

## PREPARING FOR LIFE'S BATTLES

FEBRUARY 5, 2023

### WORSHIP

Amazing God, All Because  
of Jesus, Great Are You  
Lord, Christ Be Magnified

### WELCOME

Share about the most epic  
adventure/battle movie  
or story, either fictional  
or based on true events,  
that has made a lasting  
impression on you.

### WORD

#### **JOSHUA 5:4-8** (READ THE REST OF JOSHUA 5)

<sup>4</sup> This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, died in the wilderness along the way after they came out of Egypt. <sup>5</sup> For all the people who came out were circumcised, but all the people who were born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised. <sup>6</sup> For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, that is, the men of war who came out of Egypt, [c]perished because they did not listen to the voice of the LORD, to whom the LORD had sworn that He would not let them see the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>7</sup> Their children whom He raised up in their place, Joshua [d]circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them along the way. <sup>8</sup> Now when they had finished circumcising all the nation, they remained in their places in the camp until they were [e]healed. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." So the name of that place is called [f]Gilgal to this day.

How do soldiers prepare for battle? In the war movie "GLORY", the 54th Massachusetts – one of the first all-African American regiments in Lincoln's army can be seen praying the evening before they face their greatest battle during the Civil War. This is certainly a valuable lesson from the movie for us today.

As we continue our message series on Joshua, we will learn about how to prepare for life's battles. **Joshua 5** takes place right after the miracle of the crossing of the Jordan (at flood stage). A new generation of Israelites were getting ready for their first battle inside the Promised Land. They were encamped at Gilgal and here we will see how God prepares them for battle. There were four experiences that God brought the Israelites and Joshua through to get them battle-ready, and we can learn principles that will prepare us for life's challenges as well. Each of these four principles carry with them a declaration about the Lord.

#### **1. CONSECRATION: "The Lord is my Master!"**

When you say, "the Lord is my Master", you are saying that you belong completely to Him not only when it's convenient, that He owns me. It is the "act of dedicating yourself to the service and worship of God...it is your unconditional surrender to God" (Teach Every Nation). Strangely enough, when it comes to God's economy, the key to victory is surrender. How did God facilitate for His people to experience this? Through the covenant of circumcision (**Joshua 5:2-5**)! Though all Israelite males who came out of Egypt were circumcised, the generation born during the journey to the Promised Land were not. Also, the older generation who came out with Joshua (and Caleb) into the wilderness have all since died, a consequence of their disobedience to the Lord (**Numbers 14:30-33**). We can learn a few things from this sad story of the older Israelite generation—1-God is patient and gracious, but His patience has a limit; someday His judgment of sin will be experienced by those who are disobedient; 2-Sin is really terrible; it has awful long-lasting consequences which includes 3-Sin's collateral damage.

This covenant of circumcision between God and the Israelites was in effect from the time of Abraham (**Genesis 17:9-11**). This covenant means that Abraham and his descendants belonged to (set apart for) God though a promise, and vice versa. More than the physical cutting away of the flesh, circumcision was symbolic of the cutting away of sinful, worldly ways – a circumcision of the heart (**Deuteronomy 10:14-16**). Yet God knew that people don't have the ability to circumcise their own hearts, and so He promised that He will be the one to do so (**Deuteronomy 30:6**). We can clearly see man's responsibility and God's sovereignty in this covenant, and this is still true for us today (**Romans 12:1**). As we "present" or surrender ourselves to the Lord, we will experience victory in our battles as Pastor Chip Ingram reminded us, "Surrender is the secret to power in the Christian life".



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Because God's renown has reached the kings even beyond the Jordan, they were all afraid of Israel's powerful God. This ensured that the fighting men had time to heal without their enemies taking advantage of their vulnerable state (**Joshua 5:8-9**).

#### 2. CELEBRATION: "The Lord is my Savior!"

While still at Gilgal, Israel celebrated the Passover (**v.10**), a momentous occasion—the first ever celebrated in the Promise Land by the new generation who had just consecrated themselves to the Lord. Even in this time of celebration, God's timing is perfect; He brought the Israelites into the Promised Land just in time for them to fulfill His command regarding the Passover (**Exodus 12:1-7**)! The perfect lamb that was sacrificed during the Jewish Passover is symbolic of Jesus, our Passover Lamb (**Matthew 26:2, John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7**). Today, we commemorate through the Lord's Supper, Jesus' sacrifice on the cross to take away our sins. This celebration helps prepare us for life's greatest battle (death) because God's Lamb has been sacrificed for our sins, we can be certain that all who trust in Jesus as their Savior will enjoy a joyous eternity in God's presence!

#### 3. CONFIDENCE: "The Lord is my Provider!"

**Joshua 5** also shows how God's gives us the confidence to face life's battles. How did God teach this to the new generation of Israelites? By providing them with food from the land the day after the first Passover and the very next day, their supply of manna stopped (**v. 11-12**). God has used the manna to make the Israelites experience that man needs more than just physical food to truly live—we need God and His word (**Deuteronomy 8:2-3**). Indeed, God richly provides for all that we need (**Philippians 4:19**). When we experience the provision of God in our time of need (like during the pandemic), it enables us to have the confidence to face other battles.

#### 4. COMPLETE OBEDIENCE: "The Lord is my Commander"

When the Lord is your commander this means that you will do whatever He wants, and accept whatever He allows. Joshua experienced this principle as they came near Jericho (**vv. 13-15**). He is confronted by a mysterious Being who identifies himself as the captain of the LORD's army! Joshua fell down on his face, and takes off his sandals when commanded to, recognizing that he was in a holy place in that encounter. It is highly likely that Joshua came face-to-face with Jesus Himself! Our battleground is sacred ground (Rev. Edmund Chan); whatever is your battleground, that is holy ground. Worship God in complete surrender there. Joshua had to recalibrate his perspective, that he was before a holy God, and he had to get on his knees and bow his heart to God even before he could receive any command from Him. Indeed, when we practice these four principles of battle preparation from **Joshua 5**, it will lead us to victorious living!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

#### 1. Self-Check.

Based on the message today, how can you best prepare for the challenges you face?

#### 2. Setting It Right.

Encourage others in your Dgroup or family how the Lord is your Savior and Provider.

#### 3. Living It Out.

In what areas of your life do you need to completely obey the Lord as your Master and Commander?

### WORKS

#### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

All of us face all kinds of battles each day. Ask the Lord to show you who among the people in your life are going through an extra-challenging battle and pray for that person this week. Let them know how the Lord has been your Provider, Savior, Master and Commander. Take time to share how that can be true for them as well, through Jesus!

### WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

#### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

#### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's provision for families deeply affected by inflation.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; escalating tension in East Asian countries to stop.

#### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working.
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

#### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

#### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

### MEMORY VERSE

#### JOSHUA 5:14

He said, "No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?"