

THE WALLS OF JERICHO

“The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us.”

—NUMBERS 14:7-8

Why are so many people tempted to view faith as something we do rather than letting God do something for us? The Hebrew people, in their rescue from Egyptian bondage, had ample evidence of God’s intervention and utter sufficiency on their behalf. The tragedy with the Israelites, as it is for many of us today, is that we try to live by human effort and reasoning, rather than trusting God.

As soon as the Israelites reached Kadesh-Barnea, they sent twelve spies out to survey the land God had promised to give them. What were the people like? Are there many or few? Are the towns walled or unwalled? Is the soil fertile or poor? The spies surveyed the entire land and came back with pomegranates and grapes so heavy it took two men to carry a cluster on a pole. The land of Canaan was everything God said it would be, but there was a problem. The inhabitants were powerful, some of them giant-like, and the towns were well fortified with trained armies and weaponry. Ten of the twelve spies agreed it would be impossible to conquer the land. Only Joshua and Caleb believed God would honor His promise and give the land into their hands. But they were outvoted and the Israelites gave up before they even started.

What the people failed to realize was that conquering the land was not something they would do, but God would do for them. He would give them victory, which He did, but a generation later. Under the leadership of Joshua, God caused the walls of Jericho to come crashing down. Hebrews 11:30 says, “By faith the walls of Jericho fell.” The Israelites had detached themselves from living in dependence on God, and trusted more in human reasoning and effort. For forty years they wandered the wilderness.

If we can explain our lives and circumstances purely in human terms, how different are we from the Israelites wandering the wilderness? One of the features of the Christian life is that our lives become explicable because God is doing something. We can adopt the idea that the work of God in having saved us is to give us instructions, and that is true, but the most fundamental of all instructions is to acknowledge and recognize that without Christ we can do nothing. What may seem insurmountable to us is often God’s means of showing us that by faith in Him, He is the one who makes the walls of Jericho in our own lives conquerable!

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I know that nothing is impossible with You. Help me to be totally dependent upon You in every circumstance. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: What are the walls of Jericho in my life the Lord has helped me conquer?