

Joshua 1: 1 – 9; John 15: 1 – 5

'Queen's Jubilee'

Introduction ...

I wonder if you can recall a time when you agreed to do something ... to take something on ... and only later discovered all the 'hidden extras' it involved?

Maybe at school ... a house captain ... or the recycling monitor ... maybe as a Guiding or Scouting leader ... And I expect that our Deputy Lord Lieutenant and Mayor are in the process of discovering the 'extras' that they weren't initially aware of!

Joshua ...

In our first Bible reading we hear of **Joshua** taking on a new role. His predecessor – Moses – has had a tough enough job: leading the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt ... and then those 40 years in the desert wilderness ... but the task in front of him – Joshua – was massive too – with many unknowns ... or hidden extras.

Joshua was to keep the Israelites on track – morally, ethically and in faith – belief and practice ... and to settle them in their new, promised land.

What a leadership role to bear!

What would help? What could underpin his leadership? It's there in **verse 9** of our reading – right at the end:

The Lord your God is with you – wherever you go ...

which then makes sense of the opening words of the same verse:

Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened or dismayed ...

The Queen

When Princess Elizabeth accepted the responsibility of becoming our Monarch – she could not have known what 'extras' would be involved ... or how the role would need to evolve and adapt ... of how society would change – nor the ever-increasing speed of that change ...

For example:

Empire not only to Commonwealth but also to independence ... to the Black Lives Matter campaign and the acknowledgement of the Windrush scandal. 70 years ago – Princess Elizabeth could not have even dreamt of how communications would change – and of how that would impact – personally and in her role. Yet here we are 70yrs later – to celebrate her reign: As Simon Armitage, the poet Laureate, wrote in his poem **Queenhood**:

It is constancy and it is change

The age of clockwork

morphs into digital days

But the song of the blackbird remains the same ...

PTO

He also wrote of the Coronation

A monarch walks forward

into the sideways weather of oncoming years ...

The Queen herself often alludes to the ways in which God has helped her to undertake the role – both in times of great joy and in times of severe difficulty.

Like Joshua, like Jesus ... she does not regard her role as 'a job' but as a calling from God ... you can read some of her own words on this in that book **'The Faithful Queen'**. And through inhabiting the role as calling – as God's vocation for her ... she, like Joshua, **can be/has been strong and courageous.**

Back to the Poet Laureate:

Robe and stole are lifted onto your shoulders

Both shield and yoke ...

In the terms of our second reading – she lived and still lives her life as a Christian disciple:

Abiding in Jesus in order to bear much fruit.

In 2010, Queen Elizabeth II said this: to the General Synod – the Governing Body – of the Church of England:

At the heart of our Faith stands not a preoccupation with our own welfare and comfort

but the concepts of service and of sacrifice as shown in the

life and teachings of Christ – the one who

made himself nothing, taking the very form of a servant.

As we – in our own ways – seek to serve our communities for the common good – we can take heart, we can take inspiration – from the ways in which our Queen has done so and from the God she walks with. **Amen.**

Then followed 2 verses of the National Anthem.