

## Sunday Update

13#6#21

### Joshua 1:1-9

*After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant: 2 'Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan river into the land I am about to give to them – to the Israelites. 3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. 4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates – all the Hittite country – to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. 5 No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. 7 'Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. 8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'*

How do you lay good foundations? Good foundations matter perhaps more than we understand. Where do we find good foundations for our lives? I friend of mine was telling me the story of the building of his house; knowing Dave, I suspect he was trying to do a lot of it himself. I don't know whether he laid the foundations of the house or whether he had the builder do it, but the foundations were dug out and then the concrete laid. At the point, the building inspector arrived to check on the work that had been done, before they went on to build the house. He inspected the foundations and decided that the concrete mix was wrong; so they had to dig the foundations up and lay them again; if they had left the mix the way it was, the house would have been in danger of collapse. It matters a great deal to set the right foundations before you try to build on it. That is obviously true of house-building as it is true of life.

Today's story is of Joshua. He is being appointed leader of the people of Israel because Moses has died. This is a terrible time for the people: Moses had been their leader for 40 years and had brought them all the way through the desert till they stood on the border of the Promised Land. We would imagine that they had grown to depend on Moses, maybe even respect him for his leadership; some would even love him, though the relationship between leader and people was often tested. Joshua was appointed to take his place; he was to be the next generation of leadership for the people. His great task and challenge would be to take the people into the Promised Land and get them settled there, fight off their enemies and allow them to settle in peace, just as God had promised. There were obstacles in the way: there were already people living there, so expect battles; Israel had proved themselves unreliable in the past, not always willing to accept leadership, so expect sleepless nights; there would be big choices to make, so expect a great deal of prayer. God promises Joshua that He would be with him, so he should not be afraid, but should *"Be strong and courageous..." (verse 6)*

Joshua is taking on a big job; the responsibility is huge! God has given him a big task, taking the people into the Promised Land after 40 years wandering in the desert. He needs good foundations to be able to do this job well, personal qualities that will equip him to deal with the stresses and anxieties that will come his way. We're told about 2 foundations of Joshua the man, the leader, the believer. Let's have a look at these foundations and discover how Joshua's experience can help us lay good foundations in our lives.

The first foundation block for Joshua is a promise that God makes to him. God promises that He will be with Joshua and will always be there. *"I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you."* (verse 5) God has made that promise before; last week we saw that he made it to Jacob; for Joshua it was significant that God had made it to Moses; now God makes that promise again to Joshua at the start of his new ministry. Times have changed and in the midst of all sorts of uncertainties for Joshua and the people, God promises that He will be with Joshua and will never leave him. That sense of God's presence will be the first foundation of Joshua's life; he will learn to trust God and to walk in the Lord's ways because time and time again he will discover that God is with him, helping him and guiding him all the way. We're going to think more about this idea in our service this morning.

The second foundation block for Joshua is the Word of God, in his case the book of the law. With the promise (above) there comes a challenge: *"Do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it."* (verse 8) The Book of the Law is the place where God has shown His people what He is like; He has revealed Himself so that people might know God and believe and trust Him. It is also the place where He has told His people what faith looks like and how they are to live their lives. It is central to their faith, knowing God and knowing how to be faithful people. So this book is crucial to their life in exactly the same way that the Bible is crucial to our understanding of God and to the way we live by faith.

Joshua is to do 3 things with this book. He is to keep it and not lose it; he is to meditate on it day and night; and he is to obey it. The book of the law is to be central to Joshua's life and the kind of person he is. That might seem obvious, but God says it anyway, as a reminder that Joshua is to be faithful to God as a leader; it is important that the book is important. Then he is to meditate on it, imbibe it, take it in, know what it says, understand it; read it with his breakfast and have it on his bedside table when he goes to bed; it should be second-nature to him to read it and consider it. Then, thirdly, he is to do what it says: his leadership and his life are to be shaped by what he reads in this book. There will be pressures on him to do things in a different way, but he is to be the leader that God wants him to be, shaped by God's presence and sustained by God's grace.

The Bible sets the foundation of our lives in exactly the same 3 ways. First of all, it opens up so many significant things to us for us to know and understand: we see what God is like and what He has done for us, especially in Jesus; we see what life is like when Jesus is King; we see what a life of faith looks like. Then secondly, we are to take it in; there is no point in the Bible being on the bookshelf gathering dust, but it needs to be opened and read and taken in. Thirdly, we are challenged to do what it says, to obey the commands and principles of God for our lives, to be the kind of people that Jesus wants us to be. In this way, the Bible sets grand foundations in our lives for the kind of people that we are; then we are able to be the best people, and to live life in the best way and to do our work in the best way that we can. The Bible is such a good foundation block for our lives, that we miss out on so much when we neglect it. Take it down from the shelf; read it with your breakfast and have it on your bedside table when you go to bed; put it into practice in the kind of people you are. Read the story of the wise and foolish builders in Matthew 7:24-27 – what is it that makes the man wise?

The Bible is seen by many as irrelevant, an out-of-date book that belongs to a bygone era. Even among Christians it is not read as much as it should be. Many of us struggle to make sense of it, either because it belongs to a different era and culture, or because the language is hard. Yet, it contains the best foundation anyone can lay for a life full of good character and grace from God. There is treasure for us in its pages. Its teaching equips us to be strong and courageous in faith and life.

*Prayer: Father, thank You for the Bible, Your Word to us. Thank You that You have shown us what You are like; You have told us what You have done for us, especially in Jesus; You have described Your love for us in profound ways; You have shown us what life is like when Jesus is King and how we live life in the Lord's ways. Help us to read, mark, learn and digest the Bible so that we may live by it, with good foundations for our lives. Let it's teaching shape the way that we think, the way that we believe and the kind of people that we are, so that we may have good foundations for our lives for all of our days.*

*Day by day, dear Lord of you*

*Three things I pray:*

*To see you more clearly,*

*To love you more dearly,*

*To follow you more nearly,*

*Day by day.*

Please take time during the week to pray for the people referred to in these topics:

- For people who struggle to know what is important and valuable in life; for those whose foundations are not good but lead them into trouble; for people looking for something reliable in life, but not knowing where to turn. Let them find Jesus.
- For Bible Societies across the world, working to make the Bible available to people in Scotland and in other places too, translating it into so many mother tongues, and opening up this treasure store of riches for people who have never read it before.
- For people who have contracted Covid and are in hospital, that they make a good recovery; those NHS staff who are caring for them.
- For people who mourn because a loved one has died; help them to find comfort and peace; for the process of grief that goes on and those who feel the effects of lockdown on their deepest emotions and feelings of loss.
- For the continued roll-out of the vaccine to be efficient and effective, reaching the people who need it most; for the vaccine to make people safe, as promised.
- For the opening-up of things after lockdown; more businesses opened last week and travel is becoming less restricted; continue to pray for safety and for good health for the population; let these spikes and variants be brought under control and that people will behave responsibly.
- For people who are still isolating, still spending time on their own again and feeling afraid; for people in care homes, beginning to meet family again, and the staff who care for them.
- For schools: for pupils back in the rhythm and routine of school, some suffering the stress of tests and assessments; for teachers who are trying to manage classes as well as teach and catch up with lost work; for those isolating from school because there are still cases.
- For communities and businesses: the pubs and hotels and others opening further; for those who own these businesses and it is their livelihood; for those who work and are still on furlough; for those who work and have been back to work in an office for at least some of the time; for the anxiety created by that kind of social contact; for the gaps left in the social interaction of many people, adding to their sense of isolation.
- For the Church of Scotland, wrestling with issues of finance, ministry numbers and buildings, and trying to draw up plans for the future; guide us and lead us.
- For Churches, some buildings open and some still closed; help them to care for all of their people; may the technology be a lifeline for lots of people; help churches across Scotland to be a light in their community and share the light of Jesus with others.

- For Juniper Green Church, holding in-person services in the church building and services on Zoom for the next 2 weeks, that people will find grace in worship however they take part; help us to do everything wisely, safely and well.
- For people we know...
- This week, take time to think about these words and pray them into your own heart: *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1)*

Here are some links to hymns you might know and love:

Sing to God new songs of worship      [Sing to God new songs - YouTube](#)  
 O for a thousand tongues to sing      [LYNGHAM-O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING - YouTube](#)  
 O love that wilt not let me go      [O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go \(George Matheson 1842-1906\) - YouTube](#)  
 Speak O Lord      [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my90e3a\\_nlM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my90e3a_nlM)  
 Stand up stand up for Jesus      [The Celebration Choir - Stand Up, Stand Up For Jesus \[with lyrics\] - YouTube](#)

Remember the prayer e-mail line at [prayerjgpc@gmail.com](mailto:prayerjgpc@gmail.com)

#### Some other resources:

- Each Sunday at 10.30am, we will have a short time together using Zoom; a link has been sent out in the e-mail with this update which should enable you to join in.
- For this Sunday and for next Sunday, there will be in-person services in our church building alongside the Zoom services; to book a place for the for the 20<sup>th</sup>, call Jim on 453 3494, on Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 12 noon.
- This reflection is available on our own church website under the “sermons” tab and there is an archive of sermon material there for you to read and links to the video reflections – [www.jgpc.org.uk](http://www.jgpc.org.uk)
- If you have a smartphone, a tablet or an i-pad, the Bible2020 app will give you a short bible reading each day (from the Scottish Bible Society)
- Scripture Union daily bible readings can be found at <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive>
- The Church of Scotland website has prayers and reflections from the Moderator and details of lots of on-line streamed church services - <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>
- Claremont Church in East Kilbride are making services available over a phone line: here are the contact details which you can share with people who are not on line: **Sunday Services @ 10:30 - same details every week** 020 3937 2973; PIN: 352 598 857#

**DAILY BIBLE STUDY MATERIALS** - New issues of “**Our Daily Bread**” Booklets for June, July and August are now available. Please contact Michael Merriman who will be delighted to arrange copies. Other Bible Study materials are also available with Ian Aitken. **Let the Bible feed you.**

#### Holiday Club 2021

I am delighted that the restrictions are lightening in such a way that an in-person holiday club can take place this summer. Last year we ran holiday club online over Zoom, and while fun and enjoyable, we can’t wait to be face to face with children again and be in one place together. We are partnering with SU Scotland again this year and using material called *Jungle Adventure*, a resource that is brand new for 2021 and one that is taking us outdoors to explore the Bible, learn more about who God is and wonder at Him through creation. The club will run for 5 mornings from 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> July in the grounds of Heriot Watt University. I wanted to let you all know our plans and to ask for you to

pray. Pray for restrictions to continue to change in our favour, pray for ongoing conversations with HWU as we finalise details on using space there, pray for the children and team who will be there (we already have 9 children signed up to come!), pray for God's protection and safety over every aspect, pray for God's creativity and guidance to be with us as we plan. However, we also need some equipment to help us embrace the outdoors whatever the Scottish weather may be! We are on the lookout for a couple of gazebos or event shelters, some windbreaks and groundsheets or tarpaulins. If you happen to have any of those things and would be willing to lend them to us for use that week, please get in touch with me. And if you know of any children aged P4-7 who may be interested in joining in our Jungle Adventure, then let me know and I can pass on details of how they can book. Thanks, Heather.

# I will be with you

These resources are designed to help you explore the Bible as a family together at home while we can't go to church. Be as creative as you want to be and enjoy spending time with each other and with God.

## Prepare yourself...

Loving God,  
We come here today honestly.  
We bring our hopes and fears,  
our joys and worries,  
our happiness and sadness,  
knowing that you accept us no matter what.  
Thank you for being with us all the time.  
Teach us more about you as we look at  
your Word, show us what you are like  
and how we can follow you.  
**Amen.**



## Question...



Can you think of a time you had to be brave?



## Read the Bible...

Today's verses are found in **Joshua 1:1-9**. You can read them in a Bible or find them [here](#).

This video shows how Joshua took over from Moses, and introduces his first task as Israel's new leader: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqhPOd0JxBs>

## Talk together...



- How do you think Joshua felt taking over from Moses?
- What makes a good leader or guide?
- Can you think of anyone you admire? What do you admire about them?
- What does God tell Joshua?
- What does God promise Joshua?
- What challenges or difficulties are you facing?
- What do you think we can learn about God from Joshua's story that might help us?
- Can you think of a time when you knew God was with you?
- Where might God be calling us to be 'leaders', to be a good example to others?

## Play together...

### Follow the leader

Take it in turns to be the leader. Remember being a good leader might mean choosing actions everyone can follow and goes at a speed that suits everyone!

### Relay race

Run your own family relay race – use an old kitchen roll tube or empty bottle as a baton.

## Pray together...

Have a ball or something you can pass to each other. Take it in turns to pray, passing the ball to someone else to continue the prayer. You could take a sentence or even a word each until somebody finishes with a big Amen!

## Make something...

### Be brave scroll

You'll need: Brown paper/paper bag, pens, wool/string/twine, glue/tape  
If using a paper bag, cut and unfold it until you have one sheet of paper.



1. Crumple the paper over and over until it is wrinkled and soft.
2. Copy the words of Joshua 1:9 onto the paper (or a shortened version if you like!).
3. Roll the top and bottom of the paper tightly around a pencil or something similar to create a curl on both ends.
4. Using a length of wool and glue/tape, secure the yarn in the top curl and tie it so you can hang it up.

## Praise together...

[Be strong and courageous](#)

Seeds Family worship

[Be strong](#) Truth songs



[Wherever I go](#)

[Every step](#) Worship for everyone

[Our God is with us](#) Rita Springer