

SUDDEN HOPE III

SUDDEN MESSYOLOGY

⁴ Where no oxen [are], the crib [is] clean: but much increase [is] by the strength of the ox.

Proverbs 14:4 KJV

¹² Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. ¹³ And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. [Is] not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. ¹⁴ And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.

Joshua 10:12-14 KJV

- I. Do you want control or increase?
 - A. If your answer is increase, then you're inviting uncontrollable messiness into your life.
 - B. If you're trying to avoid messes with people, places, and things, you are voting to have a clean stall.
 - C. All you have to do to maintain a clean stall (absolute control) is to get rid of the oxen. Poof! No mess!
 - D. But this is a shortsighted decision that will prevent the possibility of all harvests in your future.

E. Without the oxen there is no one to pull the plow, and so no planting, fertilizing, and no possibility of harvest.

F. God loves to work in messy situations with messy people. In fact, it's the only context in which he has ever acted.

II. Five messy messes and messages for this season.

A. Mess #1: Joshua doesn't consult the Lord.

¹⁴ And the men took of their victuals, and asked not [counsel] at the mouth of the LORD. ¹⁵ And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto them. (Joshua 9:14,15)

Message: Always consult the Lord before entering into any relationship.

B. Mess #2: Meet the messy Gibeonites.

They enter into a relationship with Israel illicitly. (Joshua 9:3-27)

Message: God works, even in the midst of our messy and inappropriate relationships.

C. Mess #3: The defection of the Gibeonites from evil people groups triggers a messy war with five kings.

⁵ Therefore 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 themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it. (Joshua 10:5)

Message: No man lives to himself, or dies to himself. Everything we do has life-changing consequences. (The butterfly effect.)

D. Mess #4: The Gibeonites call out to Joshua from their mess.

⁶ And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us. (Joshua 10:6)

Message: Never stop crying out to God from your messes.

E. Mess #5: The enemy's mess. Joshua's long day.

⁹ Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, [and] went up from Gilgal all night. ¹⁰ And the LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Bethhoron, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. ¹¹ And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, [and] were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: [they were] more which died with hailstones than [they] whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. ¹² Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. ¹³ And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. [Is] not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of

*heaven, and hastened not to go down about a whole day. ¹⁴
And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the
LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD
fought for Israel. ¹⁵ And Joshua returned, and all Israel with
him, unto the camp to Gilgal. (Joshua 10:9-15)*

Message: God displays his greatest signs, wonders, and miracles in the middle of the mess.