

Joshua 6 “God’s got it!”

Joshua 5:13 tells us, “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho,” he was scouting the city. **How would they be able to scale those formidable walls?** “He lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand.” The man was ready to fight. “And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?” Joshua is a good sentry. He shouts out, “Who goes there? Are you friend or foe?” “So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” **Joshua is being told to move over.** Heaven has come to help. Joshua is being replaced. God dispatches His Commander to lead the Hebrews into battle. Verse 14, “And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?” A humble Joshua is quick to submit. Then the Commander of the LORD'S army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.” Joshua receives the same command God gave Moses at the burning bush. What a comfort this was to Joshua and Israel! On the eve of their first major battle – up against unbreechable walls – the Commander of the Lord’s army comes to take responsibility for the campaign. And who was this Commander? The clue is in how Joshua treats Him – he worships Him. This precludes him being an angel. God’s angels are never worshipped. Only God Himself receives worship, and that’s why I believe the Commander was none other than a preincarnate appearance of Jesus. **Who fought the battle of Jericho? Jesus did.**

We left Joshua prostrate in worship on the holy ground crated by the manifestation of the Lord himself as the commander of his army (5:13-15). **He had done out most probably to think through the military strategy by which he might lay siege to this heavily reinforced guardian-city, and instead he discovered that God's plan was for him to take off his sandals and worship. PRAY**



Joshua chapter 6 Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.

So they batten down the hatches. There is no way in and no way out. Jericho is a city under siege. By normal rules of human military engagement this stalemate situation will have to be resolved by an Israelite attack. But that is a daunting prospect for an under-equipped and inexperienced body of fighting men.

² And the Lord said to Joshua: “See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, *and* the mighty men of valor. “See” draws Joshua’s attention to this as the supreme revelation of on which everything else hangs. Look, focus here, get your mind set on this. There is not a shred of doubt about the outcome.

³ You shall march around the city, all *you* men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. ⁴ And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. Note the emphasis is not on the fighting men but on the ark of the covenant, the symbol of the divine presence. **That is why there is such an emphasis on the number “seven” in the text, occurring four times in just one verse (v. 4). Seven is the number of divine perfection or completeness, reflecting the seventh day of rest at the end of the six days of creation.**

So continuing verse 4... But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. ⁵ It shall come to pass, when they make a long *blast* with the ram’s horn, *and* when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him.” **You guys are not going to believe it... God met me and gave me the battle plan... What is it Joshua?**

God wants us to know it’s Him not the method... Chuck pauses... brick wall with dove on it...

He Healed At A Distance (Luke 7:1-10)

He Rebuked The Illness (Luke 4:38-39)

He Commanded A Dead Girl To Get Up (Luke 8:40-56)

He Spit On The Ground And Made Mud, Then Sent The Person To Wash

He Allowed Demons To Leave A Man And Enter Pigs (Luke 8:26-39)

He Called Someone Out Of The Grave (John 11:1-44)

It’s never in the method... eyes on God!

⁶ Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the Lord.” ⁷ And he said to the people, “Proceed, and march around the city, and let him who is armed advance before the ark of the Lord.” ⁸ So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people, **Joshua does not hesitate to do what the LORD has told him to do. Often, our delays to obey God show that we really don’t believe Him.** that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the Lord advanced 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 *the priests* continued blowing the trumpets. **Levites exempt from military duty, yet used here!** ¹⁰ Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying, “You shall not shout or make any

noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout." ¹¹ So he had the ark of the Lord circle the city, going around *it* once. Then they came into the camp and lodged in the camp. **The purpose of the parade is to focus on the ark and therefore on the Lord, so that both Israel and Jericho will know who is responsible for what is about to happen.**

¹² And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. ¹³ Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them. But the rear guard came after the ark of the Lord, while *the priests* continued blowing the trumpets. ¹⁴ And the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days. ¹⁵ But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. ¹⁶ And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets, **Rev 10:7** but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

that Joshua said to the people: "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!" ¹⁷ Now the city shall be doomed by the Lord to destruction, it and all who *are* in it. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who *are* with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. ¹⁸ And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, **By this he means the idols and things associated with the demonic and depraved worship of the people of Canaan.** lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. ¹⁹ But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, *are* consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord." ²⁰ So the people shouted when *the priests* blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. **We are not told that Israel knew this would be the result of their obedient marching and final shouting. They may have been as surprised as the people of Jericho were at the way God decided to deliver Jericho into their hands.** The ESV footnote draws our attention to the literal translation both in verse 5 and verse 20: "the wall of the city will fall under itself"; that is, it will collapse as though from pressure from above rather than from outside.

Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. ²¹ And they utterly destroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword. **Why was Israel commanded to practice such complete destruction? Because the greatest sins of the Canaanites were spiritual: (Deuteronomy 18:9-14) "When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those**

nations. ¹⁰ There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, ¹¹ or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. ¹² For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. ¹³ You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. ¹⁴ For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you.

Judgment is always God's final resort, and in this case it came after generations of provocation. That wickedness or uncleanness is graphically described in Leviticus 18, with its focus on sexual perversions, child sacrifice, and other "abominations" to the Creator: "For by all these [things] the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants" (Leviticus 18:24-25).

All that has been discovered about Canaanite paganism only serves to confirm the gross barbaric manifestations of evil that were endemic in their idolatrous culture. So there can be no accusation of injustice against the Creator God of perfect righteousness and justice.

As David Howard comments, "We should note that the instructions to Israel to annihilate the Canaanites were specific in time, intent and geography. That is, Israel was not given a blanket permission to do the same to any peoples they encountered, at any time or in any place. It was limited to the crucial time when Israel was just establishing itself as a theocracy under God, to protect Israel's worship, as well as to punish these specific peoples."

God is perpetually at war with sin. Because the Jews didn't fully obey this commandment in later years, it led to national defilement and divine chastening (Ps 106:34-48). The Book of Judges would not be in the Bible if Israel had remained faithful (Judges 2:11-13). ²² But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, "Go into the harlot's house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her." ²³ And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. **Rahab was removed, just as Lot out of Sodom (Gen 19) was the prerequisite to destroying the city; Israelites at Passover in Egypt.** So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. ²⁴ But they burned the city and all that was in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. ²⁵ And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, **In this, we see a contrast between judgment and salvation. All of Jericho heard about the God of Israel (Joshua 2:8-11), but only Rahab responded positively in faith towards God with that knowledge.**

her father's household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

As Jackman points out, “God’s promises have lasting value. He will not go back on his word, and there in the midst of Israel is the living proof. Rahab and her family began outside the camp of Israel (v. 23b), but soon they were living among the people, and eventually she finds her true place in the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1:5. Acts of faith have long-lasting effects.”

²⁶ Then Joshua charged *them* at that time, saying, “Cursed *be* the man before the Lord who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates.” ²⁷ So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.

As the word of God is believed and obeyed, So the God of the word is with his people to give them all the blessings of his covenant faithfulness.

It is not jihad but Jesus who wins the victory for the people of God. If we are to see the Jerichos of our contemporary world collapse before the gospel of God’s grace, it will be on the terms of the commander of the Lord’s army and by his life-giving power alone.

The Lord’s army is set to fight the world and the flesh, the pressures of evil outside and within us, and behind both, manipulating them for the destruction of Christ and his church, the devil himself. That is where the battle is to be joined – in the heavenlies. But if the enemy can get us to fight earthly battles with human weapons nothing will please him more, and especially when those battles are between believers in church.

Jericho principles still apply.

(1) We need to search out, listen to, accept, and adopt the divine strategy for victory, revealed in all the Scriptures, the living and enduring Word of God.

(2) Because Christ is the Commander, our job is to trust him, believing his wonderful promises, and to obey him with detailed, meticulous attention. We don’t have to know always why we are called to a certain course of action, but just that if God’s Word says it, we need to obey it.

(3) The battle belongs to the Lord. He know the end from the beginning, and he knows exactly how he will bring us there. Nothing is ever outside his sovereign control, and “we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). As Charles Spurgeon observed, “If everything worked together for our good, then nothing is left to work for our ill.”

(4) We are not to waste time or energy speculating or trying to imagine how God might achieve what seems to us to be frankly impossible. No one would have thought of God’s Jericho strategy in a million years. Joshua did not have to engineer victory; God gave it. Our problem is that so often we substitute our plans for God’s priorities, and we foolishly convince ourselves that our ingenuity can be a replacement for our obedience. But Jericho

will not yield to any power except the sovereign authority of the Lord, appropriated by us, his people, in our march of obedience and our shout of faith.