CAPITOL COMMISSION
Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders

MOPray

DR. JOHN BATTAGLIA • MISSOURI STATE MINISTER
P.O. BOX 891, JEFFERSON CITY • MISSOURI, 65102 • (573) 355-4161

Weekly Bible Study Schedule | Tuesday, March 11, 7:00-7:45 AM | HHR #3
Capitol Commission is NON-PARTISAN and MULTI-DENOMINATIONAL

INTRODUCTION

Joshua chapter 6 is a pivotal moment in the history of Israel as they conquer the city of Jericho the first major stronghold in their campaign to take possession of the Promised Land. Following their miraculous crossing of the Jordan River in chapter 3, the Israelites now face one of the most formidable obstacles in their path the city of Jericho. The defeat of Jericho launched Israel's conquest of Canaan.

GATES

6:1-2 – Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. But the Lord said to Joshua, "I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors."

The city gates played a central role hosting social, economic, protection, governance, justice, and spiritual activities. (Deuteronomy 16:18-20; Ruth 4:1-11; 2 Samuel 18:24-33; Isaiah 28:6; Matthew 16:18). City gates are often symbolic of the authority of the city. Jericho's walls were formidable and nearly impossible to penetrate by enemies but useless against God's power and plan.

> "I know the Lord has given you this land…No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight…" 2:9-11

Jericho was a city under God's judgment (Genesis 15:16; Deuteronomy 18:9-12). Jericho's destruction demonstrated God fights for His people. What do you fear today? More month than money; less health than hoped for; losing a relationship; results of a poor decision, these are real situations and would make most tremble, but followers of Jesus know fear belongs to the enemy, God belongs to us. No barrier can stand against God's power and plan.

SPIRITUAL BATTLE

6:4 – Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns.

The Ark of the Covenant is a profound symbol of God's presence. It was seen as the dwelling place of God's presence on earth. God's relationship with His people is evidenced by His covenant, guidance, mercy, judgment, and redemption. The Ark of the Covenant prefigures Jesus Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan for Salvation.

The battle against Jericho was more than a military theater it was a spiritual act. God was leading the battle. The Ark reminded Israel that victory comes from the LORD's power and presence, not human strategy, or military might. Spiritual leadership as seen with the priests penetrates the enemy of our soul. Success comes when we let God lead not relying on our own wisdom and might. (Prov. 3:5-6)

> *For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.* Eph. 6:12

Priests are instructed to blast the rams horn each day as Israel circled the walls of Jericho. On the last day, they are instructed to give one long blast of the Shofar. The long blast is called the Tekiah and represents a few dynamics. One in context is the proclamation that God is the sovereign of the heaven and earth. He is the supreme LORD. When blown it signifies God's power and presence. Its sound fills the space of its location.

When facing impregnable walls that are taller and stronger, built of wood and metal that does not flex, it is natural to buckle at our knees, after all there is only so much we can do. "I am doing the best I can"; I'm doing all I know to do"; I do not have anything left to give" are expressions you might have voiced, but that is the point, we are natural God is supernatural. We lose fights to those bigger and stronger than us, God wins battles regardless of the size of the walls. We are bigger, better, and stronger,

when we let God fight the battles of our life. Why not ask Him now, "God help me, I ask you to fight the battle I'm facing. I can't but you can." Amen.

MARCH

6:13-15 – The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the LORD, blowing their horns. Again the armed men marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the LORD. All this time the priests were blowing their horns. On the second day they again marched around the town once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days. On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the town as they had done before. But this time they went around the town seven times.

You could not find this military strategy among the seven Canaanite nations. This march required faith and obedience. Not only did they march, 13 times, they marched in silence. Obedience to God's command led to victory over the city of Jericho. Victory follows obedience. Again, the Ark of the Covenant, the Priests, and the Shofar each signified the presence and power of the LORD.

Notice the theme throughout our study in the book of Joshua – God is continually present with His people. God is a social being. He loves us and loves to be with us. Subsequent to the ascension of Jesus to heaven, the Holy Spirit came to dwell within us.

SHOUT

6:10, 16 – Joshua commanded. "Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!" Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the town!

Have you wondered, why the silence? Some say silence prevented complaining and doubting. It would be only human to say to your friend, "why are we marching for seven days?" "What if God does not deliver on His promise, we will not have a chance." Given the track record of Israel complaining and murmuring through the wilderness journey (Exodus16:2-3; Numbers 14:2) it certainly makes sense. Hitched to that probability is to use silence as a means to capture the attention that only the God of Israel could knock our walls down. The victory shout was louder highlighting His power and presence.

RAHAB

Rahab and her family were saved as Jericho was destroyed. She exercised faith to believe God would do what He planned and recognized Him as the Sovereign LORD (Joshua 2:11). Consider, Rahab initiated faith by welcoming Israel's two spies. She knew exactly why they were there, rather than turning to fear she turned to faith. The spies recognized true faith. The scarlet cord down from her window marked her house for protection. She demonstrated her faith and they fulfilled their promise. God keeps His promises even in times of judgement. (Joshua 6:25)

The scarlet rope foreshadows Jesus pointing to His ultimate salvation to all who trust that He died on the cross, shed His blood as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of the sins of the world, of my sins and your sins. Followers of Jesus believe He was raised from the dead, and ascended to the Father in heaven and will one day return to take His people with Him to heaven, and judge the living and the dead.

Rahab did more than survive she entered her destiny and left a legacy as she joined the physical lineage of Jesus. She was the great-great-grandmother of King David. I don't know what you've done in your life, but I know that God can save anyone who calls out to Him.

FIRSTFRUITS

6:24 – Then the Israelites burned the town and everything in it. Only the things made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron were kept for the treasury of the LORD's house.

Jericho and the metals belonged to God. The first fruits of victory in the Promised Land belonged to the Lord. Jericho was under divine judgement for their idolatry and rebellion.

CURSE

6:26 – At that time Joshua invoked this curse: "May the curse of the LORD fall on anyone who tries to rebuild the town of Jericho…"

Around 500 years later, in the reign of King Ahab, Heil of Bethel rebuilt Jericho (1 Kings 16:34) tragedy came upon his sons. A new Jericho would revive the evil that was destroyed.

The Power of Silence