

“ARE WE THERE YET?” SERIES PART 2: STUDY 1

LIFT UP YOUR EYES – A NEW LAND AND A NEW LEADER

BEFORE THE LESSON

When it was time for Moses to hand over the leadership of Israel to Joshua, he reminded Joshua of God’s faithful promises. However, he still pleaded with God to allow him to enter the Promised Land in spite of God forbidding him earlier for his disobedience. Moses was allowed to see the Promised Land only from a distance. Giving over leadership is never easy to do, but Moses had prepared Joshua well for his new position. This passage from Deuteronomy is all about how God had chosen Joshua to take over for Moses to lead Israel. Whenever we are in a time of transitioning to new leadership, whether as a church, a business, or a nation, it takes wise leadership to help prepare people for what’s coming next.

STARTING THE LESSON

We’re in the second leg of this series, and it’s time to start thinking about how to hand over the baton. In times of transition, whether it’s having children graduate and move out into the world, handing over a job or ministry upon retirement, or allowing someone else to take on a leadership role, transitions can feel disorienting. Moses is nearing the end of his life, and it’s time for him to hand over the leadership of Israel to Joshua, a man that God has hand-picked for his faithfulness.

TIPS TO SHARE WITH LEADERS

Take some time to look over the questions and choose a few of the deeper discussion questions that you would like to have the group answer. You don’t have to ask every question, so think about your group and which questions you believe they would have the most to share.

Remember to thank group members when they share something personal.

STARTER QUESTION

- In one sentence, what is one thing you would say to your teenage self about what it’s like to be an adult?
- What is one quality of a good leader?

OPENING PRAYER

Holy Spirit, come and guide us today. Speak to us as we read and discuss together and help us to grow in our faithfulness. Open our hearts to hear the word of God and apply it in our own lives. Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

BIBLE PASSAGE REFERENCE

Deuteronomy 3:21-29

21 At that time I commanded Joshua: “You have seen with your own eyes all that the Lord your God has done to these two kings. The Lord will do the same to all the kingdoms over there where you are going. **22** Do not be afraid of them; the Lord your God himself will fight for you.”

- Who was Joshua? What do we know about him?

Joshua is mentioned in the Bible in Exodus 17, 24, 32, 33; Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges 1:1-2:23; 1 Samuel 6:14-18; 1 Chronicles 7:27; Nehemiah 8:17; Acts 7:45; Hebrews 4:7-9. Joshua was one of the 12 spies that Moses sent into Canaan. He and Caleb were the only two spies who came back with a report that the Israelites could conquer the land, while the other 10 gave a negative report. Joshua was a faithful leader of Israel after Moses’ death, and he led the people to conquer many of the nations that lived in the promised land.

QUESTION 2

- What promises did Moses make to Joshua in verses 21-22?

Moses promised Joshua that God would fight for the people of Israel, and that God would help them defeat the nations in the promised land.

BIBLE PASSAGE REFERENCE

(continued)

23 At that time I pleaded with the Lord: **24** "Sovereign Lord, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do? **25** Let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan—that fine hill country and Lebanon."

26 But because of you the Lord was angry with me and would not listen to me. "That is enough," the Lord said. "Do not speak to me anymore about this matter. **27** Go up to the top of Pisgah and look west and north and south and east. Look at the land with your own eyes, since you are not going to cross this Jordan. **28** But commission Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he will lead this people across and will cause them to inherit the land that you will see." **29** So we stayed in the valley near Beth Peor.

QUESTION 3

- In Numbers 20, we see that Moses' disobedience at the waters of Meribah caused God to refuse him entry into the Promised Land. Why do you think he continues to plead with God to be allowed to enter the land?

Allow the group to discuss possible reasons for Moses' pleading with God.

QUESTION 4

- What did God do for Moses in place of allowing him to enter the land?

He allowed Moses to see the land from the top of a mountain before the rest of the people crossed over the Jordan.

QUESTION 5

- How do you think Moses felt knowing he would never see the results of Israel's journey?

Allow a few minutes for the group to discuss what they think Moses was feeling.

QUESTION 6

- Recall a time when you thought God was leading you somewhere, but then he closed that door. What was it like to experience that?

Give each person who wishes to share an opportunity to respond thoughtfully.

QUESTION 7

- Give an example of a leadership transition that went well, perhaps from your own experience, or perhaps from history. When it's time to hand over a position of leadership, how do we do it well?

Allow everyone a chance to think about what it means to hand over leadership to someone else and share what that looks like.

QUESTION 8

- Recall a time when a leader did not let go of their position when they should have handed it to a new leader. What could they have done differently?

There are many examples of leaders, whether in government or other organizations, of leaders who have chosen to hold onto power too long. Allow some time to discuss how this could have gone differently.

QUESTION 9

- How can a leader help people to understand it's time to move on when they would rather everything remain the same?

There are many possible ways leaders could ease the transition for incoming leaders and those who are worried about change.

QUESTION 10

- For parents, what is the scariest part of letting adult children go out into the world on their own? How can we prepare them to be successful?

If there are parents who've already got adult children in the group, it would be good to ask them to share first. This question can lead into ministry time.

QUESTION 11

- What are the character qualities to look for when it's time to tap someone to take over a position of leadership?

Allow the group to discuss the various characteristics that you would look for in a leader.

QUESTION 12

- How can we encourage those who are taking on an important leadership position without comparing them to their predecessors?

Allow for a few answers to lead into ministry time (If you choose the 2nd prayer ministry option, these answers will come in handy).

PRAYER MINISTRY

- Pray for the children in your lives. Spend time as a group praying for the future of your own children, nieces & nephews and other children and teens who are in your lives. Pray for their current and future spiritual lives and pray for their future careers and relationships. Pray particularly for any struggles that they are having, that God would be with them and lead them through any difficult times.
- Pray for the leadership of the church, particularly those transitioning into or out of a pastoral position. After praying as a group, consider writing a pastor or leader a personal encouraging note about a specific way that their leadership has blessed you.