

THE SUCCESSFUL CONQUEST OF JERICHO

BIBLE TEXT : Joshua 5:10-15; 6:1-27

LESSON 155 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city" (Joshua 6:16).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Joshua 5:10-15

¹⁰ And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

¹¹ And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day.

¹² And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

¹³ And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries?

¹⁴ And he said, Nay; but *as* captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?

¹⁵ And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy. And Joshua did so.

Joshua 6:1-27

¹ Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

² And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, *and* the mighty men of valour.

³ And ye shall compass the city, all

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Joshua's Encouragement

By the hand of Joshua, God had led the Children of Israel into the land of promise. Their first camp was at Gilgal where they had kept the feast of the Passover (Joshua 5:10). Thus the Children of Israel had obeyed the Word of the Lord and had conquered a mighty barrier and natural defense. They had already tasted of the fruit of the Land of Canaan (Joshua 5:12). How encouraged they must have felt! No doubt they were eager to go to battle against their enemies, as God had told them to do.

Joshua was near the city of Jericho. Perhaps he was meditating in his heart and wondering about the capture of Jericho which was called the "city of palm trees" (*Deuteronomy 34:3- And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar*). Perhaps Joshua was waiting upon the Lord for instructions and orders concerning this walled city. As Joshua lifted his eyes, he saw a man in whose hand was a sword. Joshua was not afraid, for the Lord had said to him: "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Joshua 1:5).

Joshua went to this man and asked him if he was for them or against them. The man answered that he was come as the Captain of the host of the Lord. Joshua immediately "fell on his face" to worship him. Joshua did not say that God had made him the leader of the Children of Israel. But, in a humble spirit, he asked for instructions from the man with the sword. Joshua removed his shoes as he was directed to do. The place where a holy place for the presence of the Lord was there.

God would have us to be reverent in His presence today, too. God expects us to be quiet, with a spirit of worship, in the church and in any other place while others are praying or reading the Bible. Many times a child of God considers as sacred and holy ground the place where God especially blessed and encouraged him, whether it was in church, in his home, or even in some other place.

Joshua bowed there humbly in reverence, as the presence of the Man brought new courage and faith to his heart. Who was this Man, the Captain of the host of the Lord? Who could be the Captain but Jesus Himself? In (*Hebrews 2:9, 10, - ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. ¹⁰ For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings*) we read that Jesus is the Captain of our salvation. It is He who leads us on from victory to victory, when we lift our eyes to Him and obey His every word.

God's Plan

The people who lived in Jericho had heard what God had done for the Children of Israel. Fear was in their hearts (*Joshua 2:11 - ¹¹ And as soon as we had heard *these things*, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man,*

ye men of war, *and* go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.

⁴ And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.

⁵ And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, *and* when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

⁶ And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto 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 unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD.

⁸ And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

⁹ And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, *the priests* going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

¹⁰ And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall *any* word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

¹¹ So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about *it* once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath) and they shut the gates of the city so none could leave nor enter. That did not hinder the Children of Israel, for it was not God's plan for them to take the city by sending armed men through the gates.

Joshua was told that God had given him the city of Jericho, the king, and the army. But they did not come to Joshua to surrender. Joshua and the Children of Israel had to fulfill God's plan for them. They were given strange orders, but they did not hesitate to obey them.

They marched around the city of Jericho — once each day for six days. They marched in the order that God directed. First went the men of war; then seven priests, carrying seven trumpets made of rams' horns, went before the Ark of the Lord; and then followed the "rereward," the people. No doubt this was a strange sight to the people of Jericho as they watched from their houses on the wall.

Undoubtedly those who lived in Jericho expected to hear the noise of battle. All that could be heard was the sound of marching feet and the blast from the seven trumpets, which might have been terrifying to the enemies but was, nevertheless, inspiring to Israel's armies. After they had thus marched around the walls of Jericho, they went back to their camp.

No Security

The king of Jericho may have wondered about the strange warfare, and asked, "What is their plan? How long will they march? What can they accomplish by such actions?" Probably after the sixth day, their enemies began to feel quite secure for they could see no danger in the strange campaign. Many times when sinners begin to feel secure, then their judgment comes. In I Thessalonians 5:3, we read: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them ... and they shall not escape."

How did the Children of Israel feel about all this marching? They had not lost confidence in God, even though there were no visible results. God had promised that the wall would fall when they compassed the city the seventh time on the seventh day. With patience and faith they obeyed the orders of God.

Some people take things into their own hands. They cannot wait upon the Lord. They may like to be up and doing when the Lord wants them to tarry. God wants obedience — whether in going or in staying. What do you think would have happened if some of the fighting men had been impatient and by their own plans and strength tried to conquer Jericho? Without a doubt, they would have failed and perhaps lost their lives as well as the lives of others. Their orders were to march and not to fight. The Psalmist said, "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD" (Psalm 27:14).

A Christian may not always see the immediate effect of his prayer or the effort he puts forth for the Lord. With patience, perseverance, and faith, he continues, knowing that his work for the Lord is not in vain, (I Corinthians 15:58).

Shout of Faith

As the seventh day dawned, the hour of Jericho's destruction drew near. The Children of Israel arose early that day to compass the city seven times. We do not know how far they marched nor how much time it required, but the Children of Israel were obedient and went in the strength of the Lord.

¹² And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

¹³ And 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 rereward came after the ark of the LORD, *the priests* going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

¹⁴ And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

¹⁵ And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

¹⁶ And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city.

¹⁷ And the city shall be accursed, *even* it, and all that *are* therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that *are* with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

¹⁸ And ye, in any wise keep *yourselves* from the accursed thing, lest ye make *yourselves* accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

¹⁹ But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

²⁰ So the people shouted when *the priests* blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat,

The Prophet Daniel said, "The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Daniel 11:32).

They had received marching orders that specified no talking or shouting until the signal was given. Perhaps this was to confuse the enemy or to give the Children of Israel a chance to meditate and consider what God was doing for them. Sometimes people, grownups as well as children, get themselves into trouble by too much talking. Their time and thoughts are occupied with the talking. Often it leads to foolishness and other things that are not edifying.

The Children of Israel had marched six times before; on, the seventh day they marched seven times. Perhaps their enemies looked from their windows and some may have even jeered at the unusual warfare. But the Children of Israel were concerned only about obeying God.

At last their marching had come almost to its end. Joshua said, "Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city." Some doubters might have said: "What have we to shout about? The walls are still in place. When the walls fall, then we will shout."

Victory

The Children of Israel did not doubt. They believed and did as Joshua commanded them. When the seven priests blew the trumpets, the people shouted and "the wall fell down flat." The Bible does not say that the wall fell because of an earthquake nor as a result of marching feet. It says, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days" (Hebrews 11:30). The wall did not fall a little at a time, some each day, nor were there just openings here and there; "the wall **fell** down flat" when the people shouted.

No instruments of war nor any other force was applied to it by the Children of Israel; but according to their faith the wall fell, enabling them to enter the city.

Saved

Joshua sent the two spies (Lesson 153) to rescue Rahab and her family who were in the house which had the scarlet line bound in the window (**Joshua 2:18** ¹⁸ Behold, *when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee*). Rahab, her family, and all that she had, were saved; but the rest of Jericho was destroyed, so Rahab dwelt in Israel from that time on.

All the vessels of brass and iron, all the silver and gold were put into the treasury of the Lord and consecrated to Him. But for themselves, the people saved not one thing, lest not only they but the whole camp would be accursed. This was the commandment of the Lord — utterly to destroy because of the wickedness of their enemies.

Christians today do not have great walled cities like Jericho to conquer, but many have problems which seem just as impossible to solve. Often children have difficult situations arise in their schoolwork or among their associates. Some children have unsaved parents who do not cooperate with them in serving God. The Lord always solves these problems if, with faith and patience, the child of God takes them to Him in prayer. Perhaps their prayer will not be answered the first time; but by obedience and by trust in the Lord His people always become the victors.

so that 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, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

²² But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.

²³ And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

²⁴ And they burnt the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

²⁵ And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel *even* unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

²⁶ And Joshua adjured *them* at that time, saying, Cursed *be* the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest *son* shall he set up the gates of it.

²⁷ So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was *noised* throughout all the country.

When some hard problem comes into your life, remember that your faith in God can cause the "walls" to fall. Your testimony will be like that of Abijah, king of Judah. Before going to battle he said, "And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain." So the children of Judah "prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers" (II Chronicles 13:12, 18).

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why did the Captain of the host of the Lord appear to Joshua?
- 2 Why was Jericho "shut up"?
- 3 Why did the Children of Israel march around Jericho so many times?
- 4 What did the people have to shout about?
- 5 What caused the wall of Jericho to fall?
- 6 Why were Rahab and her family saved?
- 7 What else was not destroyed?