

Refuge City Church — July 25, 2021
“Faith waits, wars, and works” [Joshua 6]

Introduction

- **LAST WEEK:** Four reasons to rejoice (Circumcision/baptism, Passover/communion, Provision, and God’s sovereignty).
 - The right time to attack was set aside to purify and pray.
 - The people have consecrated themselves before the Lord.
 - They’ve paused to remember God’s faithfulness.
 - They’ve remembered His salvation and provision.
- **TODAY:** The battle of Jericho
 - It is now that God allows them to move forward, and begin conquest of the promised land.
 - We ended last week with this verse, and we start this week with it as well.
 - **Proverbs 21:1**, “The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will.”
 - God’s plans. God’s ways. Will always lead to God’s outcome.
 - **QUOTE:** “Plans are the prerogative of God; obedience is the privilege of His children. It is His and His alone to map our path to maturity.” (Luis Palau)

Joshua 6

1 Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in. **2** And the Lord said to Joshua, “See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. **3** You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. **4** Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of ram’s horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. **5** And when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him.”

- God’s instructions were to march and be quiet. This military strategy required absolute faith and obedience in God.
 - The city was fortified, with some scholars and archaeologists saying although it was not the biggest city to overcome, it was the strongest and most fortified.
 - God calls us to do hard things, and a lot of the time, it’s the hardest things that come first in our obedience and trust in Him.
 - To Noah He said, “Build an ark.”
 - To Abraham He said “Leave everything and go to an unknown place”.
 - To Moses He said, “Defy Pharaoh and lead my people out of slavery.”
 - To you and me He says, “Deny yourself and follow me!”
 - No weapons were mentioned in the strategy session to overwhelm the city.
 - The way God instructed Joshua, the warriors, and the priests was to keep *Him* at the center of it all!
 - Marching line: Soldiers, Priests, Ark of the Covenant, Soldiers

- God's recipe for success! What do we see take place in 6 days of marching around Jericho?
 - **Immediate obedience** = when God says it's time to go, you go. No hesitation.
 - **Matthew 4:19-20**, "Follow me...Immediately they left their nets and followed him."
 - **Quiet Patience** = this plan was to take place over the course of 7 days.
 - **Verse 10** "You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout."
 - **James 3:4-5**, "Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things..."
 - **QUESTION:** Ever feel like in your obedience to God, nothing seems to be happen? Keep trusting in Him!
 - **Psalm 46, 1** God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. **2** Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, **3** though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling... **10** "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!"
[Homework: read and reflect on the whole chapter]
 - **Vulnerability** = march and blow the trumpets. The army of Jericho could have attacked from their high position and decimated the Israelites.
 - Quote from 'The Chosen'. Mary Magdalene's character, "I have faith in Him. I just don't have faith in myself." [we know our weaknesses/failures; **2 Corinthians 12:9**]
 - **Proverbs 4:25-26**, "Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure."
 - **Zechariah 4:6**, "...Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."
 - **Anticipation** = God declared victory. It was going to happen. The importance of maintaining a position and mindset of faith.
 - **Philippians 3:13-14**, "Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
 - **CONSIDER:** Could this be our recipe for victory over *any* obstacle we face in life?
[taking Chapter 5 and 6 together; consecration and faith]

[Summarize Verses 6-16]

- Joshua provides the instructions on what to do, and how the city will fall.
 - They marched around the city one time per day, for 6 continuous days.
 - On the 7th day, they marched around the city 7 times.
 - Military Strategy: Bring your soldiers to the point of exhaustion immediately prior to fighting, and then ask them to fight???
 - Complete dependence on the strength and power of the Lord!!
 - At the conclusion of the 7th time around the city on the 7th day, the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and the walls came tumbling down.
- **Verse 2:** "I have given Jericho into your hand."
- God declared the victory before the battle begins!
- **Verse 16:** "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city."
 - Praise to God that victory had been achieved before the walls fell down!
 - **Hebrews 11:30**, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days."

17 And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the Lord for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. **18** But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. **19** But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord.” **20** So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. **21** Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

- Some might ask, “What was the king of Jericho and it’s inhabitants thinking during this whole time?? Let’s look at that perspective.
 - **Joshua 2:8-11**, “[Rahab] “I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.”
 - They knew of God and all he had done for the Israelites.
 - In 6 days of marching [possibly 40 or 400 years; Genesis 15 = God’s word to Abraham] the king and inhabitants could have surrendered/submitted to the Lord. But they did not.
 - *Spiritually speaking*: stubbornness + disobedience = defeat
- “Devoted to Destruction” [verse 17]
 - Set aside as an offering to the Lord.
 - Why such severe destruction? This physical battle becomes a spiritual representation of God’s righteous justice.
 1. Ultimate rejection, when opportunity was given for submission to the Lord.
 - **Romans 6:23**, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
 2. Submission to the Lord requires an intense pursuit of His holiness and purity.
 - **Deuteronomy 20:16-18**, “But in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, but you shall devote them to complete destruction...as the Lord your God has commanded, that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the Lord your God.”
 3. We serve a just God, who judges rightly according to His sovereign will.
 - **Ezekiel 33:17-19**, “Yet your people say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just,’ when it is their own way that is not just. When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it. And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by this.”
 - Complete destruction of sin and disobedience!
 - The moment we make exception to sin and justify worldly ways, and bring them in to our lives, we’ve opened the door to sin. Why would we do that??
 - **QUESTION: What needs to be devoted to destruction in your life?**
- **Verses 22-23**

- Rahab and her family saved, and brought into the family of God [promise fulfilled]
 - **Hebrews 11:31**, “By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.”
 - Obedience, patience, vulnerability, and anticipation. The recipe of faith worked for Rahab and her family!

24 And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. **25** But Rahab the prostitute and her father’s household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. **26** Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, “Cursed before the Lord be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho. “At the cost of his firstborn shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.” **27** So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

CONCLUSION

- Whatever ‘walls’ the Lord decides to tear down, are not meant to be built back up!
- Whatever God declares to be devoted to destruction, are meant to be destroyed forever!
- Faith: It waits, wars, and wins. Faith works!
 - **QUOTE:** “Faith’s first rule of action is to ascertain the will and word of God. Faith’s second rule of action is to obey that will and word implicitly. Faith’s final rule of action is to reckon on that word, and count the thing as good as done, giving glory to God in anticipation...” [J. Sidlow Baxter]
 - **Proverbs 21:31**, “The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the Lord.”