

Joshua 10:1-28

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 September 2022

Preacher: David Helm

[0 : 00] Again, that's Joshua 10, 1 to 28. And please remain standing as you're able for the reading of God's word. As soon as Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had captured Ai and had devoted it to destruction, doing to Ai and its king, as he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, he feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were warriors.

So Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem, sent to Hoham, king of Hebram, to Pyram, king of Jarmuth, to Jephiah, king of Lachish, and to Deber, king of Eglon, saying, Come up to me and help me, and let us strike Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the people of Israel.

Then the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered their forces and went up with all their armies and encamped against Gibeon and made war against it.

And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, Do not relax your hand from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country are gathered against us.

So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. And the Lord said to Joshua, Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands.

[1 : 43] Not a man among them shall stand before you. So Joshua came up then suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. And the Lord threw them into a panic before Israel, who struck them with a great blow at Gibeon, and chased them by way of the ascent of Beth Horan, and struck them as far as Ezekiah and Makeda.

And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth Horan, the Lord threw down large stones from heaven on them as far as Ezekiah, and they died.

There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword. At that time Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the Lord gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel.

And he said in the sight of Israel, Sun stands still at Gibeon, and moon in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies.

Is this not written in the book of Jashur? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. There has been no day like it before or since when the Lord heeded the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel.

[3 : 01] So Joshua returned and all Israel with him to the camp at Gilgal. These five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makeda.

And it was told to Joshua, the five kings have been found, hidden in the cave at Makeda. And Joshua said, roll large stones against the mouth of the cave and set men by it to guard them. But do not stay there yourselves. Pursue your enemies. Attack their rear guard. Do not let them enter their cities, for the Lord your God has given them into your hand. When Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished striking them with the great blow until they were wiped out, and when the remnant that remained of them had entered into the fortified cities, then all the people returned safe to Joshua in the camp at Makeda.

Not a man moved his tongue against any of the people of Israel. Then Joshua said, open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me from the cave.

And they did so and brought those five kings out to him from the cave. The king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

[4 : 12] And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.

Then they came near and put their feet on the necks. And Joshua said to them, do not be afraid or dismayed. Be strong and courageous. For thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.

And afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death. And he hanged them on five trees and they hung on the trees until evening. But at the time of the going down of the sun, Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves.

And they set large stones against the mouth of the cave, which remains to this very day. As for Makeda, Joshua captured it on that day and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword. He devoted to destruction every person in it. He left none remaining. And he did to the king of Makeda, just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

[5 : 20] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Well, let me bring my greetings to those of you who might be visiting with us today for the first time.

I know that in the coming weeks, we'll probably have a couple of hundred people walking in here for the first time. And I would encourage those of us who assemble regularly to be the first face of welcome as this neighborhood picks up speed in the fall months.

For those of you who are new, the life of the church will be fully underway, as you've already heard, in the coming weeks. And we certainly hope that you'll find your way into our church family.

We're glad you're here. You seem to have come then on a day when we are in the midst of our summer series through the book of Joshua today, having arrived at chapter 10.

I'm going to title this sermon, Lord, help us. I'm taking my title from that impassioned cry of the Gibeonites in verse 6.

[6 : 37] I'd encourage you to take a look at it yourself. And the Lord said to Joshua, do not fear them. I'm sorry, verse 6. And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp of Gilgal saying, do not relax your hand from your servants.

Come up to us quickly and save us and help us. For all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country are gathered against us.

The Gibeonite cry, Joshua, help us. The story in light of my sermon, Lord, help us.

It would appear from the Gibeonites call for help that their need was urgent. That threefold imperatival voice of command in verse 6.

Come quickly. Almost by way of impassioned command. Desperate, so they were. Save us.

[7 : 46] In this case, even from death. Help us. Their need, therefore, was both immediate and important.

I don't know if you've ever felt that way. A desperate need for help. Immediate need. Something arrives into your life where instantaneously you are feeling surrounded.

As the city of Gibeon was. Without any moment's notice. You've awakened to something so dire. Perhaps even a matter of life and death.

Hemmed in. No resources in and of yourself to escape. Which raises the question that this story then sets out to answer.

Can the Gibeonites expect help from God? Can we get help from God?

[8 : 57] After all, aren't we like the Gibeonites? You heard about them in the last week. These men and women were a cornered people.

They had never been born into the family that were the inheritors of God's promises. In fact, they had been marked out for judgment.

And are we not a people conflicted, compromised? Truth be told, haven't some of us entered into an interest in God at such a time of need where we're willing to make any kind of deal with him?

If he would, in this situation, grant help to me. The Gibeonites pledged their allegiance to Israel's God under false pretenses.

Don't forget that. They made promises to him when they needed to get out of a jam. And given all of this then, can we expect help from God?

[10 : 09] God. The story before us provides the basis for their help. Let me give you the movement of the verses that were read. In verses 1 to 6, they are asking for help.

In verses 7 to 9, there's a twofold assurance that help will come. In verses 9 to 25, where the story unfolds, you begin to see what help looks like in action.

And then finally, as I address our own need of help, there's a particular irony of help. Asking for help, verses 1 to 6.

Asking for help. In point of fact, the Gibeonites asking for help of Joshua and Israel was preceded in the text by the king of Jerusalem, who had earlier put out his own cry for help.

Did you notice that? Take a look again at verses 1 to 4. As soon as Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem, fascinatingly, by the way, his name meaning the Lord of righteousness, king of the place of peace.

[11 : 24] This just king who dwelt in a land of peace heard how Joshua had captured Ai and devoted it to destruction. Doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king.

And how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them. And he feared greatly. Because Gibeon was a great city. Like one of the royal cities.

And because it was greater than Ai. And all its men were warriors. So Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem, sent to Hoam, king of Hebron, Piram, king of Jarmuth, Japhia, king of Lachish, and Debir, king of Eglon, saying, look at it.

Here's his request. Here's his ask for help. Verse 4. Come up to me and help me. Let us strike Gibeon, for it's made peace with Joshua and with the people of Israel.

Verses 1 to 6. There is an asking for help. In fact, those phrases, through the voice of the king of Jerusalem and through the voice of the Gibeonites, are almost parallel.

[12 : 31] Come up quickly. Help us. The Gibeonites are looking for Israel to save them, while the king of Jerusalem is looking for an alliance that would attack them.

And therein we see two different means by which people seek help. Help.

Help. Do you ask for help from the Lord? Or do you seek the engagement with others that through the strength of the alliance might relieve you in a time of need?

It's a contrast, verses 1 to 6, between where people turn for help. The Beatles, I think it was, said it. I get by with a little... Man, you must really be a young crowd, not even know that one. I get... I'm not going to ask you to do the next line, but the first line, I'll get by with a little help from my friends.

[13 : 50] The Gibeonites, under the same situation of an invader Israelite army, did everything possible to get by with a little help from the Lord.

Evidently, the Gibeonites alliance with Israel had the effect of fearfully endangering the entire stability of the economic geopolitical makeup of the Levant at that time.

Let me put it to you this way. It was the king of Jerusalem who felt so under threat by Gibeon's alliance with Israel that he felt he had the most to lose, he had the most to fear, and therefore he went to his neighbors to seek their help.

Now, some knowledge of the geography of the region, of the economic ties between these city-states might be in order. Stay with me on this. With Gibeon, now in an alliance with Israel, it no longer served as a buffer city-state between Jerusalem and the Israelites who are now encamped at Gilgal.

Think of the modern day in which we live, where the nation of Ukraine, for instance, seemingly turning in one direction, alleviated a buffer state between its former friend and therefore alliances with one become convoluted through fear into coalitions that will protect the geopolitical economic well-being of a country.

[15 : 37] That's what the king of Jerusalem felt, that his way of life was now endangered. And so he turns to these city-states which are beneath him to the south, all four of them.

And the Israelite invaders, who now dwell to the north, he brings to Gibeon to recapture his buffer state.

Israel, remember, had already taken Jericho. Jericho lay to the north of Gibeon. Israel had already taken Ai. Ai lay to the north of Gibeon.

But now with Gibeon, an alliance with Israel, who already had Jericho and Ai, Jerusalem is now the new front line.

And the king fears. And so he goes to his closest geographic neighbors to form a coalition to fight an alliance made by a lying people, a traitor people, who now found themselves under the protection of God's promise.

[16:51] Sadly, he didn't approach Israel. He should have known if there was hope for Gibeon to cut a deal with God, perhaps there would be hope for me.

But no, he rejected Israel and her God and his hopes for mercy and decided to create help of his own making.

And isn't that what we often do? By verse 5, take a look. It would appear that these other four kings saw the importance of his ask, for they came running immediately.

Verse 5, then the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered their forces and went up against Gibeon and made war against it.

You need to know that Lachish lay some 19 miles southwest of Jerusalem. Lachish had a commanding view then of all the plains that would push west all the way to the Mediterranean Sea.

[18:00] Famous trade routes in the Mesopotamian world in the Bronze Age, where Egypt was the controlling influence from beneath.

And yet up along the Mediterranean, trade routes were established in the land of Philistia. And cities like Eglon and Hebron and Jerusalem accounted for all of their trade through this great movement.

And now it was all endangered. Eglon itself was a fortified city from the very middle of the Bronze Age. And so they all knew that if Jerusalem falls, there is no stopping Israel from taking the entire region.

It is the roadway to control of the Mediterranean world. International trade routes are at stake. Longstanding Mesopotamian commerce routes all the way to the sea are jeopardized. And even archaeologists have reminded us recently that interdependent international trade was already in play in the Bronze Age.

[19:11] It isn't as if the world's gone global in the last 15 years. It had gone global 1500 BC. In fact, there was in 1982 a sponge diver off the coast of Turkey down under the waters who discovered a shipwreck of a over 50 foot Canaanite ship.

And the archaeological discovery was so great because this was a merchant ship. Eric Klein relays the story of this in his book, 1177, The Year Civilization Collapsed.

An enjoyable historical read. And what you find is a cargo, according to Klein, quote, that carried the ship, assorted an assortment of goods, truly an international manifest.

In all, on board the ship, at least seven different countries' goods, states, and empires were represented. In addition to the primary cargo of 10 tons of Cypriot copper, one ton of tin, and one ton of terebinth resin, there were also, get this, about 140 Canaanite storage jars in two or three basic sizes, which contained terebinth resin, remains of grapes, pomegranates, figs, as well as spices like coriander and sumac.

Brand new pottery from Cyprus and Canaan, including oil lamps, bowls, jugs, jars. There was also jewelry, pendants, a gold chalice, 24 stone anchors, 14 pieces of hippopotamus ivory, one elephant tusk.

[21:10] And get this, a six-inch tall statue of a Canaanite deity overlaid with gold, which, if it was supposed to serve the protective deity of the ship, says Klein, it didn't do its job very well.

All of this lay at the bottom of the sea. Only discovered 1982. But the goods on the manifest demonstrate that the land of Philistia and the Canaanites and the Hittites and Mesopotamia were already involved in international commerce that was taking goods all the way over as far as Greece and Turkey.

And with that then in play, you begin to see the dire, urgent need of the king of Jerusalem. I need help.

My entire world order is now under attack. It is not an overstatement to say that with Israel now acting as the invaders from the north, and Gibeon now aligned with them that these five kings feared for the economic and political stability of the entire world.

Their interdependence of the Bronze Age itself was now at stake. And so the text says right there, you can see it in verse 5, and again in verse 6, they gathered their forces against Gibeon.

[22:48] As an aside, this won't be the last time in the Bible that you see fearful nations gathering by way of human coalitions against the activity of God and his purposes in the world.

We don't have time to dive into it, but Psalm 110, again, you will see the kings of the earth gathering together against the Lord and his anointed, and God who sits in the heavens will laugh at these

emerging human coalitions, and he will simply move forward with installing his own king on Mount Zion.

In fact, Luke, the historian of a much later period, will indicate that when Jesus came, the king, ironically, of Jerusalem again, will gather other rulers of the Roman world against Jesus in his activity, but nevertheless, God will accomplish his work.

In our text, though, it's a bit different. The Gibeonites are not anything like righteous Jesus. The Gibeonites are not even the people of God's promise.

The Gibeonites are outsiders. The Gibeonites are liars. The Gibeonites are imposters, interlopers. [24 : 25] They're you. They're me. And the question is, will God help them? Will he help you?

Would he help me? The unrighteous. The compromised. The desperate.

The desperate. The deceptive. After all, we were at least willing to look to him when we were in a bind.

The story moves from the Gibeonite ask in one to six to two assurances that help will be given in verses seven to nine.

God will help even a deceptive person who has decided to put their trust in him. Hallelujah.

[25 : 42] Hallelujah. Joshua. The two words of assurance here.

First, Joshua's response was immediate. He came that night. That's an assurance to the Gibeonites that we're all in.

God's people stand with you in your time of need. But the secondly, not only was Joshua's response immediate, the Lord's words were unmistakable.

Do not fear. I also have given them into your hands. It isn't just Joshua and the people who cut this compromised covenant to begin with will still stand with you.

But I, who am holy and righteous and who dwell in the heavens, I will do it as well. I mean, they've gathered against this word of God, the Lord, do not fear.

[26 : 59] Take courage as an echo all the way back to Joshua 1.6. Go in, do not fear, be courageous. I'm going to go with you. That twofold assurance ought to be an encouragement to us.

Because we are not the people of promise. We are the interlopers. We are those who need to cut a covenant with God that cannot rest upon our own foundation.

And when we are in need, the assurance of the text is that God may yet help you. There is hope in the oath of God and in the activity of his leader, savior, servant.

This is a twofold assurance. God cares for you. This is really what ought to make you pray when you're in a tough bind. When you're in a tough bind, you're going to pick up the phone or you're going to fall on your knees.

Lord, help me. On what basis, says the Lord? Lord, not on my righteousness, not on my ways, but on your own kind mercy who decides to stand with me.

[28 : 21] On the own way in which you have elevated your savior leader who has made a covenant pact with me. You bring your prayers to the Lord.

Don't believe the lie that when you find yourself overwhelmed and hemmed in, oh my gosh, how am I going to get my way out of this? Fall on your knees. Lord, I'm overwhelmed.

My relationships are overwhelming. My marriage might be overwhelming. My schoolwork might be overwhelming. My lack of finances might be overwhelming.

My health might now put me on the precipice of death and therefore is overwhelming. My mind is not right and therefore I am overwhelmed. My emotional constitutional makeup is not correct.

Where do I go? Where do I go? First place we go, you go to your knees and you say, Lord, help us. And I know that I have your assurance that because I am seeking your ways, you will come to my aid.

[29 : 30] Behind your prayers to the Lord stands a history of God making good on his word. So ask for help.

There's a twofold assurance that help will be given. And then in verses 9 to 25, there's a three-part summary of what help looks like in action.

Can I show it to you? The sermon will move quickly because the story picks up speed. Let me just point out the three summaries of what that day looked like in regard to help from different vantage points at different times.

First, the Lord fights for us. First, the Lord fights for us, verses 9 and 10. Second, Joshua himself appears to be like a god to us, verses 11 to 15.

And third, the coalition of those five kings lie dead and defeated by the end of the story before us, verses 16 to 25. This is what help from heaven looks like when you seek God rather than your own way out.

[30 : 39] The Lord fights for us. Look at verse 9 and 10.

The writer is indicating that what help looks like is it actually comes from heaven.

The Lord fights the battles on behalf of his people. Joshua went up, but the Lord came down. The Lord threw them into a panic.

The Lord threw down large stones from heaven. The Lord did more work than any of the people doing the work because it was the Lord who was helping.

This is what help looks like. You and I need to be reminded that the Lord fights for us. Isn't that great to know?

[32 : 03] I mean, you're overwhelmed and I'm telling you the Lord is ready to fight for you. Your help doesn't fundamentally rest in another person behind a door.

Your help rests upon the threshold of heaven where the Lord actually accomplishes things that no human can do. And there are many here today who can testify to that.

You can testify to the point. You can bear witness that I have been in a place where there was no help from earth. And yet the Lord fought for me.

And so you begin to praise his name. Interestingly, the writer is going out of his way to depict, get this, God as an enlisted soldier.

The eternal Lord who reigns in the heaven is in the text, an enlisted man in the army of Israel.

[33 : 11] Let me put it this way. God condescends in the text to take on the form of a man. A warrior. He's the divine warrior.

He's even throwing hailstones from heaven on that ascent from Beth Haran, which was narrow and had to climb.

They were now trying to escape, that is, the five kings to the west of Gibeon, up into Beth Haran in the hill country, and then down its narrow slope and toward the sea and all the way out.

And as they are confining themselves on their panicked retreat, the Lord is launching arrows from heaven and doing more damage than anybody else. This is a natural wonder of the world.

You can read stories in human history. I've read it even of England at various times where all of a sudden winds shifted and ships had to move course or were incapable of making or arriving at their destination because something unexplainable had happened.

[34 : 18] That's what was going on here. Now, I understand from modern sensibilities this is jarring. To see God as a divine warrior can be disturbing. But just as we said in chapter 1, remember when he promises to give them the land of all these other peoples, that there were echoes of Eden wherein God owned all the land, and therefore those who rebel against God are squatting on his land.

Therefore his displacement of them is right and just, for he is God. So to hear this judgment on these five kings is not without a broader context of understanding God's patience.

Genesis 15 indicates prophetically that the Amorites would not be dispelled from the land until some 400 years of their rebellion went on. What the text needs to be understood in terms of then is the patience of God before he brings judgment on a nation often will last for centuries.

So much is his long suffering. So much is his patience. You can read 1 Peter where you'll see the same thing. The reason that God does not come down at this very moment before the service is over and shut down the whole thing and call us all to account and separate the sheep from the goats is because he's not willing for anyone to perish.

He's patient. He's patient. His judgment is clear, but it is in patience by way of his character and mercy that he would want to extend.

[35 : 59] And these five kings did nothing to repent of their rebellion and to seek shade and shelter under the hand of God. So God fought for the Gibeonites who did.

The second summary statement of the day on what help looks like in action comes in verses 11 to 15.

It's from a different vantage point. Not only did the Lord fight for them, 9 and 10, but Joshua appears to be like a God to them, 11 to 15.

This is probably the most highlighted moment in the text. The writer flips into poetry at this point, the only time in the whole book, because there was no way to convey this kind of help outside of song.

At that time, by that I mean at the time on this day, probably somewhere in the morning, we're seeing a second summary statement of what help looked like during that day.

[37 : 14] Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the Lord gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel. And he said in the sight of Israel, son, stand still at Gibeon and moon in the valley of Ajalon.

And the sun stood still and the moon stopped until the nation took vengeance on their enemies. Is it not written in the book of Jashar? This is this hero epic like book of war stories.

The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. Then the narrator tells you there has been no day like it before or since when the Lord heeded the voice of a man for the Lord fought for Israel.

So Joshua returned and all Israel with him to the camp at Gilgal. Again, summarizing the activity of the entire day. Not only did the Lord fight for them, but Joshua appears to be little less than God to them.

He's a man who stands the sun in its tracks. Now, don't give me this scientific thing. The Bible's a bunch of junk. These people don't know that the sun stands still.

[38 : 23] And therefore, to think of the sun standing still is ridiculous because it's the center of all things. And we all revolve around it and therefore the Bible doesn't make any sense. The writer is simply speaking in the common way that you and I talk about it when we look over the lake in the early morning and say, look, the sun is rising.

Well, you know it's not rising. You know it's actually there. But that's just a common way to speak of it. The sun rises and the sun sets. And what he says here is stand still, which means that it doesn't matter whether he knows science as you know it or not.

It means he is looking for divine deliverance that God would extend the day until vengeance could be had. And evidently, God did. And you might scientifically say, well, that means he halted the earth from moving, which means the speed at which that would have happened would have thrown everybody tumbling around.

But in actual fact, it's a miracle. It's a miracle. In fact, he's here to tell you it's so much a miracle there was never a day like it before.

And there was never one after. That's what he's saying. But notice Joshua is now appearing and acting as though he were divine.

[39 : 33] The man is commanding nature as a God. This is stunning to me.

Joshua, the writer going out of his way to equate him as one like the everlasting God. Notice his phrase here.

Be still. And the sun was still. And the moon trailing behind halted.

Never before. I mean, there are times when it is said of Moses that with no one, no one ever like him. There are times when it is said of David.

He was unlike every other person. There is a time here where it is also said of Joshua. Never before was there someone like this.

[40 : 43] A man. Who carried on the characteristic qualities of help as though he were nothing less than God.

Now, do you see the glory of what this text is teaching? Deity itself appears in verses 9 and 10 as an enlisted man of war.

But the man of war appears as divine in verses 11 to 15. In these actions, you have God condescending from heaven to take on the form of an enlisted servant soldier.

And you have Joshua elevated to the title of God man. I'm reminded of later in the Bible. Another one will appear who fulfills the final form.

What we see taking place here only in the shadows. In Jesus of Nazareth, we have God taking on human form. And in Jesus of Nazareth, we have one that is nevertheless very God of very God.

[41 : 57] And the people of his own day have left a record to this same effect. For in Mark's first gospel, most closely written in time after the figure of Jesus comes and goes from the scene, indicates in Mark chapter 4 that when the disciples needed help, when they were in the boat, when the waves of life were going to kill them, and they said, Lord, help us.

He rose and he said, be still. And it was still. And he healed men and women. And the demons themselves said, never before have we heard teaching like we're hearing from this man.

Jesus himself is the cataclysmic fruition of what is coming in shadow form here in the Old Testament.

Jesus is your help. Jesus is your advocate. Jesus is the one in whose name you pray. Because Jesus is one unlike any other. He supersedes Moses. He supersedes Elijah. [43 : 22] He supersedes Joshua. He supersedes David. He supersedes the greatest alliance you can put together to get yourself out of your problem. Lord, help us.

In fact, he already has. Does he not sit at the right hand for the very purpose of intercession? He's waiting on you today to cry out to him for help. Now, I know I'm running on this sermon. But you're going to give me a few more minutes to get done what this text requires. Because there is a third summary statement in the text of what took place on that day to indicate to you what help looks like. Not only does God fight for you. Not only does Joshua appear like a god to you. But the coalition of the five kings, by the end of the story, lie dead and defeated before you. [44 : 30] 16 to 25. They went down. They hung out. They found a resting place in a cave. As the battle unfolded, Joshua wasn't even there at that time.

Because it says they went and told Joshua, verse 16. These guys are hanging out in the cave over there. And then it says, verse 21. By the time Joshua enters into the camp at Machedah, no one in that town was saying a word.

Those citizens, tight-lipped. I'm neither for you or for you. All I know is the whole city stays quiet until these warring kings and Joshua sort out whatever it is they have going on.

They try to play the middle. And Joshua says, verse 22, open the mouth of the cave, bring out the kings. And they did so.

And they brought him out. And notice what happens here. Joshua summons all the leaders of Israel and says, come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.

[45 : 38] Putting your foot on the neck of a king in the ancient world was an indication of complete subjugation. And notice, it's no longer God saying to Joshua, be strong and courageous.

As Joshua is saying to the people, be strong and courageous. Because he will give you help. He will fight from heaven. I will be elevated in your sight. And your enemies will actually lie defeated. And so they stand with their foot on the neck of the king. And that is the basis for your confidence in Christ. For the New Testament will indicate that not only will all things be subjected to Christ, but in Romans 15, he will put their rule under your feet.

The basis of our confidence that God is with us is the completed work of Christ and his rule over all things. And so I am more confident because I see the coalition of kings dead and defeated.

They are crushed underfoot. Assurance has again been given. And the footing of my confidence rests in the work of my Lord.

[46 : 52] Now, how do you connect this then to us as I close? You've seen the ask for help, the twofold assurance of help, the tripartite look at help.

But notice the irony of our help. 26 to 28. The irony of our help is in the death and resurrection of our Lord. Look at this.

26 to 28. Afterward, Joshua struck them and put them to death. And he hanged them on five trees. And they hung on the trees until evening. But at the time of the going down of the sun, Joshua commanded and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves.

And they set large stones against the mouth of the cave, which remain to this very day. The story ends with the enemies of God defeated.

They are hung on a cross. They are pulled down at sunset so as to not pollute the land according to the Levitical law. They are buried behind large stones.

[48 : 00] And those stones are there to this day. Can I tell you about Jesus? Yeah. Who came as God in the flesh to help us.

But he could only do so by taking on the punishment that is due the enemies of God through a judgment that would have been meted out upon us. And so with Jesus, they made a public mockery of his kingship.

They wove a crown of thorns and traded him through the public streets. They laid a cross on his shoulder and killed him on it, hanging him there.

He was taken down at sunset. He was placed in a cave behind a large stone so that the world would know this false king is dead to this day.

Except, except the stone is no longer there. The stone has been rolled away. He was hung on Good Friday, placed into the tomb behind the stone.

[49 : 14] But on Sunday, early in the morning, the angels came. The stone was rolled away. The women entered.

And he was and is alive. He's alive to this very day. And he ascended into heaven.

And God gave him a name above all other names. And he sits at the right hand of God, waiting to bring your requests to the Father's attention so that the help can funnel down from the threshold of heaven.

It's all there for you. This, to me, is the gospel. Can we expect God to help us?

And I mean us. The interlopers. The liars. The deceivers. The people born not with a promise.

[50 : 22] Well, ask. There's assurance. There's action.

And there is an irony that our help comes from this table. We're going to celebrate the Lord's table. It is a table of thanksgiving. That he died the death you were to die. That you might have the life that is only his to give. If you have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you are looking to him for help in the little things and the big things. In the biggest of all things.

Your eternal state. As well as your physical well-being.

As well as the struggles you're in. As well as the hemmed in nature that you feel you can't get out of. If you turn to him. If you partake of him.

[51 : 22] If you put your faith in him. He will strengthen you. He will sustain you. And you will proclaim to a world. That he is the one to whom you turn. If you have not done that yet.

If you are yet looking to make your own way. Then simply sit. And may this play out like a parable before you. That while the activity of God strengthens those to who turn to him.

You are yet waiting. To create your own act of deliverance. At which point I would say to you. Lord. Help you. Yes.