

## RISE

### Joshua Series, Episode 2 (Joshua 5-8)

Sunday, September 17. Joshua 6:1-27 (After Party Discussion)

After crossing the Jordan and observing Passover in Canaan, God speaks to Joshua about attacking and taking possession of the city of Jericho. The Lord tells Joshua point blank that He *has given* (past tense) the city and all its inhabitants into the hand of Israel. He then conveys the details of His plan of attack to Joshua. The battle plan is extremely unusual, to say the least, but Joshua and the Israelites follow it precisely. At the end of the seven-day march, Jericho is no more and the Israelites are in possession and control of the land.

**--Why do you think God chose the process of having the Israelites march around Jericho for seven days? Why is it important to follow the detailed process specifically? How can (and have) shortcuts hurt us?**

**--What does the unconventional attack on Jericho reveal about God's creativity? What does it reveal about His way of teaching, growing and leading us as His children? How should it affect the way we seek or look for God?**

**--Identify at least one spiritual benefit or lesson realized by the Israelites as a result of their following God's process/plan of a multi-day march around Jericho.**

**--On a scale of 1-10, how willing are you to wait on God's timing? Think of a time when you chose to be patient and wait on God. What was the outcome? How did you see God move and provide?**

**--What can we learn about being obedient from Joshua's (and Israel's) response to God's instructions about attacking Jericho? Do you find it difficult to take action when God's plan doesn't seem to make sense to you?**

**--How does being able to read a real-life, supernatural account like the fall of Jericho impact your thinking and attitude about: trusting God, God's power and control, yielding to God's will and leading, living according to God's Word, God's timing and plan? How aware would you say you are of the process of growing spiritually? Where do you think you're at in that process, and what is your next step forward?**

**--Take a minute to assess your current circumstances (i.e. job, relationships, family, spiritual growth, etc.). What's your "Jericho" (obstacle) to spiritual growth and development? In other words, what is it that is holding you back from moving to the next level? What, either of your doing or just life's circumstances, stands in the way of you and spiritual, emotional and/or personal growth? How important is diligence and persistence to the process of growing and maturing spiritually?**

Monday, September 18. Joshua 5:1-15

When word of the Israelites passing over the Jordan on dry ground reaches the cities and kingdoms beyond the Jordan to the west, the people "lost heart and were paralyzed with fear because of [the Israelites]" (vs.1). At that same time, God commands Joshua to circumcise the entire male population, an undertaking that would physically restrict and incapacitate the men of Israel for a period of time. Joshua and the Israelites comply with God's directive and then celebrate a first Passover and a new season of life that was now beginning in the Promised Land.

**How has God protected you when you've been in a vulnerable situation or a weak position? What does God's protection and provision in this situation convey about how God watches over and cares for us? When God moves you forward into a new season of life or ministry, is it your practice to look back and remember what He has just brought you through? Do you look forward with anticipation to what He has for you in the future?**

Tuesday, September 19. Joshua 6:1-27

After crossing the Jordan and observing Passover in Canaan, God speaks to Joshua about attacking and taking possession of the city of Jericho. The Lord tells Joshua point blank that He *has given* (past tense) the city and all its inhabitants into the hand of Israel. He then conveys the details of His plan of attack to Joshua. The battle plan is extremely unusual, to say the least, but Joshua and the Israelites follow it precisely. At the end of the seven-day march, Jericho is no more and the Israelites are in possession and control of the land.

**Why do you think God chose the process of marching around Jericho for seven days before giving victory to Israel? Why is it important to specifically follow the detailed process? How can (and have) shortcuts hurt us? What does the unconventional attack on Jericho reveal about God's way of teaching, growing and leading us? How willing are you to wait on God's timing? Think of a time when you chose to be patient and wait on God. What was the outcome? How did you see God move and provide? Do you find it difficult to take action when God's plan doesn't seem to make sense to you?**

Wednesday, September 20. Joshua 7:1-26

Despite Joshua's explicit command to "not take any of the things set apart for destruction" (Joshua 6:18), certain people violated his directive. Unaware of this disobedience, Joshua sends men to Ai to spy out the land. Upon return, the men report that only a few thousand men are needed to take the city. Without consulting God, Joshua deploys 3,000 warriors, but instead of victory, Israel suffers an embarrassing defeat. The Israelites were then "paralyzed with fear" and "their courage melted away" (vs. 5). A distressed and doubting Joshua complains to God only to discover that the defeat was the result of sin from Jericho. God then commands Joshua to resolve the situation in what seems like a harsh manner as we read this passage with our grace-filled understanding of today.

**What does this passage reveal about the temptation that money and possessions present? What are some ways we can guard against and combat the powerful pull of money? Is it your habit to consult God before making important decisions? When or in what type of situations are you most likely to take action without inquiring of God? What does this account show about God's desire for us to be fully committed to Him, living rightly and with a pure heart? What does it show about consequences when we sin? How does consistently being in God's Word help us keep our focus on God and proper living?**

Thursday, September 21. Joshua 8:1-29

The Israelites once again attack Ai, and with God now at the helm, the second time around brings a different outcome. Ai is completely defeated and the livestock and plunder of the city are taken as plunder for the Israelites according to God's instruction.

**What does the second attack of Ai show about God's forgiving nature, His great love for us as His children, His incredible provision when we choose to wholeheartedly follow Him? What impact does having a "clean slate" with God (no unconfessed sin) have on our attitude, motivation and service?**

Friday, September 22. Joshua 8:30-35

After securing victory over Ai, Joshua builds an altar for a peace and burnt offering where the Israelites renew their commitment to God. Joshua then reads to the entire assembly—Israelites of all ages and those who had joined them along their journey—every single word of God's commandments that had been given to them through Moses.

**Why is it important to renew our commitment to God from time to time? Based on this account, how essential is it for us to know and understand God's instructions to us in the Bible, and to regularly spend time with God in His Word? How does reading Scripture out loud benefit, impact and/or help us?**

Saturday, September 23. Joshua 9-12

Spend some time reflecting on what you read and learned from Joshua 5-8. Then read Joshua 9-12 in preparation for Sunday's message.