

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

## The Walls of Jericho

### 1. Review

#### **Angels watching over me:**

- a. 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!

### 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? Madison is OUR city and we are called to bring the Kingdom of God to it!

### **Walls are falling:**

3. 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..*

4. 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. Last week I shared that the spiritual supports for the walls were removed by the army of the Lord of Hosts, the angel that was sent before the Israelites. Spiritual walls must be removed and then the physical ones will easily fall. But there is something else we must realize.
  - b. Militarily, this is a bad plan. If this strategy is dependent upon human ability, it is doomed to fail.**
    - 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). It was a city built upon a rock, with double stone walls. 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.
    - ii. 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.

## 5. Walls

- i.
- 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 Jordon. 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)
- d. The Israelites needed a miracle.
  - i. 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.
  - ii. 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!
- e. 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 want to go.
  - 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.
  - 1. The reason God didn't take you to be with Him when you were born again is because you have the divine assignment to invade the impossible.
  - 2. The reality of the Christian life is measured by the impact of the impossible.
  - 3. Much of what we give God credit for can be done by the Jaycees. I'm don't mean God is not involved, I'm just saying all it is doing is tapping into human talent to accomplish what mankind can accomplish.
  - 4. What satisfaction is there in human accomplishment? There is some, but it's not really lasting. It's nothing like having cancer disappear. Its nothing like having a miracle in your body that the doctors can't explain.
  - 5. There is something about a miracle that forces you to choose. You see, if we feed the hungry and minister to the poor, the community will applaud us. **That is sacrificial, but it is not supernatural.**
    - a. But dare God heal someone or do something so out of the realm of the natural...it forces us to choose whether or not we really WANT to believe.
    - b. You see, as long as I can do something in my ability, then it doesn't make me uncomfortable. But when God intrudes into our time and space and does something unexplainable, something impossible for man...then it forces us to choose what kind of life we will lead.
    - c. We have to choose whether we just want religion and good works for which we can give God credit but we smile inside and laud ourselves for our efforts. Or we have to choose the supernatural acts of God for which He alone gets glory and for which we worship Him alone!
    - d. **It always boils down to worship.** Supernatural acts lead us to choose who we will worship. Our works or God?
    - e. It is why during revivals over history, many religious people condemned the move of God as counterfeit and a work of the devil. They had to choose between their comfy religion and the supernatural works of God. But just as Jesus said, sinners and tax collectors enter the Kingdom while the religious people stand around pointing fingers.

- f. **What does God do through faith?** Look at what Jesus said when he dried up the fig tree:
  - i. 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."*
  - ii. Luke 1:37 *"For nothing is impossible with God."*
  - iii. Everything God does is in response to prayer or faith by His people.

**iv. Feeding your faith.**

- 1. Your heart is like soil that provides nourishment to your faith. If you feed the seeds of faith (no coincidence Jesus used the symbolism of a "faith the size of a mustard SEED") unbelief (negative belief, "apistas" a=minus, pistas = faith). Then your seed of faith will not grow. The weeds of unbelief will steal the resources your faith needs for nourishment.
- 2. **There three things you can do to feed your faith:** I have been trying to practice it this week, and I have been surprised by how programmed I am toward unbelief.

- a. **Focus upon what God has ALREADY DONE** in the past and upon who God is.
  - b. **Focus upon who God is (read His word!)**
  - c. **Don't focus on what God has not yet done.**
  - d. If you focus upon what God has not YET DONE you feed unbelief.
    - i. Exodus is packed full of these examples. What had God done? He had implemented 10 plagues on the Egyptians, parted the Red Sea, provided manna in the desert...then the people complained about what God hadn't done...Water, meat, enemies, boredom.
- g. **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
  - iv. 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.
    - 1. 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.
    - 2. **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?**
  - v. The bible says the power of life and death is in the tongue.
    - 1. What is your mouth confessing? Defeat or victory?
6. 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?
  - b. **Silence is the act of resting in what God is doing.**
    - i. Exodus 14:14, *Jehovah will fight for you, and you be silent.*
    - ii. 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.

- iii. 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.
- iv. *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.*
- v. 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.
- vi. I have heard it said that “**God provides for our needs but we have to press in for our wants.**” Meaning, God provides our needs often with just the simplest prayers of faith. But your wants, I think sometimes God tests us to find out how badly we want them. Do we give up when we hit an obstacle? Do we stop praying for a loved one because they blow us off? Do we write it off as God’s will that we are sick because God doesn’t heal us instantly?

7. Closing:

- 8. **On this past Wednesday, 14 men from the Madison area met for their weekly prayer meeting to pray for Revival in Madison, and to seek God for personal and corporate refreshing. As we prayed and praised, it was clear to me that this was not going to be an ordinary prayer meeting. This would be something to remember. And it was. As men cried out for the people and churches of Madison, a word was shared from Joshua 6:17-17, “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city....all that in it belongs to the Lord.” It was as if sparks from heaven began falling upon the dry tinder of our hearts and fire began to fill the room with praise and joy. We had heard the decree...Madison belongs to the Lord and all who are in it! And God has given it to His people.**
- 9. I believe that this means that God has decreed that the people of Madison will be more open to the Gospel than ever before. I believe this means we will have favor from God among the city and the township. I believe that this means we must “Go up into the city” and take it!
- 10. We wonder where the revival fire is? Fire only falls upon a sacrifice. No sacrifice, no fire.