



Step Up with Joshua  
**YOUR WAYS  
OR YAHWEH'S?**

THIS IS A  
TIME TO  
STEP UP



“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

SINCE THE  
BEGINNING OF  
HISTORY GOD'S  
PEOPLE HAVE  
CYCLED  
JOURNEYS OF  
OBEDIENCE AND  
DISOBEDIENCE -  
DOING LIFE HIS  
WAY OR OUR  
OWN WAY



- Adam & Eve
- Abraham
- Moses
- Joshua
- Judges
- The Kings (including David)
- The Kingdoms
- The Disciples
- The Churches...



# LIFECYCLE

- Fulfilment & blessing in the love of God
- God's Instruction & promise
- Our decision to choose our own way over His
- The painful consequences
- Awakening to the truth
- Returning to God and committing to His ways
- Fulfilment & blessing in the love of God





“EVERYBODY’S  
A SINNER  
EXCEPT FOR  
THIS GUY”

**HOMER SIMPSON**

THE SIMPSONS: EPISODE 4, SEASON 6



THIS GUY IS  
JESUS AND  
IS OUR  
PERFECT  
HOPE!



“13 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, “Are you for us or for our enemies 14 “Neither,” he replied, “but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.”

“Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, “What message does my Lord have for his servant?” 15 The commander of the Lord’s army replied, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.”

THE QUESTION  
IS NOT  
WHETHER GOD  
IS ON OUR  
'SIDE' BUT  
WHETHER WE  
WILL CHOOSE  
TO BE  
OBEDIENT TO  
HIS WORD!



- Obedience is a key core value in the Kingdom of God
- To submit to the Kingship of Jesus is to embody the Kingdom of Heaven on earth
- His Kingship is not a yoke of slavery but of freedom and of the abundance of eternal life!



- The next two Joshua 'stories' are a snapshot of what this means
- Jericho - God's way
- Ai - Our way
- Two long stories cut very short....



“1 Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. 2 Then the Lord said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. 3 March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days.”

JOSHUA 6

“4 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. 5 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

- God ideas don't always seem like good ideas
- The choice to follow Christ's teaching and example is not a matter of simple logic but of faith
- The best daily question we can ask is - what is God telling me to do today?



15 On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times. 16 The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!"

“17 The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent. 18 But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them. Otherwise you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it.”

JOSHUA 6

“19 All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury.” 20 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.”

JOSHUA 6

- Jericho was defeated only because the people of God followed His instruction
- Obedience does not always lead to an easy life but it does lead to victory and blessing - now or in eternity
- Faith is the key



“30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days”

HEBREWS 11

IF WE ARE  
GOING TO  
WIN THE  
BATTLES WE  
FACE, WE  
HAVE TO  
PURSUE  
OBEDIENT  
FAITH



- Ai is a different story
- From the victory gained in obedience, to defeat due to disobedience
- This does not mean that every time things seems to go wrong it is due to our failure - Jesus was totally obedient, even to death
- The inherent principle is that obedience to God's word is the right path to choose



“ 1 But the Israelites were unfaithful in regard to the devoted things; Achan son of Karmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them. So the Lord’s anger burned against Israel. 2 Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth Aven to the east of Bethel, and told them, “Go up and spy out the region.”

JOSHUA 7

“ So the men went up and spied out Ai. 3 When they returned to Joshua, they said, “Not all the army will have to go up against Ai. Send two or three thousand men to take it and do not weary the whole army, for only a few people live there.” 4 So about three thousand went up; but they were routed by the men of Ai”

JOSHUA 7

- The people of Israel face defeat and Joshua tears his clothes!
- God gives a way of redemption and restoration as He always does
- The sin has to be uprooted and removed



“ 20 Achan replied, “It is true! I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I have done:  
21 When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”

JOSHUA 7

- Achan's root sin is common to us all - putting ourselves first and failing to trust God's word
- The consequence of this sin affects the whole community
- Joshua had to lead the people through restoration for a mistake that was not his - though he failed later (with even longer term consequences)



“ Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. For I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land. 2 You shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king, except that you may carry off their plunder and livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the city.”

- Ai is eventually defeated following consecration and faith
- By His mercy and grace, God's purpose is fulfilled and His people gain their promised inheritance - but the consequences of disobedience are real
- We face the choice to compromise every single day



WE HAVE  
THE  
RESOLUTION  
OF THE  
ISSUE  
ALWAYS  
BEFORE US -  
IT IS  
FINISHED!



- Jesus Christ is our unfailing victory
- In His name we have unending forgiveness, healing and restoration without the need to shed any more blood
- Obedience is better than sacrifice (1Sam 15:22) love is better than obedience (John 14:15) in the promise of the Spirit



“9 “The Lord has driven out before you great and powerful nations; to this day no one has been able to withstand you. 10 One of you routs a thousand, because the Lord your God fights for you, just as he promised. 11 So be very careful to love the Lord your God.”

- We need to be clear that rejecting God's ways should be accompanied by a spiritual health warning!
- Sin leads to death and obedience leads to life
- We are not being fair to those around us if we keep this truth from them - even if it is because we want to be kind and inoffensive!



“14 Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.”

JOSHUA 24

“15 But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

JOSHUA 24

HOW ABOUT  
YOU &  
YOUR  
HOUSE?

WHAT IS  
YOUR  
CHOICE  
THIS DAY?



- The desire of our house at Elim Aberystwyth is to love God and love people
- This means being full of the same truth and grace that Jesus embodied (John 1:14)
- The reality is we fail - everybody is a sinner, except for this guy!

