

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

4/15/2018 · Week 13

Joshua 6 · Battle of Jericho

1. Read Joshua 5:13-15 & 6 as a group with each member reading 2-3 verses at a time. What fresh observations / forgotten details do you notice in this famous Old Testament account? What (if anything) seems unclear or confusing to you?
2. The end of chapter 5 includes a rare instance of what theologians call a "Theophany" (a visible manifestation to humankind of God). Compare this Theophany to the one found in Exodus 3:1-6. What similarities / differences do you notice in these two accounts? What do you think is the purpose of the "commander of the army of Lord[']s" (Josh. 5:14) visit to Joshua? What do you think God is trying to communicate to Joshua before he leads the Israelite army against Jericho?
3. Jericho is believed to have been the Israelites strongest opponent in the land of Canaan. At that time in history, a normal victorious siege against such a heavily fortified city would have required a combination of complex weaponry such as battering rams, catapults, and moving towers---all of which Israel had none. Instead of supernaturally supplying Israel with these weapons, God purposes a different strategy. What was that strategy? (see 6:3-5) What do you think God was up to in commanding such a peculiar plan of attack?
4. It is easy to read this story with the end in mind. Nevertheless, try to place yourself in the minds of Joshua and the Israelite soldiers who did not know how things would play out. Think of Joshua in verses 6-7, when he first detailed the battle plan to his leaders. How would you have responded to this plan? Furthermore, think of the soldiers marching around the city silently on the sixth day for the thirteenth time. Can you imagine they felt doubtful, silly, or even slightly embarrassed in the presence of Jericho's army? Think of a time when following the commands of God has forced you into a situation that causes you to doubt or feel embarrassed.
5. God warns the Israelites in verse 18 to "keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction." What things of our world today do you think God has "devoted to destruction"? What things do you / your family need to rid themselves of so that you would be devoted to God and not to those things that will perish?
6. It is easy to misread this account and abuse it to paint the God of the Old Testament as a cruel and bloodthirsty villain. Nevertheless, the story of Rehab's salvation in midst of judgment is a great example of God's equally just and merciful character. How is God's justice and mercy seen in our world and lives today? Spend a moment of contemplation over the profound providence and grace of God as you look up Matthew 1:5 and find a familiar name in the geneology of Christ.
7. In light of the curse Joshua makes in verse 26, skip ahead in the Old Testament to 1 Kings 16:34. What did the man Hiel of Bethel do? What happened to him? Here we have an example of God keeping His promises--including those with bad repercussions. What promises of judgment has God made to people living today? How can this passage embolden you to warn your neighbors who will one day face God's judgment seat?
8. In light of this account, take some time to pray with a member of your group that God would strengthen you to trust in Him and follow His commands.