

# **“The Walls Do Come Down”**

## **Joshua 6**

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**by C.W. Powell**

“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 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.

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, 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.” (Joshua 6:1-27 AV)

Never in the history of the world was there so strange a battle. I did a little math. Jericho was a small enough city that it was possible to walk around it seven times in one day and still leave time to finish the battle once the walls had come down. So it was not a huge city. Assuming that the army could march at a stiff pace of 4 mph, that would mean that in the hours from six to 4 in the afternoon, that would be 32 miles total. Dividing by seven that would leave about five miles for one lap [rounding up all the numbers]. Dividing by 3.14159 or pi, that would leave at the most a city about one and one-half miles across from wall to wall. Because I am sure that Israel did not march directly next to the wall, the city would be smaller than that, possibly only one mile across. This would be leaving time from four until dark for mopping action to take place once the walls had fallen down. This, of course, is sheer speculation, and the actual situation might be quite different.

But it was a strange battle, and it was undertaken by Israel in obedience to the direct command of the Captain of the Lord’s Hosts, who gave the instructions to Joshua. There are some important things to consider today

I. The details of the conflict.

- a. Jericho was shut up, the walls closed, no one going in or out. The people knew that the army of Israel was there, but they were hardened in their obstinacy, trusting to their wall and their prowess, as if there is any defense against the Lord of Hosts.
- b. Israel proceeded directly according to the command of the Lord. They marched around the city once the first day, and so forth each day until the seventh day, and then they walked about the city seven times. This means that they marched around the city at least once on the Sabbath day, unless you assume that the seventh day was the Sabbath day, and then they would have marched seven times around the city.
- c. On the seventh day, they marched around the city seven times, in complete silence, for all of this was done in complete silence; then the priest blew the ram's horns, the people shouted, and the walls came down by the power of God.
- d. The two spies that had spied out Jericho were sent in to secure the safety of Rahab and her family, to bring them out of the city, and place them outside the camp of Israel until the battle was over. They could not be admitted to the camp until the rites of purification had been performed, the males circumcised according to

the law. This was done, for we find that they later were living among the tribes of Israel.

- e. When Rahab and her family had been brought safely out, the armies of Israel completely destroyed what was left of the city of Jericho. Every building was thrown down, everything burnt in the fire, all the inhabitants were slain, all the animals were slain; only the gold and silver was brought into the treasury of the Lord's house, and the pots of brass and iron were reserved for use in the Lord's house. The city, in this way, was given as a sort of offering of firstfruits unto the Lord.

II. We see evidences of the covenantal procedure of God in this work. God does not only deal with people as individuals, but he also deals with them in terms of mediation made in their behalf, either for them or against them.

- a. We see that Israel was under discipline, under the command of Joshua. The priests with the ram's horns followed the men of war and the ark came after the priests. No one was to do his own thing, but to obey the commands of God, even to the extent of maintaining silence. How stupid it must have seemed to the men on the walls. They must have thought like Goliath thought when he saw the youth David coming out to meet him,

without armor, carrying only his sling and perhaps his shepherd's staff. . "Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks," Goliath said. The wicked are most in peril when they seem to be in great power and the Lord's people seem weak. How vulnerable was Jericho behind their great wall! How feeble were their mighty men!

- b. We see that an entire family of Jericho was saved through the mediation of one woman, a harlot at that. Because of her faith, her entire family including her mother and father were saved. Paul said that a believing wife sanctifies her unbelieving husband, making the children clean, so that they are included in the covenant. Faith is greater than unbelief, and a woman's faith saved her family.
- c. The entire city of Jericho, with all its inhabitants, were devoted to death and destruction—every living thing, boys, girls, men, women, babies, and all the animals. Of course, Israel had direct commands from God to do this, and the judgment of Jericho, like the judgment of Cain and others in Scriptures was given from the throne of God Himself, and can be no justification for that action by Christians today. It had been some four hundred years since God had revealed to Abraham that his family would inherit the land of Canaan.

It would be four hundred years until the wickedness of the Canaanites would come to full measure. Not only for their own sin, but for the sins of their father Canaan, who was cursed by his grandfather, Noah, did these things come upon the people of Canaan. These were extraordinary times, and extraordinary decrees came from the mouth of God, who holds all souls in His hands and can do with them as He pleases. A great many children and babes have died in the history of the world under the judgment of God because of the sins and wickedness of their father before them, and we should not consider it a strange thing if it so happens in our day. Isn't it strange that people will condemn the Creator for the deaths of babies at Jericho, in hurricanes or earthquakes, but will find excuses for a religion that will strap bombs on children to send against civilians as if the two were even remotely similar.

d. The city of Jericho was placed under the curse of God by God himself. The only things saved, as I said before, were the durable things that came into the Lord's house for the use of the worship of God. The houses were pulled down, the city leveled, all life destroyed. No spoil was

permitted, and no individual was to take anything for himself. Under the inspiration of the God, Joshua said that anyone who rebuilt the city would do by the sacrifice of his first born and youngest sons. This curse was fulfilled many years later, during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, when a man from Bethel name Hiel rebuilt the city. His oldest son died when the foundation was built; his youngest with the gates of the city were erected.

III. What are the applications of this passage of the word of God?

- a. We would remind you that all these things are written for our admonition. These things are ensamples, or types, as Paul tells us in I Cor. 10. The ends of the world are realized in the church and in our instruction and benefit. God arranged all these things to teach us about Christ and about the nature of our inheritance in Jesus Christ. They are to make a strong impression on our minds, for this is the meaning of the word “ensample.”
- b. This story emphatically illustrates that our inheritance is the gift of God. By this most dramatic example, the Lord illustrates to Israel that the conquest of Canaan is assured and that nothing will stand before them. They did not

have to tear down this wall; it came down by the power of God. They were called to obedience and trust. To stand when God said stand; to be circumcised when God said to be circumcised; to blow the trumpet when He said so; They were to be silent when He commanded silence and to shout when He said shout, no matter how childish it seemed.

- c. Our inheritance is not the land of Canaan. No, it is much larger than that. Abraham by faith became heir of the world, according to Romans 4:13, and this was by the righteousness of faith. The conquest of Canaan is a figure of the church entering into her inheritance. We have such an inheritance and it is describe in “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,” (1 Peter 1:4 AV) Abraham and we receive the inheritance for which the world was created—the presence and glory of God forever in heaven, in the new heavens and the new earth. We enter in by faith, just as Israel entered into Canaan by faith; we fail by unbelief, just as Israel failed by unbelief.
- d. The giants and the walls of Canaan were the obstacles to their inheritance, and God by a most dramatic illustration is telling Israel and us that what seems most formidable to us will be

nothing before the awesome display of His power and glory.

- e. What happened at Jericho would happen to all the cities of Canaan; their walls would be no defense to the inhabitants because they were cursed of God. This did not mean that Israel would not have to fight—no the men of arms would contend in battle against the armies of Canaan, but they would be everywhere victorious. They would take possession of the cities and the wealth and the houses and the lands and the fields and the vineyards, for it was a land flowing with milk and honey; but all of this would be by the power of God and the work of the Captain of the Lord's Hosts, Jesus Christ Himself.
- f. This should be a very strong consolation and hope to the child of God.
  - i. What is our comfort in life and in death: that we belong to our faithful savior Jesus Christ.
  - ii. In Christ we overcome far stronger walls and giants than those overcome by Joshua and the men of Israel.
  - iii. What are the walls and giants that threaten our inheritance?
    1. Unbelief. This goes to the heart of the covenant. You must believe that God in Jesus Christ looks with favor and grace

upon you, and will hear your prayers and give you His Spirit and He has promised. He will not withhold his gifts from those who walk in faith.

2. Fears. Fear comes from unbelief. It was fear, driven by unbelief that brought the failures of those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness. John said that he that fears is not made perfect in love. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world, the world of sin and misery. We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

3. Discouragement and the inertia that comes from gloom and despair. Awake thou that sleepest and rise from the dead, and God shall give you light. Discouragement and despair are driven by unbelief and fears. We should respond like Joshua and Caleb forty years before the fall of Jericho: “Let us go up, for we are well able to overcome them”

4. Ignorance. We must not be ignorant of the things that God has prepared for those that love Him. We must not seek our inheritance where it does not exist, but seek for it according to the measure

and the gift of God. We must seek all things at the mouth of the Lord of Hosts and seek His favor and grace always, not according to human imaginations and traditions, but according to the Spirit of God.

- iv. Just as Israel of old, after this great display of God's power, must arise and do battle, so we by faith must arise in terms of our faith to overcome unbelief, fears, discouragement and gloom. It is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We are therefore to work out our own salvation in fear and trembling, according to the apostle. We are children of the day and not of the night.

May God bless you. Amen and Amen.. May God bless you.