

# “Bearing His Name Well”

Made For More Sermon Series | Week Ten | Newbreak Church

March 13th, 2022

Newbreak’s Sermon Study Guide is an in-house resource that serves sermon-based Life Groups and/or individuals who want to reflect further on how the message contributes to our spiritual formation.

**In this week’s study, we talk about what it means to “bear the Lord’s name,” or represent His character, taking note of how Joshua does in the complex situation with defending the Gibeonites.**

## Icebreakers for Life Groups

- If you were given one more hour in the day (a 25 hour day), what would you do with it? Sleep? Read? Try a hobby?
- How does being a “brand ambassador,” someone who promotes a brand either for money or passion, relate to being a Christian? In what ways is it similar? In what ways is it different?

## Going Deeper Into the Message

### Read Joshua 10:3–7

*What does it look like to represent God’s character to the world?*

### **Point 1 – Running toward the needs of people regardless of the cost.**

Joshua 10 is famous in the Bible for the well-known “sun stand still” passage (coming up), but the context of this passage is what gives it its setting and tension. Here we see 5 kings of the Canaanite nations banding together to attack Gibeon because of their alliance with the Israelites (Joshua 10:3–4).

Joshua 10:6 records the Gibeonites pleading for Joshua to come to their rescue as they are under attack. Verse 7 tells that Joshua gathered his best soldiers to go to their aid. Try to not only read the text. Feel it. Imagine it! Picture Joshua marching toward the battle, 5 nations allied wanting his head, Joshua is literally the most wanted man in the Ancient Near East at this time! Picture him marching quickly, with his best and bravest

soldiers on his right and left and he sees that tall hillside of Gibeon under attack, the Gibeonites were hopeless if Joshua was not running toward the danger.

Reflecting on last week's passage (see Joshua 9), we recall that Joshua made a treaty with the Gibeonites on false pretenses, nevertheless, *he did make a treaty with them*.

"So, what?" You might be thinking. "It was on *false pretenses*. He doesn't have to honor that promise!" Ah! This is why we need this message. See, for Joshua, keeping a promise was one important way of bearing the name of Yahweh, the Lord.

A promise is not just a promise when it is made by God's covenant people—it is a reflection of God. If Israel did not keep the promise he made to the Gibeonites, what would that communicate to them and the surrounding world about the God of Israel? Does God treat His promises with such fragility?

*"So Joshua marched up from Gilgal with his entire army, including all the best fighting men" (Joshua 10:7, NIV).*

No second-guessing, no debate. Joshua grabbed his best men and rode into battle to defend the Gibeonite people. Why? Because he promised he would. Because he bears the name of the God of Israel. Because that's what God does, He shows up for those who are under His sovereign protection.

Context helps support this. Exodus 20:7 (from the famous "Ten Commandments") in most translations says something like: *Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God, because the Lord will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses his name.*

A very wooden, literal translation goes like this: "Do not carry the name of Yahweh your God to vanity."

The Hebrew word here for "carry" is *nāšā'*, and denotes movement toward a higher location. I find it ironic that NASA (the space program) sounds the same. Obviously, they are not actually connected in meaning, but it is easy to remember because NASA has rockets that shoot upward and *nasa* in Hebrew is carrying or bearing something onward and upward.

**Carrying the name of Yahweh means being His tangible representation, His visible body, for others around us. We are not Yahweh, but we are to be incarnational expressions of His character, revealing what He is like to the world around us.**

Joshua and Israel knew this commandment. So in this case carrying the name of Yahweh means giving refuge to the people who are seeking refuge in God. Despite the

deception of the Gibeonites, they still sought refuge and the honorable thing to do is to show them that Yahweh is the protector of those who seek Him, even with imperfect motives.

Are we willing to go and do likewise?

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- How does Joshua 9 set up the tension for Joshua 10? Would you feel the tension to fulfill your promise to protect the Gibeonites if you were in Joshua's shoes?
- What is the connection between "bearing the name of Yahweh" and keeping our promises to others?
- Is there something the Holy Spirit is prompting you to take action on in light of this part of the narrative?

### Read Joshua 10:8–14

*What does it look like to represent God's character to the world?*

#### **Point 2 – Live with boldness.**

Hugh Jackman tells a story of being a kid in church and seeing people wearing the Christian fish symbol. He asked his dad why he doesn't wear one of those at work, and his dad replied, "Your religion should be in your actions." Some people talk a good game, but they don't live out the actions of following Christ. When we do the things God has called us to do, when we help the poor, take care of the sick, protect those who can't defend themselves, we have intimate, first-hand knowledge of how God loves and provides for His people. The more we do this, the more we see Him work, the more bold our prayers and actions become.

**Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:18 NIV)** The truth of our love for God and our commitment to follow Him is manifested most clearly in our actions towards others. When we allow God to fill us with His love, this naturally flows out of us to those around us. Our job is to move in confidence, that God will be faithful to His Word, to provide when it seems impossible, to heal when there are no treatments, to save when there is no hope. We become His hands and His feet to bring light in the darkness of this world.

Joshua saw God do incredible miracles and then he sinned because he did not consult God before making a covenant with a group of people. He probably felt shame and guilt for that decision. He probably got chastised by the leaders around him. He was probably feeling pretty low. Then the people of Gibeon begged him, "Come up quickly to us and save us!" Joshua could have said, "I can't. I blew it. I put our people in a bad situation. I can't go against 5 kings at one time." And he would have been right. Joshua *couldn't* do it, but God could. Joshua made a commitment to a people in the name of God and he was going to honor that commitment. He marched out with boldness with his best fighting men to protect the Gibeonites. And *after* he marched out, after he made the move to be obedient, is when God reassured him that he would have victory. **The Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you." (Joshua 10:8)** God honored Joshua moving out in boldness with a promise of victory. Joshua was able to see more miracles of God because he first stepped out in obedience. He was able to put aside any self doubts or fears because of who he had already seen God to be. This gave Joshua the confidence to pray the most bold prayer yet, **"Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon."** God answered this prayer! Joshua prayed for what was needed to defeat God's enemy and God answered that prayer.

Be bold in your prayers. Be bold in doing the work the Lord gives you the opportunity to do and you will see more answered prayer and more lives changed for Him.

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- How does Joshua's prayer model what it looks like to live boldly?
- What personal shame, guilt, or feelings of inadequacy, keep you from praying bold prayers? Give this to God and ask Him to free you from what's holding you back.
- What bold prayer do you need to pray consistently on right now?
- Can you point to a recent time when you boldly lived out your faith at your job, in your neighborhood, or with your family? How did God work through your boldness?

**—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—**

How are you going to think or live differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?

How does this week's message shape or nurture your relationship with God?

**BONUS:** For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids in a way that they would relate to or understand?