hostile territory. However, God provides an explanation for why the men had to be circumcised. All of the circumcised men who had been a part of the exodus out of Egypt were now dead. Since Israel had not practiced circumcision during their 40 years in the wilderness, the men had to be circumcised now. Here we see the spiritual indifference of the parents resulting in a painful experience for their now grown children. Later, after the men were circumcised, we will see where the LORD declared, “This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you” (v. 9). The “reproach of Egypt” references the fact that the Israelites had probably adopted the Egyptian custom of not circumcising all of their male children. Why was it so important that these men be circumcised? In Acts 7:8, Stephen reminded the Sanhedrin that God gave Abraham “the covenant of circumcision.” Circumcision represented a separation from sin and unto God. It signified a cutting away of “the flesh” (the old man) that was not prepared for spiritual battle.

Prayer Emphasis: **Realize** that God’s people are still involved in a spiritual warfare and put away the old man that wants to remain too friendly with the world. **Accept** the fact that physical suffering is sometimes a path to spiritual growth.

Day 14: Joshua 5:8-15

“Then the Commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, ‘Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.’ And Joshua did so.” (Joshua 5:15)

Holy Ground!

One has to wonder if Moses ever told Joshua about his burning bush experience or the day God declared the ground upon which he had stood to be “holy ground.” We might also wonder if a young Joshua could have ever expected to be standing on such ground himself. However, here he is, after being obedient to God in the matter of the circumcising of the men, being told that the place where he was standing was “holy”. We have to wonder if we would have read of Joshua’s standing on holy ground if he had not been obedient to God’s command to circumcise his men. There are several key things in our reading today. Israel celebrates the Passover in the Promised Land for the very first time; the manna ceases now that the people have crossed the river and prepared for the conquest of the land; and Joshua has a meeting with, “the Commander of the LORD’S army.” One can only imagine that Joshua had never experienced such a blessed day as this. I am sure his head was in the clouds! However, we can safely walk with our heads in the clouds when our feet are standing on holy ground! Joshua was to play a different role than that of Moses, but it is obvious that he was to play on the same field and at the same level!

Prayer Emphasis: **Ask** God to make your path one that is walked on “holy ground.” **Be willing** to move on to something new even if it means that you have to **accept** some change along the way.

Day 15: Joshua 6:1-7

“And the LORD said to Joshua: ‘See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.’” (Joshua 6:2)

Jericho

Normally the people of Jericho would have considered themselves to be reasonably safe behind their strong walls, but this was not the case right now. As Rahab earlier told the spies, the people of Jericho were filled with terror as they came to the realization that the Israelites and their God were marching toward them (2:11). As Joshua continued to speak with the Commander of the LORD’S army, he was told that God had already delivered Jericho into his hands. The battle plan was to seem as questionable to the human mind as the decision to circumcise an army right before a battle! Joshua and the people were to march around the city once a day for six days with priests blowing trumpets before the Ark of the Covenant that they carried with them as they marched. On the seventh day they were to circle the city seven times. Note that *seven* priests played *seven* trumpets for *seven* days. They then circled the city *seven* times on the *seventh* day. Since the number seven is so closely associated with completeness and perfection throughout the Bible, one would have to believe that God was saying that He had a “completely perfect” plan for His people. We can all rest assured that God still has a perfect plan for each of our lives today. Kingdom Progress involves discovering the will of God for our lives and then doing it!

Prayer Emphasis: **Acknowledge** that God’s ways are better than our own ways. **Ask** God to help you to think more like a child of the King! **Claim** victory in your personal life by being obedient to God’s commands. Whatever He asks you to do, **just do it!**

Day 16: Joshua 6:8-14

“And the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days.” (Joshua 6:14)

Six Days

Since verse 12 tells us that Joshua rose up early on the morning of the second day and took the necessary actions to carry out God’s unusual plan for the invasion of Jericho, we might assume that the first day of marching began early, as well. The armed guard went first, leading a procession of seven trumpet-playing priests. The Ark of the Covenant and a rear guard followed. It seemed as if Israel was being told to say, “We have an army, but it is not our army that will give us the victory over you! It is the presence of our Mighty God that will give Jericho into our hands!” It has been estimated that the walk around Jericho took somewhere around 30 minutes. When the march was completed, the procession simply marched away, returning quietly to their camp. For six days the same plan was followed exactly as God had recommended. We can only imagine the kind of faith that it took to trust God so completely and to believe that His plan was better than any they could possibly make on their own.

Prayer Emphasis: **Commit** to God’s plan for your own life. **Trust** that He has a unique plan for you and your family. **Put God first** in your own life and let each day begin with a walk with Him. **Return** to your own home every night knowing that you have accomplished what God wanted you to do each day.

Day 17: Joshua 6:15-23

“But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early...and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times.” (Joshua 6:15)

“The Seventh Day”

Since the estimated time for one lap around a city the size of Jericho was 30 minutes, we understand that the activities of this fateful, seventh day of seven circuits around the city must have taken somewhere between three and four hours. On this day, though, on the seventh lap the silence was broken. The priests sounded a blast on their trumpets and Joshua commanded the people to, “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city” (v. 16)! And, true to his word to Rahab, Joshua reminded all the people that she and all who were in her house were to be spared because of her earlier hiding of the spies. Verses 18 and 19 include a command and an explanation. The people were to, “Abstain from the accursed things” and to bring the treasures of gold and silver so that they could “come into the treasury of the LORD.” When the trumpets sounded and the people shouted, the great wall of Jericho collapsed! This allowed the Israelites to charge into the city from every side and capture the mighty city in a short time. The two men who had earlier served as spies were sent to Rahab’s house to bring all who were there out to a place of safety. We are told that Rahab lived among the Israelites from that day forward. This “seventh day” was a most memorable day for all.

Prayer Emphasis: Begin a seven-day season of prayer for something or someone today. **Recruit** others to pray with you about a very specific matter or person. Through faith, **dare** to **ask** God to accomplish something through you that you could never accomplish alone.

Day 18: Joshua 6:24-27

“Then Joshua charged them at that time, saying, ‘Cursed be the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this city Jericho...’” (Joshua 6:26)

A Curse and a Blessing

After the fall of Jericho, Joshua pronounced a curse from the LORD upon any who would attempt to rebuild the city by reestablishing its foundations and restoring its wall and gates. The Bible will later record some brief periods of occupancy for this area (Joshua 18:21), but the city itself was not restored until the days of King Ahab almost 500 years later. Just as God had warned, the leader of the reconstruction crew paid dearly for his effort. I Kings 16:34 references the words of today’s focus verse and tells how they were fulfilled. Take the time to turn to that chapter and verse in your Bible and see how it so clearly connects these tragedies with the rebuilding of Jericho. Chapter six ends with God declaring that He was with Joshua just as He had promised earlier in 1:5 and 1:9. Verse 27 says, “his fame spread throughout all the country.” Again, this was in answer to God’s promise in 3:7. There was to be no doubt that this was to be considered a great victory for the people of God. But there was also to be no doubt as to who would receive the credit and glory for this great victory! Just as God’s Word holds true to its warnings against disobedience, it also holds true to its promises for blessings upon those who choose to obey.

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to help you to make the right choices in life. **Believe** that God blesses those who choose to obey Him and deals firmly with those who willfully disobey His commands. **Act** accordingly! Amen!

Day 19: Joshua 7:1-6

“But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan...took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.” (Joshua 7:1)

“But”

Notice that the first verse of our reading today does not say, “A child of Israel committed a trespass,” but rather, “the children of Israel committed a trespass.” Earlier, we were told that the treasures of Jericho were to be confiscated and “consecrated” to the house of God. Israel would share in the bounty from future victories, but not from this first victory at Jericho. One man chose to disobey God’s commands and now the whole nation would suffer for his lack of faithfulness. Achan took some of the spoils for himself yet God’s anger, “burned against” all Israel! Soon we see Israel falling in battle to the little city of Ai, where we are told that only a “few” men dwelled. However, these “few” routed the army of Israel, killed about 36 of their soldiers, and chased them from their gates. As you would imagine, the hearts of the people melted (v. 5). It was as if the momentum had completely shifted to the other side! Still unaware of the cause for this great loss, Joshua “tore his clothes” (v. 6). The tearing of one’s outer garment signified extreme grief and a breaking heart within. Joshua then “fell on his face” before God, staying there all day in prayer. The leaders of Israel did the same. But for one greedy, selfish, and disobedient man, the people would be holding another victory service on this day. What a difference one person can make!

Prayer Emphasis: Ask the Holy Spirit to defeat all selfishness and greed within you. **Admit** that you cannot gain victory alone. **Commit** to trusting God’s plan and never replace it with your own schemes.

Day 20: Joshua 7:7-13

“For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear it, and surround us, and cut off our name from the earth. Then what will You do for Your great name?” (Joshua 7:9)

God’s Great Name

As we read today’s verses, it is as if we had walked up behind Joshua and listened in as he poured out his heart before the LORD. He began his prayer (v. 7) with an acknowledgement that God was still sovereign no matter the outcome of the battle. To say that God was sovereign, was to say that all was within His power and that His will was to be accomplished and accepted fully. Joshua’s prayer closed with the young leader being concerned with the damage that this surprising loss might have done to God’s great name. We need to be reminded that, at this time, only Achan is aware of what happened at Jericho and why the Israelites lost the battle at Ai. Joshua now feared that the name of God would be diminished among the peoples of Canaan. Notice the wording of God’s response to Joshua. He stated that “Israel” (not Achan) had sinned and “they” (not he) had violated His commands. Count the times that God uses the word “they” in the next few lines and realize that God’s great name – and the success or failure of His people – can be greatly damaged by the selfish acts of just one disobedient person. That which was to be given to God had been taken by one man and there was to be no more victory until the matter was settled before God.

Prayer Emphasis: Live with the understanding that one person can bring blessing or cursing to many people. As God’s child, **act** accordingly and live up to the name by which we are called – that being the name of Christ. **Refuse** to be one who might bring damage to that great name and the cause of the church!

Day 21: Joshua 7:14-19

“In the morning therefore you shall be brought according to your tribes. And it shall be that the tribe which the LORD takes shall come according to families; and the family which the LORD takes shall come by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall come man by man.” (Joshua 7:14)

“In the Morning...”

God wastes no time in telling Joshua how to deal with the sin problem that had so hindered the progress in Canaan. Joshua is to begin, “In the morning,” to follow a prescribed plan that would allow the guilty party to be identified. The people were to march, in rank, before God with all of the 12 tribes passing before Him. First, the tribe would be identified, then the family, and finally, the man. The violator would be caught with the stolen items and he, along with those items and his family, would be destroyed. Early the next morning, Joshua followed God’s plan and Achan was soon identified as the culprit. One can only imagine how Achan’s heart must have raced as he, along with all the others, followed the commands of God and participated in the process of discovering the one that had betrayed God and the people. There is no time to waste when the glory of God is being diminished by our personal sins! We should begin each day with our own “morning march” before God, asking Him to identify anything within us that might cause harm to His great cause. Confession is not only good for the soul, but it is good for all that are touched by our lives. Our friends and family need us to be the kind of Christian that is committed to making Kingdom Progress as we take our walk of faith with God.

Prayer Emphasis: Begin every day with a renewed commitment to following God as completely as possible. **Renew** that commitment as many times as necessary throughout each day of your life. **Remember** there are always consequences for the believer who willfully disobeys God.

Day 22: Joshua 7:20-26

“And Achan answered Joshua and said, ‘Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done:’” (Joshua 7:20)

“I” Have Sinned

We cannot help but hear the desperation in the words of Achan as he accepts full responsibility for his selfish actions. As much as that is to be commended, there is now no undoing of the terrible costs of his willful disobedience to God’s commands. Take a moment to note the number of times that the personal pronoun “I” is found in Achan’s statement recorded in verse 20. It is clear that he is admitting his own guilt and now wishes that he alone could be punished for what he has done. Notice the progression of Achan’s actions: “I saw...I coveted...I took” (v. 21). It was no different for Achan than it was for Eve in the garden, and it is no different for us today. Sin begins in the heart when we begin to look to the things of this world for our security and comfort. It grows within us as we begin to covet things to the extent that they become more important to us than a right relationship with God! Achan might have confessed that he took the stolen items when he sinned, but we know very well that it was the sin that took him.

Prayer Emphasis: Examine your own heart. **Look** closely to the desires of your heart. **Pray** for your family today – naming each member to God – and ask God to make you the person that you should be as you relate to them on a daily basis. **Ask** them to pray for you as you strive to live for God each day.

Day 23: Joshua 8:1-8

“Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.” (Joshua 8:7)

Victory at Ai

Our God is true to His promises, so when He promises that He forgives and forgets our confessed sins, He means it! After the sin of Achan had been dealt with, God immediately returned Joshua and the people to the safe place of His compassionate protection. But this time, when God admonished Joshua to not be afraid, he also admonished him to not be *discouraged*. It is not difficult to imagine how much discouragement this early and devastating defeat brought to the hearts of the people. God reassured them that He had *already* delivered the city of Ai into their hands. (Notice the past tense in the words “have given” in verse 1.) However, as opposed to the instructions regarding Jericho, God instructed Joshua to allow the people to freely take of the plunder of Ai. Joshua and the army of Israel moved out and launched an attack against Ai with a well-designed plan in place. Joshua was quick to remind his soldiers that, “The LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.” He would later say they were to deal with the city “according to the commandment of the LORD” (v. 8). How good it would be if we would heed such wise counsel. There is no opportunity for Kingdom Progress without our full obedience to the commands of God.

Prayer Emphasis: **Listen** for the voice of God on a moment by moment basis today. **Allow** Him to lead you through His wonderful Word. **Stand ready** to do battle with the understanding that every victory wrought is a gift from Almighty God. **Thank** Him often throughout the day.

Day 24: Joshua 8:9-14

“And all the people of war who were with him went up and drew near; and they came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now a valley lay between them and Ai.” (Joshua 8:11)

A Good Strategy

A well thought out strategy is often the key to the greatest victories. Joshua and his armies moved into place to set an ambush behind the city of Ai. This was not an idea for which Joshua could claim the credit. God told Joshua to approach the battle of Ai in this manner back in the verses we read yesterday. As usual, God’s plan worked to absolute perfection! When the King of Ai saw just a portion of Israel’s army before him, he took the bait and launched an all-out attack against them, leaving the city unguarded. It might not have seemed like a good strategy to any military leader to make camp *in a valley* just outside an enemy’s stronghold, but that is exactly what God led His people to do. Tomorrow’s reading will fully explain how this strategy would bring complete success to Joshua and his warriors. But today, just like Joshua’s army, we will live knowing that God has done everything necessary for a full and complete victory over our enemy. Take some time to thank Him for that before you turn out the lights tonight to sleep in the peace and safety of His grace.

Prayer Emphasis: **Rest** in the promised peace that only God can give. **Acknowledge** that He alone is our source of victory in any area of our lives. **Stand** strong in your faith, even when God directs you to camp in the valley! The greatest times of spiritual growth in our lives are often those times spent in the valleys.

Day 25: Joshua 8:15-22

“And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness.” (Joshua 8:15)

Toward the Desert

How interesting it is that part of the God-directed ambush plan for victory at Ai included feigned *defeat* followed by some time spent with a planned *retreat* “by way of the wilderness.” Such flight surely would not sound like much of a strategy for victory, but it became an essential part of God’s battle plan for this day. As Joshua and his men allowed themselves to be driven back, the men of Ai pursued them, leaving their city vulnerable to the ambush party set in place by Joshua. On Joshua’s signal (as commanded by the LORD) the ambush party advanced to Ai and captured it before setting it on fire. The army of Ai was utterly destroyed by the Israelites. We all remember the story where Jesus was, “led by the Spirit” to go to the “desert” (wilderness) to be tested by the devil. Sometimes our willingness to follow God’s commands can be difficult for the natural man to understand. In these situations, we need to recall God’s acknowledgement that His ways are not our ways and that His ways are *higher* than our ways. What appeared to the enemy as a fleeing army was simply an army obeying God and following His strategy. Kingdom Progress comes more easily to those who are willing to trust first and then understand later! If we wait until we understand before we trust, then we might never trust at all!

Prayer Emphasis: Obey God even when it does not make sense to your natural way of thinking. **Realize** that any victory to be obtained in this world will be due to our obedience to the One who created this world and rules it from heaven. **Ask** God for a detailed plan for your greatest and best spiritual success today.

Day 26: Joshua 8:23-29

“So it was that all who fell that day, both men and women, were twelve thousand—all the people of Ai.” (Joshua 8:25)

A Third Memorial

One would wonder what kind of “rating” today’s reading might receive from the television or movie industry. The conquest of Ai was a very violent event, and God does not try to hide the details of it from the pages of history. When we read that all of the men and women of Ai were put to the sword – 12,000 people in all – we have to know that this was one of the bloodiest days to date in the conquest of Canaan and in the Bible story as a whole. We then read of the king of Ai’s body being hung on a tree and left until evening. Eventually, it is taken down and thrown at the entrance to the city. We cringe at the thought of such violence. The Israelites then covered the body of the fallen king with a great pile of stones, just as they had earlier covered the body of Achan. All who were associated with the Israelites’ earlier defeat were now dead and memorials were left to those who remained alive. Some memorials are more pleasant than others, but all have their divine purpose in our lives.

Prayer Emphasis: Consider some times in your life that are worth memorializing today. **Tell** your children or spouse about them and relive the moment. **Praise** God for every victory in your life and **realize** that no defeat is permanent for the child of God.

Day 27: Joshua 8:30-34

“Now Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel in Mount Ebal,” (Joshua 8:30)

An Altar

It is no coincidence that this first “altar” in the Promised Land was built here at Mount Ebal. At the foot of this mountain was the very spot where Abraham had earlier built an altar after receiving the promise that God would someday give this very land to his descendants (Genesis 12:6–7). There may have been some times in Abraham’s life where he wondered if he had clearly understood what God promised him back at that time, but, if so, all doubt would eventually be cleared. There were several important ingredients to this worship service. There was an altar, offerings, and the Word of God. But, most importantly, there was the Ark of the Covenant which symbolized the presence of God. Without that final ingredient, this meeting would have been nothing more than another gathering. It is only the presence of God that makes our altars true places of worship. It is only His presence that makes our offerings acceptable to Him. And it is only by His Word that we can even begin to have moments like the one shared with us today. Note carefully that the reading of God’s Word was the most focal part of the service and that it was read to the whole assembly of Israel, including the women and children, along with the aliens who lived among them. This altar becomes the “Fourth Memorial” in the Book of Joshua.

Prayer Emphasis: **Thank** God for the privilege to lead your family before Him in praise and worship. **Remember** to **include** even the aliens (newcomers) in your times of praise to God.

Day 28: Joshua 9:1-6

“But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors...” (Joshua 9:3-4a)

The Gibeonites

As you may imagine, the news of Israel’s victories over Jericho and Ai spread far and wide! The kings of the countries west of Jordan came together to war against Joshua and Israel. Some of the enemies did not want to battle against Israel and sought means to avoid going to war. Convinced that they could not defeat God’s armies in battle, the people of Gibeon decided to resort to trickery to escape any future confrontation. These people sent a delegation to meet with Israel, taking great efforts to make it appear as if they had been traveling for a very long time and from a far distance. They even thought to take stale bread along with them to make the farce seem as real as possible. Upon arrival, they lied to the men of Israel, claiming that they were from a far country and desirous of making a treaty with them. What is the truth to learn from this story? In this case, the enemy was as familiar with some of the Scriptures as the Israelites. Their appeal for peace was based on some provisions in the Mosaic Law that would allow God’s people to make peace with nations that were far away from them while completely destroying those that were in the nearby region. We would do well to realize that our enemy is still twisting God’s Word today just like he did here and as far back as in the Garden of Eden.

Prayer Emphasis: **Commit** to daily time in God’s Word and become as familiar with it as you possibly can. **Grow** in your knowledge of God’s Word every day. **Commit** a verse or phrase to memory today. It may make all the difference for you tomorrow!

Day 29: Joshua 9:7-13

“But they said to Joshua, ‘We are your servants.’ And Joshua said to them, ‘Who are you, and where do you come from?’” (Joshua 9:8)

Just Like Their Father

Joshua was quick to question the honesty of the delegation that approached him seeking peace. Despite the considerable efforts made by the travelers to appear as if they had been on the road for a very long time, something must not have seemed right in Joshua’s spirit. He offered the supposition that they might actually be from a near country, and in that case, not eligible for treaties with Israel. They lied again, claiming to be willing servants to God’s people. They claimed they had received news of Israel’s escape from Egypt and its victories over the Amorites prior to their crossing Jordan. They made no mention of the most recent victories over Jericho and Ai. This was to further support their claim that they had been on the road for a very long time and had not been aware of any recent news. Jesus declared Satan to be a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). Just as Joshua suspected, these people were being just like their father! We would do well to question things that require our being the least bit disobedient to the commands of God. We will see Joshua learning this lesson the hard way. If we are wise, we will learn how we can avoid making the same mistake!

Prayer Emphasis: Call the devil just what he is! A liar! **Identify** as closely with Christ and the church as possible. **Be careful** about making associations without much prayerful consideration. **Make sure** that everyone you know is aware that you are committed to the Lord’s side!

Day 30: Joshua 9:14-20

“Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the LORD. So Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live; and the rulers of the congregation swore to them.” (Joshua 9:14-15)

A Costly Mistake

As a precaution, the men of Israel tested the food that the Gibeonites carried with them to see if it was, indeed, old and stale. It was wise to take such precautions. However, it was not wise to come to any conclusions about this matter without first consulting the LORD in prayer. Verse 14 clearly indicates that the leaders did not seek direction from God. This became the first step toward a difficult time in the lives of God’s people. Perhaps Joshua thought this to be too small a matter to take to the LORD. We should allow this story to remind us that God wants to participate in all our decisions, no matter how great or small! In just three days’ time the shocking news came of the betrayal (v. 16). “All the congregation complained against the rulers” (v. 18), but the leaders felt they had no option but to honor their promised peace with their deceivers. The army of people that had so successfully ambushed the people of Ai now found themselves caught in an ambush of their own. The words of verse 20 form a statement that is totally opposed to what God commanded them. The decision was to let the people of Gibeon live. This they did – and Israel would live to regret it!

Prayer Emphasis: Pray without ceasing! **Take** everything to God in prayer. **Seek** His counsel before any and all decisions. **Remember** to involve God in your every activity and you will never regret it.

Day 31: Joshua 9:21-27

“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.’” (Joshua 9:21)

“Woodcutters and Water Carriers”

After some obvious consideration, the decision was made to honor the treaty with the Gibeonites but force them to live up to their earlier promise to be Israel’s servants. Joshua rebuked the deceivers for their dishonesty and sentenced them to a life of slavery. They were to become “woodcutters and water carriers” for the people of God and would be assigned some specific responsibilities toward the service of the tabernacle. When asked why they would commit such a treacherous deception, they responded by saying, “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” (v. 24). Obviously, these people had faith in the Word of God to the point that they would take drastic measures in response to what it said. We need to have the same kind of faith today. Our actions should be based on what we hear from God and not on what we hear anywhere else. It is interesting to note that the end result of these people acting on what they had heard about God was a life of service! Woodcutters and water carriers were considered as servants. When these people first met with Joshua, they said, “We are your servants” (9:8). As the story unfolds before us, we see that their earlier promise to be servants to the people of Israel proved to be quite prophetic!

Prayer Emphasis: **Serve** no one but God! **Listen** carefully for God’s directions on a moment-by-moment basis. **Trust** God to always work in your best interest and **follow** His commands as much as humanly possible.

Day 32: Joshua 10:1-4

“Now it came to pass when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it—as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king—and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them,” (Joshua 10:1)

Help!

The king of Jerusalem heard the news about the victories over Jericho and Ai, as well as the newly formed treaty with the Gibeonites. These victories brought the armies of Israel very near to the outskirts of his city. He knew his city would soon be surrounded and under attack. He immediately sent a cry for help to four other nearby cities, hoping their kings would join him in a military alliance. However, this military action was not to be against the Israelites but the Gibeonites! His plea to the other kings was, “Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel” (v. 4). Tomorrow’s verses will reveal more to us about this story, but, in the meantime, let’s take note that the Gibeonites appear to have leaped from the proverbial “frying pan and into the fire!”

Prayer Emphasis: **Learn** that honesty is not just the *best* policy – but that it should be the *only* policy. When we sow evil things into the lives of others we are sure to reap evil things in our own lives. **Promise** yourself and God that you will **be honest** in your dealings with others.

Day 33: Joshua 10:5-10

“Therefore the five kings of the Amorites...gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it.” (Joshua 10:5)

The Amorites

The Amorites were the people of Canaan who lived in the hill country. Two things really stand out in the verses that we have been reading recently. First, we see the Amorites, a people who once held true to a treaty with Abraham and supported him as he fought against the people who had taken his nephew, Lot, captive at Sodom. Now they are part of an alliance of countries that are fighting *against* God’s people. Secondly, we again read of Jerusalem being part of this alliance of kings and nations. We sometimes forget there was no Jerusalem as we know it in the Bible until God’s people had been obedient enough to leave their wanderings in the wilderness, cross over Jordan, and take the land that God had promised to them. Jerusalem means “City of Peace.” But here, it seems to be anything but peaceful. The Gibeonites sent word to Joshua, begging him not to abandon them and leave them to fight these attacking forces alone. In response to that plea, Joshua marched his army all night long and arrived in time to save the very people who had deceived him.

Prayer Emphasis: Keep your promises. **Fulfill** your commitments. There may be times when things are not as you would desire for them to be, but it is always right to do the right thing. **Live up** to your word and you will **live up** to your name (Christian).

Day 34: Joshua 10:11-14

“So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies...So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day.” (Joshua 10:13)

A Mighty God!

As the Amorites fled from the army of Israel, God showed Himself mighty on behalf of His people by raining large hailstones from the sky. The NKJV says that, “the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven” (v. 11). The NIV states that he “hurled” them. My dad used to say “chunk” the ball to him rather than “throw” the ball when he would play catch with us. When we would tease him about his word for “throw” he would say, “You can call it whatever you like so long as you get it (the ball) there.” Call it what you like, God proved Himself to be the most instrumental part of this great victory. It remains the same for God’s people today. This is the day that Joshua boldly asked God to give him more time in the battle by causing the Sun to “stand still.” People of science like to tease us about this because we know that the Sun does not actually move. Our planet travels around the Sun and portions thereof are exposed to its rays as the Earth rotates. However, these people of science still refer to “sunrise” and “sunset,” don’t they? Joshua spoke from the perspective of a little man on earth asking for help from a great God in Heaven! Obviously, God slowed the rotation of the earth enough to cause it to make one rotation in a 48-hour period rather than a 24-hour period. Whether the sun stood still or the earth slowed down – “you can call it whatever you like” – God got it there!

Prayer Emphasis: Believe in miracles! Joshua prayed for a miracle in the presence of the people of Israel (v. 12). **Dare** to **ask** God for something that only He can do – and give Him the glory when He does it!

Day 35: Joshua 10:15-26

“But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah...So Joshua said, ‘Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them.’” (Joshua 10:16 & 18)

A Good Steward

Joshua did not waste one moment of the extra day God had given him! He was committed to gaining a full victory against his enemies on this special day. How sad would it have been for God to work so powerfully on his behalf only to find Joshua not taking the fullest advantage of the time that God had granted at his request. The five kings of the alliance were eventually trapped and killed and most of the men of their armies died. Although the actions taken by Joshua and his men seemed harsh – the putting of their feet upon the necks of their captured enemies prior to killing them – this was a common custom of conquerors in that time. It was a symbolic gesture that an enemy was now utterly defeated. Joshua then spoke to the people and repeated words God had earlier spoken to him. He commanded them to not be afraid or discouraged but to be strong and courageous. As might be expected, in the end, Joshua gave God all the glory for the day’s victory (v. 25). That’s what good stewards do.

Prayer Emphasis: **Make** the most of this day! **Make** every moment important! **Be** a good steward of your time and **use** every moment to seek and **do** the will of God as you **go** about your daily business. As we have learned from our recent readings, there is always time to do what God would have us to do!

Day 36: Joshua 10:27-32

“So it was at the time of the going down of the sun that Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees, cast them into the cave where they had been hidden, and laid large stones against the cave’s mouth, which remain until this very day.” (Joshua 10:27)

The Fifth Monument

At the end of “The Day” Joshua gave orders for the bodies of the five kings to be taken down from the trees and thrown into the same cave in which they had earlier been hiding. The opening of the cave was covered with “large stones”. These large stones became the fifth monument erected in the Promised Land. Kingdom Progress always includes our clearly marking the way for those who follow us. We need “reminders” to help us to recall all of the great things God has done for us in our marching for Him. We need to remember God’s blessings and our children need to know about them. The next verses make it appear as if Joshua and his army made quick work of the remaining people of the southern part of Canaan. In obedience to God, they “utterly destroyed” (v. 28) the cities, leaving no survivors, just as they had done with Jericho. As you read these verses, notice the repeated reminder that “The LORD” was the One who “delivered” the enemies over to His conquering people. Next to these verses, I drew a crude picture of a few “rocks” in the margin of my Bible. It will be my own little “monument” to help me to remember that there is no full and absolute victory unless we obey God to our fullest ability. He will take up the fight from there. Where we fall short; He stands tall!

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Progress is made only because of the grace of Almighty God. **Mark** your own life with memorials to God’s grace and **talk** about them every chance you get. God loves to hear His children **praise** Him. **Testify** of His wonderful grace to someone today!

Day 37: Joshua 10:33-39

“Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, until he left him none remaining.” (Joshua 10:33)

The King of Gezer

As we have read about the many victories God has given to His people, we should be reminded that all these battles were fought to the fullest by God’s people and that there were, undoubtedly, casualties of war and collateral damage. Although our brief history of these battles may make them *sound* as if they were easy, we can be sure that they did not *seem* easy to Joshua and his soldiers. Horam, the king of Gezer, reigned over what was probably the most powerful city in the area. Hebron and Debir were chief cities, as well. One thing is clear. Things did not become easier for God’s people as they made their way into the Promised Land. As we move forward in our own spiritual journeys, it may seem to us that one battle is followed by another and another and another! We may feel as if we are in a constant battle as we make our Kingdom Progress through this life. The enemies that we are sometimes forced to face on a daily basis may only seem to become bigger and more powerful as we go. However, the bigger the battle, the bigger our God will be for us. God “grows” in size or stature in the eyes of those who behold Him as He works to accomplish His will in their lives!

Prayer Emphasis: Take stock of the battles that are before you. **Compare** your trial to the cross that Christ carried for you and allow God to help you see things in the proper perspective. **Recognize** that God is bigger than anything you may face today. **Encourage** a fellow believer today.

Day 38: Joshua 10:40-11:5

“All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.” (Joshua 10:42)

An Excellent Conclusion

The last three verses of chapter 10 summarize the campaign against the whole region. Our focus verse states that “all these kings” were conquered “*at one time.*” But they were also conquered *for one reason.* Joshua and his army had success, “*because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.*” Joshua and Israel returned to their camp at Gilgal knowing they still had the kingdoms to the north to conquer, but also knowing that God would be the same for them in the future as He had been in the past. He is the God who, “changes not” and who will never “leave us nor forsake us.” He is the God of the mountains and the valleys. He is the God of peace and of war. He is the God who fights for us when we set out, in faith, to accomplish His divine will for our lives. But there was not much time for resting. The kings to the north heard the news of the defeat of the southern region and made preparations to launch an all-out attack against Israel. The first five verses of chapter 11 describe a very large army with many horses and chariots. To date, Israel had not faced any army that was described with such powerful words and phrases. Because things do not get any easier, we must remember our memorials and the victories in our earlier experiences. Because “The LORD” fights for us, we are not afraid.

Prayer Emphasis: Remind yourself daily that God is fighting for you. **Ask** Him for the things necessary for you to make true Kingdom Progress in your life. **Trust** Him with your every need.

Day 39: Joshua 11:6-11

“But the LORD said to Joshua, ‘Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.’”
(Joshua 11:6)

“Do Not Be Afraid”

We often receive unsolicited advice from others. However, there is no advice better than that which comes from the LORD Himself! As Joshua and the people of God are being attacked by yet another powerful alliance of kings and their armies, God comes to Joshua, in a private moment and meeting, and says, *“Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel.”* In other words, God was promising Joshua a victory before the battle even started. Bolstered by God’s strong words of encouragement, Joshua and the army moved out against the enemies camped before them and attacked them. Just as He promised, God did “deliver” them over to Israel. Joshua learned something that we would do well to learn today. God will “deliver” many things to those who first give themselves to Him by walking in obedience to His commands. Kingdom Progress is best made when we fear the LORD more than we fear any man. Our promise of God’s presence and blessing sometimes comes to us through His messengers. But, sometimes, He comes close to us Himself and reassures us that He is everything we need for victory in this world and the world to come!

Prayer Emphasis: Be brave! Persist in prayer! **Obey** God! You will soon be amazed at how much God can give you if you will give yourself to Him. **Write** the words “Do not be afraid” on a piece of paper and carry them with you throughout your day. **Encourage** someone else to stand strong for God today.

Day 40: Joshua 11:12-17

“As the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.” (Joshua 11:15)

Hazor

Yesterday’s reading concluded with some information being provided about Hazor. God had this city mentioned specifically for a very good reason. Hazor would become, by far, the largest opponent that Israel had yet faced. It was over 200 acres in size. When we compare that to Jericho (8 acres), we see that things are certainly not getting any easier for Joshua and his army! However, no matter the size of the enemy, God was always “big enough” to deliver them into the hands of His obedient people. The conquest of Hazor gave Israel control of a major intersection of highways that led to and from Egypt, Syria, Assyria, and Babylon. As the strength of the opposition increased, more attention needed to be placed upon being obedient to the commands of God. It seems that Joshua was focused on doing just that. Verse 15 states that Joshua “left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.” The Hebrew word translated “nothing” here is a compound word that literally means “no word.” Joshua left no word from God undone. He obeyed God to the fullest of his ability, and God just kept on “giving” him great victories.

Prayer Emphasis: Remain strong in your faith no matter the difficulties that may lie ahead. **Trust** God today to be whatever He needs to be for you. Let no command of God go disobeyed or left incomplete as you make your Kingdom Progress through this life.