

Joshua Chapter 06 Commentary

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.

Joshua receives the message he has already heard from Rahab, and the spies, now gets it directly from God. If he needed further assurance, he has just received confirmation from God; the city is already taken and given to them. The surety is the Lord speaks in the past tense, as if it is already accomplished.

3 And ye shall compass the city, *all* 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.

God gives specific instruction of how the city is to be taken. Notice that there are no military tactics to be put in place. There is no command to make any military bulwarks or other means to take the city. This is to demonstrate the complete power and authority of God. There is nothing being done by man to take Jericho, except to follow God's instruction.

This is a reminder to us; if we expect the will of God to be accomplished for us, and through us; we must follow his directions and not our own flesh nature will. After all, even Jesus prayed in agony in the garden his desire, but in conclusion he said: ***Lu 22:42 "Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.***" Jesus further stated that he came to do the Father's will in: ***Heb 10:7 "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.***" If Jesus, in incarnation, is willing to completely do the Father's will, shouldn't we also be submissive to God's will? The answer is yes.

I point out here; one of these seven days of compassing Jericho must be a sabbath day. Therefore, Israel, in observing the sabbath had to take time out to do God's bidding. Thinking about this; we are reminded that the warfare of the Christian is not six days with one day free of the temptation of sin. Our warfare is a continual battle every day. What does matter is that we follow God's commandments and instructions every day, not just one day or six days.

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.

The seven trumpets of ram's horn being blown before the ark of the covenant with the soldiers going before; is a picture, of the prophets of the Old Testament prophesying, of the coming of the deliverance from the ceremonial and sacrificial law unto the age of salvation by grace. When the trumpets sound long and all the people shout; we have the picture of the sounding forth of the gospel of Christ in the age of grace, how? The battle is already won; with the victory of Jesus; over death, over hell, and over the grave.

Today, it is a picture for us: God's people are to be valiant and go forth at God's command; fighting the battles of life; with the sound of the gospel of Jesus Christ sounding forth to support them in their lives. It demonstrates that both the Old and New Testaments are the testimony of Christ and his finished work. Remember, the Lord told Joshua the city is yours in past tense. Wherefore, we can rejoice in the struggles of life knowing the war has already been won. Remember, our eternal life is from the past tense also, seen in: ***Eph 1:4 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:***" Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

I want to point out here; I believe this is the only time that God commanded the ark of the covenant to be carried to war. (*In 1Samuel the people carried it into battle, not by commandment of God, and it was taken by the Philistines.*) I believe this was to demonstrate to Israel; God was in charge, and his power was with Israel. Remember, Israel has followed the ark for forty years. They witnessed the power of deliverance of God when the ark went before them and made passageway for them through Jordan. This memory being fresh in their minds, they would believe they were going to witness the great delivering power of God in the taking of Jericho, which they did.

Why was no word or shout from the people to be made? God is using this to do two things:

- Strike fear into the hearts of the inhabitants of Jericho.
- Show Israel that the battle is from the Lord's mouth, not from their mouths. The trumpets sounding are emblematic of the voice of the Lord.

We have similar assurance for our own eternal victory in Christ as seen in: ***1Th 4:16-18; 16 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.***" The Lord himself is Christ. It is not an archangel. However, the voice of Christ will be like the voice of the archangel and sound as the trump of God. The voice of Jesus will be heard by all people, dead and alive, and they shall respond in accordance with his command. God's chosen people will arise victorious at the command of Christ, and the walls of the city of death will fall down flat, and we shall go up and enter the eternal city. Praise God for the power of the voice of Christ, by which all things were created, both in heaven and earth.

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. 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.

What did following God's commandment these seven days do? It demonstrated that Israel was willing to obey God, and to take action, by faith and trust in God's almighty power. It demonstrated that Israel believed the words of God. Obviously, it took a lot of faith for Israel to carry out the instructions, which seemed impractical, and did not appear to be a rational approach to taking a city.

Now let's do some personal application in our Christian lives. Do we fully trust in the word of God and the work of Christ? We, like Israel, must exercise faith and trust in God for our deliverance in the struggles of life. Just look around, listen to the world, and see how many think that salvation, by grace alone, is just impractical nonsense. They don't believe that Christ has fully wrought their eternal salvation. They believe they must do something, of their own power, to be saved eternally. Scripture tells us plainly in: ***Eph 2:8-9; 8 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.***" This simply tells us; we must exercise faith, in Christ's finished work, and live thereby. Understanding, if we could accomplish our eternal salvation, we would leave God, and Christ, out of the picture and be exalted in the flesh. Also, if we could bring about our eternal salvation, then we could also loose it by our own works. Praise God for the surety of our eternal salvation in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

God's commandment of how to take the city being fulfilled, and his voice sounding forth through the trumpets and the men of war, the city is ready to be overcome. Understand; our victories over sin and evil are not through our own voice, but from the word of God sounding through us. We are just the trumpets, God's breath and word are where the power is. God's word of truth is the ready sword of defense, as demonstrated by Christ, when he was tempted by satan.

We have a demonstration of this power of God's word in the New Testament: ***1Co 2:1-5; 1 ¶ "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."*** Do you understand? The knowledge, of the faith of these Corinthians, was not brought about by Paul, but rather, the Holy Spirit empowering the word of God, the voice of Jesus, and speaking to the hearts and minds of these, already born-again sinners, who were enabled by the power of Christ to receive the message of God sent through Paul. Thus, it is with us all. We are not saved by a person. We are saved by Jesus making the word of God powerful, and demonstrating to our hearts and minds, to bring us to the knowledge of the eternal salvation, which we have already been given.

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.

God gives specific instructions of what to destroy and what to keep for the Lord. Notice: all the spoils that are to be kept are for the Lord, not for the people. This is a good reminder to us that in all our victories over sin and evil, the glory is God's, it is not ours. We see this in scripture in many places, here are a couple:

- ***Re 4:11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."*** Everything we possess is granted to us through Jesus Christ, therefore, the glory is rightfully his, not ours.
- ***Re 5:12 "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."*** Our best performances are as filthy rags in the sight of God. However, Christ is worthy to receive all that is rightfully his.

Understand; what God has not chosen to be saved for his glory was already accursed. Therefore, we are told to lay up treasures in heaven. This sin cursed earth will one day be destroyed, and all our earthly gains will burn up with it. However, all those wonderful spiritual bounties, which God has bestowed upon us, which are his, will not be burned. They are treasures in heaven. All we have, and are, in Christ is God's.

Did you notice in verse eighteen; if you keep any of the accursed things you will cause the whole of Israel to be accursed? What a deterrent this should be to us. An admonition to keep ourselves pure and undefiled in our Christian life, lest we defile the whole of the church body, of which we are members. In reality, any offense we commit is a black mark against the whole church body, and the name of our Saviour and 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, 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.

Demonstrated, for us now, is the strength of the voice of Christ sounding as a trumpet, through the trumpets and the voice of the people. Remember the wall of the city fell down flat, which gave the men of war access to do their part, as commanded by God.

We see a prophetic picture application to our own lives as Christians. When you are born again the warfare begins between the old flesh nature and the new Christian nature. Our goal, in obedience to Christ, is to utterly destroy the flesh nature, removing all of our former nature from our Christian walks. If we obey the flesh nature, rather than the Christian nature, we have taken of the accursed things and are defiled in the sight of God. I will remind you; this flesh nature will be with you until you die naturally, only then, after death, will the warfare against the flesh nature be completed. This is why we are told in scripture: ***Heb 10:19-31; 19 "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the***

holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 ¶ And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 ¶ Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 ¶ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. 26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 ¶ For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 ¶ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

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.

Joshua tells the two spies to go and fulfill their oath to Rahab, which they do. I would here add a note of thought that appeared a few days ago. We are told in *Jos 2:15 "Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall."* that Rahab's house is upon the wall of the city. Herein is a great mystery revealed. When the wall fell down Rahab's house had to still be standing, or they would have been destroyed therein. God protects his own people, and protected God protected Rahab and her family: for at least two reasons:

- Rahab was a chosen vessel of God and would be adopted into Israel. She will be in the lineage that leads us to Christ.
- Because some of his people gave their word of oath in his name.

This is a reminder to us that we, the born-again Christians, should be very careful to fulfill all that we promise from our mouths. Understand, you are an ambassador for Christ, and when you give your word, it is as though the promise came from Christ himself. If you fail to fulfill your promise, then you are casting a shadow of doubt, and distrust, on the name of Christ, who is truth, and this is counted as sin against God, unto you. We are reminded of this in scripture in:

- *De 23:21 "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee."*
- *Ec 5:4-5; 4 ¶ "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed." 5 "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."*

It is easy to understand; as ambassadors for Christ; our word of promise should always be a true testimony, of the faithfulness, and the truthfulness, of Christ, whom we are representing.

"and left them without the camp of Israel." Several commentators pointed out; Rahab and her family had to be put *"without the camp"* as a time of separation was needed:

- To purify them because they were unclean and defiled with their idols and idolatrous customs. they would defile the camp if brought directly in.
- Israel needed time to indoctrinate them in the ordinances of Israel, as required by the law of God, before they could be admitted into the camp of Israel. Here are some scripture validations of this thought:
 - ***Ex 12:48-49; 48 "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. 49 One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."***
 - ***Le 18:26-30; 26 "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: 27 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;) 28 That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you. 29 For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. 30 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God."***

There are many other scriptures that validate this thought, but this should suffice for the reader at this time. Consider, even natural nations observe this same rule for admission as a citizen of that country. If you want to be a citizen of a country, and were not born in it, you must learn, and agree to, the laws thereof, before you can become, or be accepted as, a citizen thereof.

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.

I would point out here; everything was to be destroyed by fire, except those things that can withstand the fire, or are purified thereby. Some will say; it was a waste to kill the cattle and etc.; however, I remind you that as Matthew Henry pointed out; God promised Israel a land flowing with milk and honey, not one flowing with silver and gold and riches of earthly gain; nor a land furnished with houses and cities ready built.

Did you notice that it says Joshua saved Rahab and her household? This gives us the prophetic picture of Jesus, the Christ, being the one who saved us. We are not saved by other Christians, only by the grace and power of Jesus. Remember, Joshua, by definition, is another name for Jesus.

Thus, we have the accounting of how God overthrew Jericho. God did here set a precedent for Israel to follow, as they continue destroying, the occupants of the land of promise, and gaining their occupation of the land of promise.

Again, we see that the bounty all went to God. I digress here to point out; we often hear people say they saved someone, as if they gave them eternal life. This is simply not true, and this chapter bears that out. God gave Rahab a new birth and sent the spies to her house. Through them her conversion was made known, and she covenanted with God's people to do the will of God, to the salvation of her and her family. The spies didn't save her, except in the natural life sense. They didn't give her eternal life, she already had that given to her by God.

The same is true in the New Testament church. You may be used, by God, to help someone come to a better understanding of the knowledge of their eternal salvation, which has already been given by God. You never have anything to do with eternal salvation. Why was all the bounty for the Lord? Because it was his by right. Why do you not tell that you saved someone, without specifying that you did not save them eternally? Because the bounty, and the glory, for eternal salvation is God's, not yours.

Just as the spies were commanded and did lead Rahab and her family out of her old residence to become part of the nation Israel, so you may be used by God to lead someone from their old lifestyle to come into the New Testament church, by urging them to make their experience of grace, and by confession of faith in Christ to unite with the church body and be baptized. But even in this, be very careful to remember, and tell, that you were only the messenger, not the Saviour.

In **Jos 6:26**; we see that Joshua announced a curse upon the man who would rebuild this city. We have the fulfillment of this in: **1Ki 16:34** "*In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.*" The fulfillment of this announcement testifies that Joshua was also a true prophet of God.

Lastly, we see that the name of Joshua is made famous in all the land. Remember, Joshua is also another name for Jesus, of whom we here see a prophetic picture. When Jesus came into the world incarnate, established the New Testament church. He gave his life for the remission of the sins of all of God's chosen people. He died and was buried in a tomb. He arose from the tomb victorious on the third day, over death, over hell, and over the grave. Jesus saved, out of this world (of which the city of Jericho, and the salvation of Rahab and her family, is a figure), all those whom he, and God the Father, had covenanted together to save. When this was accomplished, the name of Jesus was made famous upon the earth, and is still famous throughout the world. Glory, Honor, and Praise, to our miraculous Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ!