



## "REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

### KEEP CALM AND MARCH ON!

#### Marching through the Book of Joshua: Lesson 9

In last week's lesson, Joshua learned an important lesson about God. He was reminded that it was God who had given Israel the land, and it was God who would bring about the victory. Now, in Joshua chapter 6, we read the exciting account of what happened to the city of Jericho when the children of Israel obeyed God's commands. The story about the walls of Jericho falling down is a popular Bible story, one that almost everyone remembers from Sunday school. We may remember what happened, but often forget the important truths and spiritual lessons that the story has for us. Chapter 6 was a pivotal point in the lives of the Israelites. Studying this chapter proved to be a pivotal point in my own personal walk with the Lord as well. God brought me face to face with the walls I had been facing and cowering from. I pray that you, too, will be impacted in a mighty way by the truths that Joshua chapter 6 has for you! May your faith increase by leaps and bounds as you witness the walls in your life come falling down, piece by piece, brick by brick.

#### First Day

1. Read Joshua chapter 6. List any new facts that you find.
2. Are there any key words or phrases? What is the main point of this chapter?
3. Who are the main characters?
4. How would you title this chapter?

5. In your own words, briefly describe what happened at Jericho.
6. What thoughts do you think may have been running through the minds of the people that were living in Jericho?
7. What immediate application do you see for your own life as you read chapter 6 for the first time?
8. What promise did God give Israel in Exodus 23:27? What verse in Joshua chapter 1 tells us that God kept His word?

This ends our lesson for today. Doesn't reading the entire chapter make you totally excited? I can't wait to go on! Our memory verse for the week sums up the entire chapter for us.

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days." **Hebrews 11:30**

### Second Day

**Review your memory verse.**

Today we will look at verses 1 and 2 in more depth. Remember to pray before you begin, asking the Holy Spirit to open your understanding and give you wisdom to see how His Word applies to you.

1. Read Joshua 6:1. Why do you think this verse is significant?

Verse 1 is considered a "parenthetical." This is defined as a verse that has been interjected to qualify information, or as an explanation. It's like the Holy Spirit has put parentheses around it, and then continues with the former thought.

2. Find out all you can about the city of Jericho. Locate it on the map on page 12 of your lesson. Read about Jericho from a Bible Dictionary or Encyclopedia, if you have one. What else happened there? What did it look like? (Do this before you read the paragraph below.)

Jericho, the most important city of the Jordan Valley, is said to have covered a span of about eight acres, and sat approximately 17 miles northeast of Jerusalem. It was known as the "city of palms" because of the huge palm trees that grew there (Judges 3:13). Jericho was about 800 feet below sea level, making it the lowest city on earth. The city was protected by two huge walls, about 15 feet apart, which surrounded the city. The outer wall was said to be 6 feet thick, while the inner wall was 12 feet thick, both being about 30 feet high. The two walls were linked together by houses built across the top, like Rahab's house. This city, with its tremendous, overwhelming walls, stood in the way of Israel's advancement into the Promised Land. But God, in His tender, merciful way, once again encouraged Joshua not to worry, but to move forward as God Himself would direct him.

3. Do you remember the reaction of the 12 spies when they first saw the wall? (Numbers 13:28)
4. What two words did God use in verse 2 to encourage Joshua?

Canaan was divided into small "city-states" that were ruled by their own king (Joshua 12:9-24, Joshua 6:2).

5. Read Psalm 127:1. What does Solomon say about a city?
6. Walls, doors, and gates may deter man, but they mean nothing to God! Read Acts 12:5-10 and 16:25-26. What other "walls" or "doors" were opened, according to these verses?
7. Has God ever brought down some impossible walls in your life? Did you give Him the glory due His name?

The Israelites camped in Gilgal as they prepared to march around Jericho. I wonder what they were thinking? Were there any doubters? Were any of the Israelites afraid? Did they want to turn back? I wonder ...

8. What is your first reaction when you run into a "wall"? (ouch!) Do you turn and run? Do you come up with your own plan to scale the wall? Or do you stop and ask God for directions? Think about it!
  
9. Are you facing a wall right now? Can you share it with your group? Have you asked God for guidance? Remember to submit to your Commander. You're standing on holy ground! (Joshua 5:15)

**God is powerful. God is mighty. There is no wall that is too strong or too high for God to tear down. There is no problem too big or too complicated for God to deliver you from.**

10. Read Psalm 29, which describes God's power. Which verses bring you comfort or reassurance as you face tomorrow?

We'll stop here for today. God told Joshua that He had "given" Jericho into his hands (vs 2). It was already done. Joshua didn't have to be afraid because God had promised him victory. God promised us victory, too. Will you trust Him today for that victory?

### Third Day

**What's your memory verse? Is God asking you to do something by faith?**

1. Read Joshua 6:1-5 and answer the following questions:
  - a. Who did the Lord give the command to?
  - b. Who was supposed to do the marching?
  - c. How many times a day, for how many days?
  - d. What were the priests supposed to do?
  - e. What was supposed to happen on the 7<sup>th</sup> day?

2. What number is repeated over and over? Why do you think that number is significant?

In Biblical numerology, the number seven represents completion. The Hebrew word, "Seven" is translated from "Shevah," which means "to be full or satisfied." Most believe that this comes from the fact that God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7<sup>th</sup>, sanctifying it (Genesis 2:3).

3. Read Joshua 6:6-14. Whom did Joshua repeat God's commands to?

4. What was between the priests and the rear guard as they marched around the wall? Why is this important?

5. How many times is the ark mentioned in chapter 6?

We are again reminded that the ark represented God's presence with His people. It was His presence that would make the difference in the battle. It's still God's presence among His people that guarantees victory!

6. Read Exodus 33:15. How much did Moses value the presence of God?

7. How did Jonah respond to the presence of God? Read Jonah 1:3.

8. How much do you value God's presence (or being in His will)? Are you fleeing from it like Jonah, or are you refusing to move ahead without it, like Moses?

Joshua learned to keep God in the center of everything. I pray that we would also allow God to have full reign in our hearts and lives.

9. According to our text in chapter 6, did Joshua ask God any questions? (Like, why march around a wall? Why blow the trumpets? And why on earth do we need to shout?)
10. What do you imagine the people were thinking when Joshua first told them of God's plan? (What would YOU have thought?)
11. Has God ever given you instructions that seemed totally inappropriate or ridiculous? How about overwhelming? How did you respond? Did you interrogate God or simply trust Him?
12. In verse 10, what were they told "not" to do?
13. What "fruit of the Spirit" were they called upon to practice during those seven days? (Galatians 5:22-23)
14. Do you think the Israelites felt "adequately prepared" or "ready" to take this city?

When writing this lesson, I was struggling with a huge wall before me. Spiritually I felt defeated, weak, and totally unequipped to handle it. God spoke to my heart through this chapter in a powerful way. He showed me that I had been told to **"march around this wall and wait."** I was not to **"open my mouth or make any noise!"** In His perfect time, He would say, **"Shout!"** and the walls would come falling down, bringing about the victory that I was longing for. I was called to be patient, exercise self-control, and trust God and His timing. Wow! What a burden was lifted off my shoulders as I repented for once again trying to fight the battle on my own. It's His battle. He's the strong and mighty one...not me!

The Israelites probably felt unprepared and inadequate, too. They were not trained for this kind of battle. Those walls probably loomed ahead of them like a monster! But God didn't want them to fight, only to trust Him.

They were not fighting for victory, but from victory. It was a battle that was much too big for them. Like my battle. Like your battle. But never, and I mean never, too big for God.

15. What walls are you facing today? Do you feel unprepared or inadequate? What is your part in this battle? (Be specific)

Let's end our discussion right here. I pray that you have your "wall" in better perspective after our study today. Let's **"rejoice"** in our God and say **"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"** (Revelation 4:8). **"The Lord shall reign forever!"** Psalm 146:10. Amen!

#### Fourth Day

**Review your memory verse. Why not have your family memorize it with you? (It's a powerful reminder!)**

**Watch out, ladies! The walls are falling down!**

1. Read Joshua 6:15-21.

Notice that the writer (Joshua) uses what is called a "delayed climax" in verses 17-19. The natural progression after verse 16 would seem to be they "shout" (verse 20), but instead, the writer records some commands that he had given to the people at some previous occasion. Is your excitement building?

The trumpet blown by the priest was a "ram's horn," which is also called a "shophar." These horns were used annually to proclaim the Civil New Year (Numbers 10:9-10, 29:1-6). Every fiftieth year, the "shophar" announced the Year of Jubilee, which was considered the year of liberation and justice (Leviticus 25:8-55, 27:17). They blew the horns to "proclaim liberty throughout the land!" The ram's horn also announced the appearance of the new moon and the full moon (Psalm 81:3).

2. Read Joshua's commands to the people in verses 17-19. Explain what he's saying in your own words.

3. Read the laws of warfare given by God in Deuteronomy 20. What were soldiers allowed to do after some wars? (vs 13-14) What was different about the nations of Canaan? (vs 16-18) **Why? Why were these nations so dangerous to Israel?** Also, read Deuteronomy 7:1-5.
  
4. What were the children of Israel supposed to save from Jericho? (vs 19) What were they supposed to do with it?

The Treasury of the Lord (vs 19) was a storehouse for the things of God (1 Kings 7:51). Later it became a place where gifts for the temple were kept (Luke 21:1).

5. Why was it so important that they didn't keep any of the things for themselves?

The Israelites were told to dedicate, or devote, the city of Jericho to the Lord. The victory belonged to Him and He could do with it whatever He pleased. This city became "doomed to utter destruction."

6. What kind of curse was placed on this city? (verses 17-19, 26)

Irving Jensen remarks, "We notice that God is complete in **All** His instructions and commands complete obedience. He promised **All** of Canaan to Israel. He punished **ALL** unbelievers in the wilderness for their disobedience. He demanded that **ALL** the tribes help in the conquest. Circumcision was to be restored to **ALL** male Israelites. **ALL** the laws must be kept. **ALL** the hearts must seek after God. Here, at Jericho, **ALL** the people were to shout; the city was utterly destroyed, even to the extent of pronouncing a curse on its' future restorer."

7. Did anyone ever try to rebuild Jericho? Who? Read 1 Kings 16:29-34. ("Laying its foundation with his firstborn" means at the "cost of the life.")

It appears that the curse seemed to forbid refortification or rebuilding, but allowed resettlement. (The land was given to the tribe of Benjamin to occupy in Joshua 18:21.) (Irving Jensen)

8. Most of Canaan was taken by ordinary, military means. Why do you think God gave Israel the land of Jericho in such a miraculous way? What is the significance, then and now?
  
9. Does our text record many details about how the city was taken after the walls came down? Do we read about the gruesome details or the bravery of the Israelites? Why or why not?

Although the part we remember most clearly from this story is the walls falling down, the Holy Spirit seems to emphasize the importance of obedience to God's commands. We spend more time on how Israel obeyed Him by marching, than on the actual act. We are also reminded of the importance of obedience to Joshua's instructions to the people in verses 17-19, and the severity of disobedience later on in chapter 7.

10. Why is our obedience so important to God? Is it important to you that you obey **ALL** His commands, with **ALL** your heart, **ALL** of the time?

Meditate on that question today. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and then be honest before God with your answer. See you tomorrow.

### Fifth Day

**Write out your verse by memory.**

Let's finish our discussion on Joshua 6 today. Keep your hearts open; God still wants to speak to us!

1. Read Joshua 6:20-27. Who was allowed to live, and why? You can refresh your memory by reading Joshua 2.

God didn't forget His promise to Rahab. Neither did Joshua. How encouraging it is to know that God will never forget His promises to us either! We learned in Hebrews 11:31 that "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace." This week we all memorized the verse that said, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days." Ephesians 2:8 tells us that we are saved by grace, through faith, and not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." Faith in the person of Jesus Christ will save us from death, just as Rahab's faith saved her. Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior by faith? If not, do it today. Let Joshua chapter 6 be a testimony to you of exactly who our God is.

2. Read Matthew 1:5. How is Rahab related to Jesus Christ? Why is this so significant?
3. How did the victory at Jericho affect Joshua's reputation in the land?
4. Through this whole chapter, who was glorified, Joshua or the Lord?
5. What are some of the most important lessons we can learn from the Israelites in this chapter?
6. What important lessons can we learn from Joshua in this chapter?

7. Most importantly, what do we learn about God from this chapter? How important is purity to God? What do we learn about how God looks at sin?
  
8. This week, has God shown you any changes that need to be made in your heart or life? What steps can you take to make those changes?

Often, after reading a chapter like this, people struggle over whether or not it's a loving thing for God to not only allow, but command, mass killing of men, women, and babies. Soldiers, we can handle, but women and children? I think **Warren Wiersbe** explains it best: "Canaan was unspeakably wicked, and God didn't want His holy people contaminated by their neighbors. We must never forget that God put Israel in the world to be the channel for His blessing (Genesis 12:1-3), which involves, among other things, the writing of the Scriptures and the coming of the Savior. Read the Old Testament record, and you will see satan doing everything he could to pollute the Jewish nation and thus prevent the birth of the Messiah. When the Jewish men married pagan women and began to worship pagan gods, it was a threat to the purpose God had for His chosen people (Nehemiah 13:23-31). God wanted a "holy seed" (Malachi 2:14-15) so that His holy son could come to be the Savior of the world. The people in the land had also been given plenty of opportunity to repent and turn back to the Lord, just as Rahab and her family had done. God patiently endured the evil of the Canaanites from the time of Abraham (Genesis 15:16) to the time of Moses, a period of over 400 years. From the exodus to the crossing of the Jordan

was another 40 years in Israel's history, and the Canaanites knew what was going on!" (Joshua 2:8-13)

Remember that the main point of this chapter is to learn what God was trying to teach Israel, and also what God is trying to teach us! And, by the way, what was your "Reason to Rejoice" this week?

### Central and Southern Campaigns

From the military camp at Gilgal Joshua launched two campaigns, thus conquering central and southern Canaan.



### Northern Campaign

After conquering central and southern Canaan, Joshua took his forces northward to Hazor.

