Joshua Continues the Fight
Joshua 8:1-24:33
Joshua and the Israelites had defeated Jericho and had now set their eyes on their next target. Joshua sent two spies to look at the city of Ai. They came back and reported, “It will only take 3000 men to take it, we do not all need to go.”

Joshua separated out 3000 men and told them all about what they were about to go do. The Israelites nodded their heads and readied their swords and armor.
The 3000 men went down to fight the people of Ai, and they went out with a great clanging and clashing of swords. But they were defeated.

All of the Israelites were shocked. Jericho had been defeated without drawing a sword, no one had died. How were they defeated by a much smaller city?

Joshua tore his clothes and fell down on his face before God and the Ark of the Covenant.
Why are you surprised?” the Lord replied, “Israel has sinned against me. I commanded you to take nothing out of Jericho, but you have. I will not be with you until you deal with this.”

The next morning Joshua assembled all of the people. One by one he called tribes, clans and then the families, until God had identified the guilty.

Achan of the tribe of Judah confessed he had taken a robe, silver, and gold from Jericho.

Men searched his tent and found it buried in the dirt below the tent. Then they took Achan and his family and executed them and burned everything they owned.

Then God was no longer angry with Israel.
This time when they fought Ai, all of Israel came against them. Joshua sent 30000 men to sneak behind the city. He led the rest against the city.

The King of Ai led his men out of the city to meet Joshua, but Joshua retreated, leading them from Ai.

Then the 30000 moved into the empty city and destroyed it.
The King of Ai saw the city burning and tried to flee, but he was caught between Joshua and his men, and the 30000 who had burned the city. All who lived in the city were slain.

The Israelites took the livestock and plundered the city, just as God instructed.
Joshua gathered up all of the people of Israel at Mount Ebal. He built an altar to the Lord, making sacrifices. Then Joshua read to them the whole of the Law given to Moses, that all of Israel would know and remember what God had done for them, what He had promised and what He expected of them.
The city of Gibeon had heard the fate of Jericho and Ai and were afraid as they were nearby. They prepared a delegation to go and convince Joshua to sign a peace treaty with them.

They put on worn and patched sandals and old clothes with holes in them. They loaded their donkeys up with worn out sacks, and moldy food.

“We have come from far away and have heard of the glory of the Lord,” they said. “Please let us be the Lord’s servants. See our food is old and our clothes are patched. When we left they were new.”

Joshua and the others listened to what they said and saw how old all they had was and didn’t ask God what they should do.

When Joshua found out they had been tricked, he was mad. He would not break the treaty, but declared they would serve the Israelites at the hardest jobs they had.
Joshua and the Israelites continued to spread thru the land. With the Lord going before them, 31 kings were defeated and slain.

God came to Joshua, “You are very old and there is still a large amount of land to be taken. Divide up the land among the tribes as I have instructed you. Command the tribes to finish clearing the lands of their inheritance.

Joshua divided up the land among the tribes. The tribes went out to claim their inheritances.

The tribes fought many battles, but they did not completely do what God had told them to do.
After a long time, there was rest for the Israelites. Joshua who was very old by that time, summoned all of Israel to him.

“You have yourselves seen everything that the Lord your God has done to all these nations for your sake. It was the Lord who fought for you. So choose today, will you serve God or the gods of Egypt or the Canaanites?” Joshua asked.

He looked over the assembled people and said with a loud voice, “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!”

All of Israel stood up and with a loud voice declared. “We will serve God!” And they did while Joshua and all of the elders who had experienced everything God had done for Israel.
Questions

Younger Kids
1. What happened when the Israelites first fought Ai?
2. Why did the Israelites lose their first fight against Ai?
3. How did the people of Gibeon trick Joshua?
4. Did the Israelites successfully defeat all of the other people?
5. Who did the Israelites choose to follow when Joshua challenged them?

Middle Kids
1. Read Joshua 7:4-5. How do you feel when you lose? How did the Israelites feel? What had just happened before this? How serious is God about sin?
4. Read Joshua 9:1-5. How do the Gibeonites plan to trick Joshua?
5. Read Joshua 9:14-15. What mistake did Joshua and the Elders make?
6. Read Joshua 10:4-6. What is the result of the alliance with Gibeon? Did the Israelites choose their friends wisely?
7. Why did Joshua gather them together at the end of his life? Why is it important for you to choose God personally?

**Older Guys**

1. Read Joshua 7:1. Did he follow through with God’s commands? How often does God give you a clear command and you don’t follow?
2. What was Joshua’s biggest fear about their failure? Read Joshua 7:6-9.
3. Read Joshua 7:25-26. Is it just that the whole family is stoned?
4. What is different about how the Israelites went out the second time to fight Ai? Read Joshua 8:3-8.
5. Read Joshua 8:30-35. Why do you think Joshua continually reminds them of what is going on?

Activities
   1. Play “Hot and Cold.” One player hides an object in the room, and the other players try to find it while the “hider.”
   2. Play “Two Lies and a Truth,” one person is to tell two lies and a truth, and you have to figure out which is the truth and which is a lie. How hard is to know the right answer if you don’t have all of the information? Is it easy to be tricked without good counsel?

Online