

## **Trusting the All-sufficient God in insufficient times**

**WORSHIP:** Blessed, God is for Us

### **WORD:**

#### **Deuteronomy 32:44-47 (NIV)**

44 Moses came with Joshua[a] son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. 45 When Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel, 46 he said to them, “Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. 47 They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”

#### **Acts 4:12 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>12</sup>Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

An obscure, landless people invade a land with fortified cities, trained armies, and powerful kings? This is exactly what Israel did—with great success!— under Joshua’s leadership. Joshua is a fascinating narrative, but it is not easy to read, and its significance for the Christian can be difficult to grasp. There are familiar lines in this book, including God’s famous command to Joshua (“Be strong and courageous”; 1:9) and Joshua’s covenantal vow (“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”; 24:15). While these verses have meaning for Christians today, as we will see later their immediate context is very different from our own: Joshua is the leader of a nation commanded by God to invade the ancient land of Canaan and kill all of its inhabitants. It can be difficult to understand

why this kind of story is in the Bible—for the questions it raises and for the obscurity of its ancient history.

For many, the Bible presents enigmatic challenges, especially in the narrative portions of the Old Testament, like Joshua. Nevertheless, according to God’s wisdom, this book is in the Bible and is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness (see 2 Tim. 3:16). As we will see, Joshua is as marvelous as it is at first mysterious. Joshua will teach us about the unfailing promises of God springing from his unfailing faithfulness. It will teach us about the justice of God against sin and the great mercy of God toward sinners.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Read Deuteronomy 32:44–47. What was Israel to do and why? Next, read the first and last chapters of Joshua; write down the key words you expect to emerge time and again throughout the book.
2. Based on your current understanding, how are the themes of land and rest fulfilled in Jesus Christ? What significance do these themes have for the Christian?
3. From what you know so far about the book of Joshua, what excites you? What confuses you? What questions do you hope to answer through this study?