

# Joshua Part 6: Boldly Going Where No Man Has Gone Before

## The Walls of Jericho

1. Review
2. Setup: One of the principles of war is to search out, discover and overthrow your enemy's strategic strongholds.
  - a. Jericho represented the strategic city on the West Bank of the Jordan. It was the doorway to the West. Roads, rivers and farms all branched out from Jericho. It was the epicenter of Canaan. It must fall first.
  - b. Jericho also is a physical example of the Christian's warfare. We are establishing the Kingdom of God wherever we go.
  - c. What are our enemy's strongholds that we must liberate?
    - i. They get their power from lies we believe. Once the strong hold is conquered, the enemy has no more ability to exert his harm on us. Take for instance, a belief that God is sovereign, so I don't really need to pray, God is going to make it happen anyway. If you believe this lie (I don't NEED to pray) which is based upon a truth (God is sovereign) then the devil has won a major victory over you and the Kingdom you represent. But what if you disarmed the lie with the total truth: "That God limits His activity upon the earth to the prayers of His people." What does that do to the stronghold of the enemy? It demolishes it!

### Angels watching over me:

3. Joshua 5:13-15 *"Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" 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?" 15 The captain of the LORD'S host said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so."*
  - a. What do you think this was about? Joshua challenged this "man" that had to look pretty fearsome. But Joshua didn't quiver and quake until he found out who he was facing...the "Captain of the host of the Lord."
  - b. I think you might be surprised at the answer the angel gave to Joshua's question. Joshua's question was a multiple choice...are you for us or our enemies? The answer the angel gave was "no." Strange answer, huh? He came as the captain of the army of the Lord. Whose side is God on? God's. Abraham Lincoln was once asked if God was on his side. He replied, I don't know, but I hope we are on God's side. Whose side are you on? Your side, someone else's, or God's?
  - c. I also want you to recognize that **Angels are assigned to us and do battle on our behalf**. (some say this was a theophany, which it may have been).
    - i. We think we see all that goes on, but there is more in the unseen spiritual realm that we can imagine. The battle for cities, neighborhoods and even nations are taking place in the heavenlies long before they take place in the physical realm of our lives.
    - ii. Some have told me that people have been praying for Madison Ohio to have an outpouring of God's power and love for GENERATIONS! That battle for what we will be a part of has already been fought.
    - iii. *What has my lord to say to his servant?"* What is the Lord saying to us? Why do I ask "Does anyone have a word from the Lord?" (Some of you probably are thinking, hey pastor, isn't that your JOB to have a word from the Lord?).
  - d. Joshua had supernatural spiritual resources available to him which were going to guarantee him victory if he went forward in faith and obedience. The angelic beings were literally tearing down the spiritual supports that upheld the walls of this pagan city! What a "word" to get from the Lord concerning what was to happen next!

## **Walls are falling:**

4. *Joshua 6:1-21 Now Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel; no one went out and no one came in. 2 The LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors. 3 "You shall march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days. 4 "Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. 5 "It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead." 6 So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD." 7 Then he said to the people, "Go forward, and march around the city, and let the armed men go on before the ark of the LORD." 8 And it was so, that when Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD went forward and blew the trumpets; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. 9 The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, while they continued to blow the trumpets. 10 But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "You shall not shout nor let your voice be heard nor let a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I tell you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout!" 11 So he had the ark of the LORD taken around the city, circling it once; then they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp. 12 Now Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. 13 The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew the trumpets; and the armed men went before them and the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, while they continued to blow the trumpets. 14 Thus the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp; they did so for six days. 15 Then on the seventh day they rose early at the dawning of the day and marched around the city in the same manner seven times; only on that day they marched around the city seven times. 16 At the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city. 17 "The city shall be under the ban, it and all that is in it belongs to the LORD; only Rahab the harlot and all who are with her in the house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. 18 "But as for you, only keep yourselves from the things under the ban, so that you do not covet them and take some of the things under the ban, and make the camp of Israel accursed and bring trouble on it. 19 "But all the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD." 20 So the people shouted, and priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city. 21 They utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword..*
5. Sometimes a familiar story leads us to read it so lightly that we miss the message hidden inside. This is the way it is with Jericho. Most of us think this is about a bunch of walls crumbling because the Israelites shouted and blew rams horns. But the sound didn't cause the walls to crumble. It was something else.
  - a. Militarily, this is a bad plan.
    - i. They had surrounded the city whose inhabitants probably numbered in the tens of thousands, a city whose walls were at least 10 feet thick at the base, a city that was closed up tightly and prepared to endure a siege. (photo of the tell). The Israelites likely numbered 2 million, although I doubt all of them participated in this. I believe the marchers were the men of military age, which would still have been a huge crowd for a small area. They would have easily encircled the city of Jericho.
  - b. Archaeologists have found that the citizens of Jericho were well prepared for a siege. A fresh spring which provided water for ancient, as well as modern, Jericho lay inside the city walls. At the time of the attack, the harvest had just been taken in (Jos 3:15), so the citizens had an abundant supply of food. This has been borne out by many large jars full of grain found in the

Canaanite homes by John Garstang in his excavation in the 1930s and also by Kenyon in 1955. With a plentiful food supply and ample water, the inhabitants of Jericho could have held out for several years.

- c. Excavations have shown that the bricks from the collapsed outer walls fell in such a way as to form a ramp. Israelites could merely climb up over the pile of rubble, up the embankment, and enter the city. The Bible is very precise in its description of how the Israelites entered the city: “The people went up into the city, every man straight before him” (Jos 6:20, KJV). The Israelites had to go up, and that is what archaeology has revealed. They had to go from ground level at the base of the tell to the top of the rampart in order to enter the city.
  - i. Most sieges would last months, yet this one lasts only 7 days. And the 7<sup>th</sup> day, to walk around this big city would have taken some time! Hours and hours!

## 6. Walls

- a. There comes a time in everyone’s life when one is faced with what seems like an impossible task or situation. We have walls, big walls keeping us out of where we must go. (Randy Paush’s statement that walls exist to find out how badly you want something).
  - i. Looking for a new position or job.
  - ii. Meeting a financial need.
  - iii. Facing a deadly illness.
  - iv. Repairing a broken relationship.
  - v. The walls you face, the obstacles you have to overcome are way too great for your resources or abilities.
  - vi. It is hard to think that God can do the impossible, so we are tempted to fall back on our own puny resources.
- b. The spies 39 years before has said that Dt 1:28 “*the cities are great and walled up to heaven*”, they led people to fear and falter. Satan had kept the army of God’s people defeated in the desert for 40 years. Yet something happened when they crossed the Jordan. They got a new view of life from God’s perspective. And their first battle lay ahead!
  - i. Now Jericho stood between the Israelites and their promised land.
  - ii. Would its high walls and fortress like appearance discourage the Israelites?
  - iii. They had to conquer these walls with faith, not siege weapons!
- c. **It was by faith, not by force, that the walls of Jericho fell down.** (Heb. 11:30)
  - i. **What does God do through faith?** Look at what Jesus said when he dried up the fig tree:
    1. Matthew 17:10 “*He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*
    2. Luke 1:37 “*For nothing is impossible with God.*”
  - ii. Everything God does is in response to prayer or faith by His people. (come on Sunday nights to learn more about this!).
    1. **What moves God? Belief in who HE IS.**
- d. **Why were they to shout? Their shout was an act of faith.** They were to shout **BECAUSE** v16 “*Shout! For the LORD has given you the city.*” Because God had given them the city.
  - i. The Hebrew word “shout” or “shouted” in verse 20 is “te-roo-aw” which means an acclamation of joy, a battle cry of praise, rejoicing, shouting, high joyful sounding. They all lifted up their trumpets and their voices and shouted praise and rejoiced. Why? Because they **KNEW** in verse 16 that God had given them victory and the walls would come down.
  - ii. Was it in their possession YET? No. Not insofar as the present visible sense. The walls were still standing. Yet in God’s time and place, the walls had already fallen and the city belonged to the Israelites.

- iii. Think about it. When the priests stepped in the water, did the water stop flowing? Not from their PERSPECTIVE, but in truth, it had been walled off some 20 miles upstream. This is the attitude of faith. **God says something, which means it has already happened.**
  - 1. It is a statement of FACT when God says it.
  - 2. It may not be apparent or visible to us yet, but that doesn't change the facts.
  - 3. Their shout was an assertion of faith, it was them claiming by faith the promise and declaration of God that the city was theirs.
  - 4. So we see here that Joshua proclaimed God had given them the city, but they didn't 'see' the walls fall until after they began shouting and praising God
  - 5. It was not unlike the person who is ordered to stand up after healing has been declared over them. (Jesus and the paralytic in John 5:8-9 "*Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.*"). When was he cured? Before or after he GOT UP? I argue it was WHILE he was asserting the effort to GET UP.
  - 6. APPLICATION: I am learning that God desires us to call people to action when we pray for them. We must incite people to take a step of faith in response to the declaration or prayer over them. What does that look like? It looks like a person who is being prayed for to stand up and walk.
  - 7. **Can you praise God when times are tough and obstacles are huge? It is easy when things are going well...but can you stand and praise Him by faith when they don't LOOK good?**
- iv. **The bible says the power of life and death is in the tongue.**
  - 1. **What is your mouth confessing? Defeat or victory?**
- e. Our greatest weapon is our faith. It isn't guns, ammo, wmd's, not even our ability to preach the gospel. The weapons of our warfare, though they are not of the flesh, and though they seem weak and unable to bring something to pass, are yet mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds,
  - i. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 "*3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*"
    - 1. These strongholds were in Roman times, the pirate bases in the Mediterranean. Until they were destroyed, the pirates could pillage at will. A Roman General finally adopted a plan to destroy their island, and deconstructed it brick by brick, stone by stone until nothing was left standing.
    - 2. So who is our enemy? Satan.
    - 3. What is it of his that we are destroying? Lies that become strongholds for unbelief.
    - 4. So why am I preaching about faith? Because it tears down the lies of the enemy!
    - 5. What do you feed your heart with?
- f. the Christian, wearing his spiritual armor and bearing his spiritual weapons, sets out to "conquer" the world for Christ, but he soon finds obstacles. The enemy has erected strongly fortified garrisons to resist the Truth and attempt to thwart God's plan of redemption. There is the fortress of human reasoning, reinforced with many subtle arguments and the pretense of logic.
  - i.
  - ii. Peter Wagner explains: "Spying out the land is essential when warring for a city ... Christians should walk or drive every major freeway, avenue and road of their cities, praying and coming against demonic strongholds over every neighborhood ... Even if you don't see instant results, keep the trumpets blowing ... always remember God is not slack concerning His promise; the walls will come down!" (Engaging the Enemy: How to Fight and Defeat Territorial Spirits, p. 98).

iii. Have you ever noticed how they use Llamas to help herd sheep? Do you know why they do that? It all started a few years back when a woman name Lexy Fowler tried just about everything to stop coyotes from killing her sheep in Montana. She has used odor sprays and electric fences. She sent nights sleeping with her lambs and has even placed radios near them. She has corralled them at night, herded them by day but still she lost scores of lambs to the coyotes. Then she discovered the llama – the funny-looking llama. "Llamas don't appear to be afraid of anything," she said. "When they see something, they put their head up and walk straight toward it. That is aggressive behavior as far as the coyote is concerned, and they won't have anything to do with that. Since she found out about Llamas she has lost only a few sheep to the coyotes because -coyotes are opportunists, and the llamas take away those opportunities."

1. The devil, our enemy, is like a coyote, he uses opportunities to take and steal away. But like the coyote, he cannot handle aggressive behavior. When we understand his schemes, when believers use the tools God has given to resist him, he will flee away.

iv.

7. v10: *"But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "You shall not shout nor let your voice be heard nor let a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I tell you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout!"*

a. Why?

i. **Silence is the act of resting in what God is doing.**

1. Exodus 14:14, *Jehovah will fight for you, and you be silent.*
2. There is a time for activity. There will be a time for noise. But while God is doing His work, silence is an act of worship and trust.
3. God could have caused the walls of Jericho to fall upon the first surrounding of them, but they had to go around them thirteen times before they fell, that they might be kept waiting and resting patiently for the Lord.

b. *20 So the people shouted, and priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city. 21 They utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword..*

- i. We want God to do "it for us." But we do it with God. God moved the walls, but they had to fight. Passivity is not the way to advance.

8. Closing:

a.