

BibleWise

Discussion Questions – Lessons We Can Learn from Joshua

by Bible Scholar, Barry Huff

Joshua courageously led the children of Israel out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land, and from his bold example we can learn many lessons.

- Have you ever been scared of a big test, a game, or a bully?
 - **In a scary situation, you can remember the words of Joshua, "the Lord is with us: fear them not"**
(Numbers 14:9; see Numbers 13-14 for the whole story).
- When the children of Israel were in the wilderness, Moses sent one spy from each of the twelve tribes of Israel into Canaan.
 - Ten of the spies reported that it was impossible to enter the Promised Land because the people who lived there were huge and stronger than the children of Israel.
 - This report made the children of Israel complain that they never should have left Egypt.
 - Joshua and Caleb, the last two spies, told the children of Israel not to complain or to be afraid of the strength of humans.
 - **Instead, they should trust God, the ultimate strength.**
- Unfortunately, the children of Israel didn't believe Joshua.
 - They had to spend forty years wandering in the wilderness, turning to God every day for their food and water, until they trusted Him enough to enter the Promised Land.
 - **The path is a lot quicker when we trust God right from the start!**
- By the time they were ready to cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land, the children of Israel were trusting God with every step.

- In fact, they walked right into the Jordan River, knowing that God would part the waters. And, sure enough, God did!
- Sometimes we have to get our feet wet before the waters will part.
 - To overcome any problem that faces us, we must courageously move forward with faith in God.
- This faith in God was symbolized by Joshua ordering the priests, who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant (rather than the soldiers carrying swords), to lead the children of Israel across the Jordan River and into the Promised Land (See Joshua 3).
 - In any difficult circumstance, we might ask ourselves, what am I putting first in my life: God's strength or human strength? Am I facing this challenge by beginning with prayer?
- When the children of Israel entered the Promised Land and came to the walls of the ancient city of Jericho, Joshua once again led them to turn to God for help.
 - Joshua's experience shows that when we're turning to God for help, we shouldn't be surprised when we're asked to do something that makes no sense. God's got a great sense of humor!
 - Instead of using battering rams and bombs to conquer the city, the children of Israel used prayer and praise.
 - Prayer and praise are the greatest weapons in the world.
- The children of Israel walked around the city walls each day and blew their trumpets in praise of God, and, sure enough, the walls of Jericho came tumblin' down.
- Often, this story has been used by powerful countries to say that God will help them destroy their enemies. But that interpretation misses the whole point of this story.
 - While most people who lived around the children of Israel believed that God protected only the powerful rulers and did not care about the

powerless or poor, the children of Israel knew differently.

- The children of Israel worshipped a God who cared for, freed, and protected a rag-tag bunch of slaves "as the apple of his eye" (Deuteronomy 32:10).
- The story of Joshua and the walls of Jericho (found in Joshua 6) teaches us that God brings land to the landless, loves everyone - even those who nobody else cares about - and overthrows all walls of limitation, no matter how high.
 - Wall of limitation crumble so that God's children will have what they need.
- We too can celebrate this God through marching and music, the dedicated action of our daily life and the praise in our hearts. We will then witness walls of fear, sickness, oppression, hatred, and limitation come tumblin' down.
 - Like Joshua, we can boldly leap into the waters and march with shouts around the walls of any challenge, because we know that the God who parts waters and tears down walls is the greatest and only power in the world.
 - Instead of being afraid of, and thereby worshipping, the greatness of a problem, we can worship the greatness of God.
 - With Joshua, we can let our lives declare, "the Lord is with us: fear them not" (Numbers 14:9).