

The Story Series
"The Battle Begins"
Joshua

But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

Numbers 13:31-33 (NIV)

God is preparing us for the battles ahead.

Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them - to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates - all the Hittite country - to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

"Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:2-9 (NIV)

God already sees our battles in the past tense.

Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

Then the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. Joshua 6:1-2 (NIV)

**Courage is not the absence of fear,
but moving forward in spite of fear.**

March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in."

Joshua 6:3-5 (NIV)

God is bigger than the battle or the enemy.

When the trumpets sounded, the army shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the men gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so everyone charged straight in, and they took the city. They devoted the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it - men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys.

Joshua 6:20-21 (NIV)

*Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,
or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens?*

*Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket,
or weighed the mountains on the scales
and the hills in a balance?*

Isaiah 40:12 (NIV)

Why would God do this?

- **Because of the wickedness in the land.**

After the Lord your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, "The Lord has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness." No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is going to drive them out before you.

Deuteronomy 9:4 (NIV)

You must not worship the Lord your God in their way, because in worshiping their gods, they do all kinds of detestable things the Lord hates. They even burn their sons and daughters in the fire as sacrifices to their gods.

Deuteronomy 12:31 (NIV)

SO WHAT?

Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

... God will be with you ...

So Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.

Joshua 11:23 (NIV)

The Story continues...

Growth Group Questions

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. What were you scared of as a child? What are you most scared of now? When were you the most scared in your life? What happened?
2. Can you think of a time you faced an overwhelming challenge that you needed to confront? What was it and how did you respond?
3. Read Joshua 1:1-9. One of the keys to the Success of Joshua and the Israelites was to stay in the Scriptures. How do you stay connected to Gods word?
4. Read Joshua 8:34-35. After Joshua defeated the city of “Ai”, He read the word of God to everyone. How has God spoken to you directly through his word?
5. Just like the Israelites we sometimes are fearful of challenges and don't want to deal with them. What challenges in your life have you put on the back burner even though you know you need to face it and deal with it.
6. How can you be strong and courageous and take action on that issue?