

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 5 w/Answers

Joshua (Chaps. 5-9)

This week we'll continue our Old Testament survey with the book of Joshua. As we discussed near the end of class last week, Joshua's first military campaign was against the city of Jericho. It is important to note that at the time God's people prepared to enter the land of Canaan, it was populated with an array of city states, like Jericho, spread across the land -- most of them loosely controlled in those days by the Pharaohs of Egypt. As the book of Joshua will reveal, Joshua will eventually defeat 31 kings of these city states through three major campaigns.



To better understand both the victory at Jericho and the type of warfare Joshua and his men will fight, we need a fundamental knowledge of siege warfare and the defenses used by these city states. So, let's begin our study this week with a look at siege warfare and then consider some additional information on Jericho that we did not cover last week. From there, we'll quickly cover the first nine chapters in this week's lesson.

Here's your assignment for this week:

1. Define how siege warfare was conducted and describe some of the city defenses and strategies used to defend against it. (Also read 2 Samuel 11:14-21 for an example.)
 - a. ANSWER 1: Siege warfare, in its simplest form, meant surrounding the city you wanted to capture or destroy, cutting off its food and water supply, and waiting for the city to either surrender or become so weak it was easily captured. Sieges could run any length, from a few days to years. They typically included war-making equipment such as battering rams, ladders for climbing city walls, catapults and various machines for building siege ramps and damming rivers and other sources of water, as well as day-to-day equipment for supporting and sustaining the encamped attacking army itself during a siege. Keeping the army that was conducting the siege well supplied during a long campaign was an important key to victory.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Strategies for defending against a siege included storing up food and water, creating access to water from inside the city, as well as building very tall and very thick walls. One such strategy involved building a wall around the city and then going out in front of it and building another wall - called a "bulwark". Furthermore, in order to stop or slow down ladders from being used against the walls, steep slopes were built at the base of walls. Walls were typically wide enough to allow the passage of messengers and supply people running from one vantage point to another carrying the latest report or moving weapons from one point to another during the combat. One common tactic for defending the wall was the use large stones, even millstones, which would be dropped down on the invading army as they gathered at the bottom of the wall or as they attempted to climb ladders.
2. Define what a "bulwark" is.
 - a. ANSWER: A wall or embankment used as a defensive fortification - sometimes also referred to as a "rampart".
3. Define what a "glassy" is in siege warfare
 - a. ANSWER: To prevent battering rams from attacking city walls or gates, a wide elevated berm called a "glassy" was built by the city. It prevented the use of ladders and rams from being set in place up close to the walls.
4. How were gates used in the defense of a city?
 - a. ANSWER: To prevent large armies from marching directly into the city, its gates were often built intentionally narrow and often in a series of twists or turns, such that an army would have to defeat more than one gate and enter the city slowly -- one gate at a time in narrow columns turning and twisting as they entered. Defenders would position themselves high overhead in order to take advantage of the army's compromised position and inability to maneuver.

5. Examine the campaigns that Joshua led in order to capture the Promise Land and describe the methods that God used to fight these battles and to show everyone that it was His war and His victory. List some of the many things God did to make it clear to the Israelites that He was their God and that He was fighting for them all through Joshua's campaigns.
 - a. ANSWER 1: Joshua had 600,000 men but no tools of war, and no fighting experience. They had all been in the desert 40 years and in slavery 400 years before that; therefore, they had no military training, and no strategic or tactical planning experience.
 - b. ANSWER 2: In Jericho, God caused the walls to fall down flat, something completely opposite of siege warfare.
 - c. ANSWER 3: In many of the conflicts, God caused the people within the walled cities to run out into the open in order to fight. In a "spirit of foolishness", they left their heavily-fortified cities and ran into the very trap God had set for them.
 - d. ANSWER 4: In some battles, God used nature as His army, using bees and hornets to drive people out onto the plains where Joshua's army easily defeated them.
 - e. ANSWER 5: God caused many of the Kings from these city states to form alliances among themselves, united into a single army, fighting a single fight, and providing God -- through Joshua -- the opportunity to destroy many city states within one battle.
6. Consider for a moment when God dried up the Jordan River in order to allow Israel to cross on dry ground. List some reasons why God did this miracle?
 - a. ANSWER 1: He wanted to demonstrate the power of His hand in the physical universe to the new Israel that He was bringing out of the wilderness. Those who had previously seen Him split the Red Sea had all died, and now the new nation saw this miracle of God for themselves as they prepared to enter the Promise Land.
 - b. ANSWER 2: The enemies of Israel, knowing this was the season when the river was at flood stage -- with water spread across the river more than a mile wide -- would not have even considered that an army could cross the Jordan at that time.
 - c. ANSWER 3: This was also God's way of confirming Joshua's role as the new leader. Joshua issued the prophecy, and then the army saw it actually happen. It solidified Joshua as God's new anointed leader for Israel.
 - d. ANSWER 4: It caused the inhabitants of Canaan to be devastated when the overflowing Jordan river is suddenly dried up, just as they had heard had happened 40 years ago to the Egyptians at the Red Sea. (Joshua 5:1)
7. When did Manna cease to be provided? (Joshua 5:7-12)
 - a. ANSWER: On the evening of the 14th day of the month, after they had been circumcised and healed, they ate food from the Promised Land. The following day manna stopped.
8. What happened in Joshua 5:13-15? Who is speaking, and how does this compare with Exodus 3:1-5?
 - a. ANSWER: God is speaking with Moses, and many believe Christ is speaking to Joshua in much the same way that God spoke with Moses about leading His people. Joshua is now asked to remove his sandals as he is also standing on holy ground.
9. What happened to the spoils from the battle at Jericho - who got them? (Joshua 6:17-19)
 - a. ANSWER: Everything in the city was devoted to God, all was to go in God's treasury.
10. Discuss the sin of Achan and the impact of his actions on the nation of Israel. (Joshua Chapter 7)
 - a. ANSWER: Achan (the name means trouble) took some of God's spoils. No one else knew that he did, and yet God was wroth against all of Israel, not just Achan. (7:4) They are then defeated miserably in Ai. In Joshua 7:11, the sin is called out by God and through a gradual reduction in numbers. Eventually, Achan is called out for his sin and in Joshua 7:21, it is recorded that he confesses and then he and his entire household are stoned.

11. Discuss the circumstances surrounding the treaty with the Gibeonites. (Joshua Chapter 9) How does 2 Samuel, chapter 21, relate to this treaty - how many of Saul's innocent descendants were killed?

- a. ANSWER 1: The Gibeonites were very crafty people who knew that they would all be annihilated by Israel. They tricked Joshua into believing they lived in a city "afar off" by wearing old and dirty clothing, carrying old wine skins and so on. They convinced him to sign a treaty with them, even though he was suspicious. He never asked God, but rather just made the decision and signed the treaty on his own. He did not seek the council of the Lord and thus made a very bad mistake.
- b. ANSWER 2: In 2nd Samuel we see that, 400 years later, the affect of the treaty is still evident. Saul attempts to do in the Gibeonites, and in the end seven innocent people suffer, both for Saul's error and for Joshua's -- who should have never made the treaty in the first place.

We see again this week that God will not tolerate sin, and that a community that condones it -- even without its knowledge -- has sin within it, and is quickly and severely punished. We also see that when God is allowed to lead, there is always victory; but when man depends on his own will, follows his own lusts, and ignores God, defeat lies at the doorstep. Praise God we also see displayed in Joshua His infinite mercy and His unchanging faithfulness, as He leads Israel deeper and deeper into the Promise Land.

Let's commit this week to follow God's plan for our lives and not to follow our own desires. Let's also commit this week to tell someone else about His great love for us and the gift of eternal salvation that He provides to everyone through His one and only son Jesus.

Thanks for studying with us,

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