

CHANGING WANDERERS INTO WORSHIPERS

From the Exodus to the Promised Land

Watching Those Walls Tumble Down

Selections from Joshua 6

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



LET'S BEGIN HERE

God specializes in the impossible. He spread the waters for the fleeing Israelites and closed them upon the pursuing Egyptians who were nipping at their heels. He used David's little stone to knock down Goliath, a fierce warrior twice David's size. Through Jesus' death, God defeated death and made possible eternal life for all. God chooses surprising methods to gain His victories!

As for us? Facing impossible odds, we often grow tempted to outsmart with our wits, overpower with our will, turn away in fear, or inflict pain from rancor. A decision always accompanies the battles we face—to fight God's way or our own.

In today's study, Chuck Swindoll takes us through Joshua 6 to show us how Joshua precisely followed God's unconventional war tactics to reap a spectacular victory—a foretaste of the many victories that would follow.

God specializes in those occasions where you are overwhelmed and easily intimidated and outnumbered and outmanned and outmuscled and outsmarted, so that He might win it His way and get the glory. This is not just preaching fodder—this is truth to live by.
—Chuck Swindoll



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Like a meticulous architect, God laid out the specifications Joshua and the Israelites were to obey for receiving the promised land. We studied that plan in Joshua 1. Then came the following events:

- **Joshua 2:** Because of her faith, God spared the Jericho harlot, Rahab, and her family. While God used Israel to judge the inhabitants of Canaan, He extended grace to those who wanted it.

Quotable

*God is God—
who does the
unusual to
accomplish the
impossible.*

—Charles R. Swindoll



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- **Joshua 3–4:** God enacted another water-parting miracle to assure the Israelites that the same powerful God who had resided among their fathers was with them.
- **Joshua 5:** Israel obeyed the covenant stipulations God had established through Moses.

Did you catch the end of Joshua 5?

When Joshua was near the town of Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and demanded, “Are you friend or foe?” “Neither one,” he replied. “I am the commander of the Lord’s army.” At this, Joshua fell with his face to the ground in reverence. “I am at your command,” Joshua said. “What do you want your servant to do?” The commander of the Lord’s army replied, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did as he was told. (Joshua 5:13–15)

God confronted Joshua. Joshua bowed before the real Leader responsible for Israel’s impending victories.

Take a moment to prepare your heart to learn from God’s Word. When the Bible speaks, God speaks. We need God’s empowerment to hear from Him and enjoy His presence through His Word. Below, express your desire for God to teach you, change you, and equip you to fight your battles His way rather than your own.



Searching the Scriptures Tip: Observation

Often, the biblical narrative conveys emphases by the space it designates to a subject. We see that in today’s passage. The author could have easily summarized the events at Jericho in Joshua 6. Instead, we get a play-by-play. So, as you read the details, ask yourself what the author is emphasizing.



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Observation

Thoroughly observe *Joshua 6*. For each of the three sections in Joshua 6, list the details of that section along with any other key observations, and then write a single-sentence summary of its emphasis.

The Instructions—Joshua 6:1–7

Details	Emphasis

God lives in another realm. His game plan is of another sphere. He operates according to principles that are not familiar to this world. They are higher than this world, and they are beyond flesh.

—Chuck Swindoll

The Implementation—Joshua 6:8–21

Details	Emphasis



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With God, nothing is impossible. Because of God, impressing isn't important. How long it takes us to learn and believe these two truths! —Chuck Swindoll

The Aftermath—Joshua 6:22–27

Details	Emphasis

The best battles God wins are won when we find ourselves absolutely overwhelmed, intimidated, outmanned, and outmuscled. —Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation

Now it's time to consult your sources so you can better understand the historical context of Joshua 6.

First, use your Bible dictionary to look up *war* or *holy war* so you can understand the theological significance of this unique period in biblical history. Jot down your notes below. Consider answering this question: What was the purpose of war for the Israelites under Joshua?



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Using your dictionary or Constable's Notes *online*, why did God command Joshua to carry the ark around Jericho?

What did the priests signify?

With the impregnable walls of Jericho serving as the first of Israel's battles, what did Joshua and the Israelites learn from their victory? What is the significance of Joshua 6:27?

You will never fight the Lord's battles the Lord's way until you have time alone with Him. When you are alone with Him, it is amazing what He can do to break your pride, to get your attention, to treat you . . . as one of His subjects, and to show you His plan. —Chuck Swindoll



Correlation

The subject of war surfaces throughout the biblical narrative. It develops the meaning of God's title for Moses' song, "The Lord is a warrior" (Exodus 15:3). In their book *God Is a Warrior*, Tremper Longman III and Daniel G. Reid note five stages of God's battling.¹

Stage one: God fought Israel's flesh-and-blood enemies. Both the Joshua 6 account and the Israelites' exodus from Egypt exemplify stage one.



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Stage two: God fought against unfaithful Israel. Israel had to follow God's covenant stipulations, but the people failed. Nearly eight hundred years after the time of Joshua, God sent Jeremiah to prophesy to the faithless nation. How does [Jeremiah 21:1–5](#) portray stage two?

Stage three: Israel's prophets promised a Divine Deliverer who will return and restore all. The prophets coupled their judgment against the Jews with hope for them, as well as the whole world. Chaos will not reign forever. Evil will not endure. God will conquer. Read [Zechariah 14:1–9](#) and record below how it describes stage three.

Stage four: Jesus fought the principalities and powers during His first coming and will again during His second coming. In his gospel, Mark portrayed this stage as Jesus conquered forces of nature ([Mark 4:35–41](#)), demons ([5:1–13](#)), and death ([5:35–43](#)). Read these passages and summarize how Jesus conquered the powers of evil.

Stage five: The Divine Warrior defeats all evil once and for all. Jesus will remake this world. His people will inhabit it eternally, and His presence will abide with all. How does [Revelation 20:11–15](#), [21:1–8](#), and [22:1–5](#) portray stage five of the Divine Warrior thematic development?



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Jesus is like our Joshua, who leads us to victory over our spiritual foe, the devil. Until the ultimate battle, God's Spirit gives us power to reign over the sin that once dominated us (Romans 6) and fight against the forces of evil (Ephesians 6:10–20).

Application

What fight do you face right now? A cooled marriage? A rebellious child? A mountain of debt? Do you feel like an impossible wall looms before you, and you don't know how to break through? Using what you learned in this study, take a moment now to focus on the actual battle you are in. Write it down below.

How have you fought this battle in the past? In what ways are you tempted to face this battle with your own power?

You know what happens when God uses the unusual to accomplish the impossible? When our faith shifts from the horizontal to the vertical? He becomes our all in all. —Chuck Swindoll

What would it look like to fight this battle with the spiritual weapons God has given you? Make a plan below to follow how God would want you to fight.

"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)



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A FINAL PRAYER

Father, thank You for giving me the power I need. Thank You that I don't have to fight battles with only the world's knowledge, using only the world's methods. Eventually, death seizes everyone. But You have conquered death and the works of evil. I look to You for my strength, my joy, my hope, and my endurance. I pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTE

1. Tremper Longman III and Daniel G. Reid, *God Is a Warrior* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), chap. 1, EPUB.



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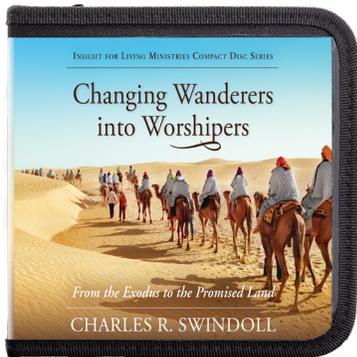
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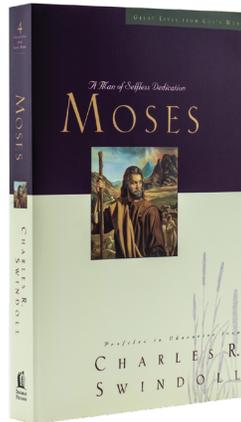
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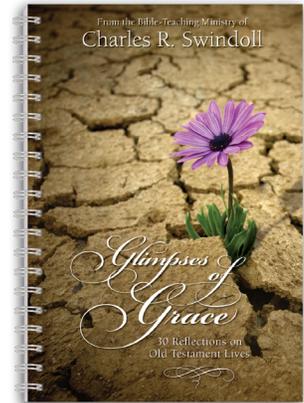
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For the 2018–2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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