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# Joshua 6

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## Joshua 6:1–27

## Israel Conquers Jericho

### Outline of Chapter 6:

- vv. 1–5     **God tells Joshua how to conquer Jericho**
- vv. 6–20   **Joshua conquers Jericho**
- vv. 21–27   **Rahab's family delivered/Joshua pronounces curse upon anyone who rebuilds Jericho**

### Charts:

- v. 4     **The Invasion of Jericho and the Ark of God**
- v. 15    **God's Judgment of Jericho and Numerology**
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**Introduction:** Sooner or later, we have a topic that must be dealt with, and this might be the best time. There have been people who were anti-war for a long time, but there seemed to be almost a generation of people from the 60's who were by and large anti-war. Obviously, there is nothing nice or kind about war. It is a vicious, filthy practice—but it is inevitable. Our Lord told us that there would be wars and rumors of wars until He returned (Matt. 24:6). Just because a person recognizes the horrors of war, does not make that person more highly evolved or on some great spiritual plane. Any soldier can testify to the absolute horror of war. It is an outgrowth of the fallen world that we live in. All the peace demonstrations and all the passive or active resistance in the world will not end war. Because of the incredible bravery of the great men of uniform in World Wars I and II, I have lived during a period of relative peace. However, even as I write this, the United States has been at war a half a dozen times since my birth and I would be hard-pressed to calculate the total number of wars which have taken place throughout the world over these past fifty years of relative peace. The fact that God has blessed us and has kept war from our country for all of this time has lulled an incredible number of people into thinking that this is a world-wide possibility. Let me disabuse you of that notion. As natural resources become more and more in demand, we will see more and more warfare over things as simple as water and oil. We have been a nation blessed unlike no other because of our relationship to God, and part of that blessing has included almost a century and a half without war at home. Don't think that this will last forever. Don't think that some nations don't hate us and that some nations don't envy what we have. We were stopped in our tracks by the little nation North Viet Nam and don't think that the nations which hate us are unaware of this fact. It has been the blessing of God and our great men in uniform which have preserved for us our freedom and prosperity till now—but never, under any circumstances, should we take this for granted or think that we are more highly evolved than, for instance, those in the middle East who despise us, and that we will forever avoid war because of our evolved state. It is our strong military and valiant men in uniform who have afforded us this protection, and, in many cases, the illusion that we are impervious to invasion. We have already covered the **Doctrine of War**<sup>1</sup> in Deut. 31:2, but at a time like this in the book of Joshua, when we are about to observe the Jews invade this land and kill thousands of people—men women and children; we need to pause for a moment to understand this.

Let me quote the NIV Study Bible: *Many readers of Joshua (and other OT books) are deeply troubled by the role that warfare plays in this account of God's dealings with his people. Not a few relieve their ethical scruples by ascribing the author's perspective to a pre-Christian (and sub-Christian) stage of moral development that the Christian, in the light of Christ's teaching, must repudiate and transcend. Hence the main thread of the narrative line of Joshua is an offense to them.*

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<sup>1</sup> Not finished yet!!

*It must be remembered, however, that the book of Joshua does not address itself to the abstract ethical question of war as a means for gaining human ends. It can only be understood in the context of the history of redemption unfolding in the Pentateuch, with its interplay of divine grace and judgment. Of that story, it is the direct continuation.*

*Joshua is not an epic account of Israel's heroic generation or the story of Israel's conquest of Canaan with the aid of her national deity. It is rather the story of how God, to whom the whole world belongs, at one stage in the history of redemption reconquered a portion of the earth from the powers of this world that had claimed it for themselves, defending their claims by force of arms and reliance on their false gods. It tells how God commissioned his people, under his servant Joshua, to take Canaan in his name out of the hands of the idolatrous and dissolute Canaanites (whose measure of sin was not full; see Ge. 15:16). It tells how he aided them in that enterprise and gave them conditional tenancy on his land in fulfillment of the ancient pledge.*

*Joshua is the story of the kingdom of God breaking into the world of nations at a time when national and political entities were viewed as the creation of the gods and living proofs of their power. Thus the Lord's triumph over the Canaanites testified to the world that the God of Israel is the one true and living God, whose claim on the world is absolute. It was also a warning to the nations that the irresistible advance of the kingdom of God would ultimately disinherit all those who opposed it, giving place in the earth only to those who acknowledge and serve the Lord. At once an act of redemption and of judgment, it gave notice of the outcome of history and anticipated the eschatological destiny of mankind and the creation.*

*The battles of Canaan were therefore the Lord's holy war...God gave his people under Joshua no commission or license to conquer the world with the sword, but a particular, limited mission. The conquered land itself would not become Israel's national possession by right of conquest, but it belonged to the Lord. So the land had to be cleansed of all remnants of paganism. Its people and their wealth were not for Israel to seize as the booty of war from which to enrich themselves (as Achan tried to do, ch. 7) but were placed under God's ban (were to be devoted to God to dispense with as he pleased)...War is a terrible curse that the human race brings on itself as it seeks to possess the earth by its own unrighteous ways. But it pales before the curse that awaits all those who do not heed God's testimony...[and] his warnings [to] those who oppose the rule of God and reject his offer of grace.<sup>2</sup>*

Let me state this so there is no confusion: the men of uniform have taken upon themselves a noble profession and their sacrifices and dedication are among some of the nobler human aspirations. The idea that we will somehow, even as Christians, lead the world to some great millennium of peace through our love and higher moral principles is foolishness. God Himself will usher in such a state and it will immediately follow the greatest warfare that this world has ever seen. Joshua and Israel attacked Canaan out of obedience to God and removed a people who had become a cancer. What he and his men did was noble and righteous. The soldiers who protect our country are men worthy of the highest honor and respect. We will never reach a point in our history where we do not need them.

It is in Joshua 6 that we get a much better feel for the writing style of Joshua. God appears to Joshua in Joshua 5; He speaks to Joshua throughout chapter 6. As has been pointed out before, there is no indication that God speaks to Joshua on several different occasions, but it is more apparent that God speaks to Joshua at one time, but Joshua intersperses what God said with how Joshua saw that His words were obeyed. In this chapter, we get a longer than normal quotation from God and Joshua's orders are constantly interspersed with the following of said orders. Although some of the orders of Joshua may have been given at different times, and certainly to different groups, Joshua had to make it clear early on not to attack the home of Rahab. We find the order delivered to the two spies late in the chapter, but certainly something was said to the Israelites in general in order to preserve Rahab and her family (this of course would have been an order delivered by Joshua to his five star generals who would then pass the order on down the chain of command).

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<sup>2</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 284.

Zodhiates: *This was not a mere military confrontation with people who were entrenched in a formidable stronghold. The implications are more spiritual than political. While God was bring judgment upon those who had long refused Him, He was working on behalf of the people with whom He had just renewed His covenant. The fall of Jericho sent a powerful message to the Canaanites that Israel's successes were not mere human victories of man against man, but victories by the true God of Israel over their gods. This event, following closely upon the crossing of the Jordan by miraculous means, impressed upon the people othat the same God who had led their fathers out of Egypt and through the Red Sea was with Joshua just as surely as He had been with Moses.*<sup>3</sup>

A summary of this chapter is simple: God tells Joshua what he must do in order to conquer Jericho and Joshua follows God's orders. It is probably the most unusual attack ever planned against an enemy. The warriors of Israel were to march around Jericho for seven days with the ark of God. Jericho, meanwhile, quivered in fear within its walls. On the seventh day, the Israelites shouted, the walls of Jericho came crashing down, and the Israelites went into the city and destroyed the entire human population save Rahab and her family.

Because the site of Jericho has been examined by archaeologists with differing opinions and because theologians have written different opinions concerning this book, we will examine some of the events in this book more closely than you might think they would warrant. Joshua's matter-of-fact, repetitious style belies the richness in the history which he has recorded. Furthermore, the actions of the Israelites, based upon the directives of God, raise some moral issues in the incidents herein described. We will examine those moral issues as well.

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## God Tells Joshua How to Conquer Jericho

Literally:

**(And Jericho was shut up and having been shut up from the faces of sons of Israel; no going out and no going in).**

Joshua  
6:1

Smoother English rendering:

**(Now Jericho was sealed up as tight as a drum because of the presence of Israel; no one entered Jericho and no one went out).**

In general, this verse is parenthetical. God is speaking to Joshua (Joshua 5:13–15), which conversation is continued in v. 2 of this chapter. God is about to give the city of Jericho into the hands of Joshua and his army. This parenthetical note tells us that Jericho was not going to be an easy city to conquer. The people were afraid and probably smaller in number than the Israelites; however, their city was pretty much an impregnable fortress to the Jews.

Now in this verse, we have an unusual sentence construction for Joshua. We have four participles hooked together by wâw conjunctions. What is being said is easy to understand, but I would like you to see how others have rendered this:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Now Jericho [a fenced down with high walls] was tightly closed because of the Israelites; no one went out or came in.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Now Jericho was shut up and barred because of the sons of Israel,—none came out and none went in.
NASB	Now Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel; so no one went out and no one came in.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	(And Jericho shutteth itself up, and is shut up, because of the presence of the sons of Israel—none going out, and none coming in;)

Since we have four participles in this verse, it might do us well to examine the Hebrew participle. A participle may be used in a very similar fashion to the English participle by adding an *ing* to the verb. A participle may function

<sup>3</sup> *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 583.

as a noun, adjective or verb. It presents a person or subject in the exercise or exhibition of the action or condition denoted by the verb.<sup>4</sup> Generally, the participle is used as an adjectival noun—that is, it is a noun with gender and number, but the action of the verb describes the function of the noun. For instance, a *baker*. ❶ Sometimes, it can function as a simple adjective, its description integral to the action of the verb, as in “*sinful nation*” of Isa. 1:4. As an adjective, a participle may be used attributively or predicatively. (a) When used attributively, they generally follow the noun that they describe and they will agree in gender, number and definiteness (a definite noun requires a definite adjective and an indefinite noun requires an indefinite adjective). When a participial adjective is used attributively, they are usually translated as relative clauses, using such relative pronouns as *who*, *which*, *that* which is supplied by the translator and not found in the Hebrew. Deut. 22:22 could be rendered *the man laying with the woman* or *the man who lay with the woman*. Jer. 22:11: **For thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, concerning Shallum, who reigned instead of Josiah his father** or **For thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah concerning Shallum, reigning instead of Josiah his father**. (b) When a participle acts as an adjective in the predicate position, it is often joined to the noun that it describes by some form of the verb *to be*, although said verb is rarely found in the Hebrew and must be supplied by the translator. These participial adjectives can stand before or after the nouns that they modify and must agree in gender and number, although they never take the definite article. Gen. 3:14: **Cursed [are] you above all cattle**. Isa. 1:7: **Your cities [are] burning with fire**. It is often difficult to distinguish between a participle which functions as a predicate adjective and one which is used as a verb. ❷ A participle can be used as a verb. They are normally preceded by an expressed subject with which they must agree in gender and number. A participle which is used as a verb will not take a definite article. Generally speaking, they describe continuous action taking place during the time period indicated by the context, which may be past, present or future. Past participles are made even more explicit when preceded by the verb *hâyâh* (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] and future participles generally refer to the very near future, particularly when preceded by the demonstrative particle *behold* (which is *hinnêh* (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]). A participial verb in past time: Ex. 3:2: **And behold, the bush was burning with fire**. A participial verb in present time: Gen. 37:16: **I am seeking my brothers**. A participial verb in future time: I Sam. 3:13: **For I am about to punish [or, judge] his house forever**. ❸ A participle may also be used as a noun. Participles used in this way indicate *the one who* or *the ones who* are performing a certain action or exist in a certain state or condition. These nouns may be definite or indefinite, masculine or feminine, singular or plural, depending upon to whom they refer. Such nouns can be used as subjects, direct objects, predicates, objects of prepositions—in short, in any way a normal noun may be used. Often we find a person’s occupation or function named by such a use: *redeemer*, *inhabitant*, *scribe (writer)*, etc. We have similar uses in the English, e.g., *writer*, *teacher*, *farmer*. These can occur in the absolute state or in the construct.<sup>5</sup> In this verse, these four participles function as verbs.

The first is the Qal active participle of *çâgar* (צָגַר) [pronounced *saw-GAHR*] which means *shut up, to close up*. Strong’s #5462 BDB #688. This is followed by the *wâw* conjunction and the Pual participle of the same verb. The Pual is the passive of the Piel (intensive) stem and likewise emphasizes an accomplished state. The use of the Qal and the Pual emphasizes that not only had the Canaanites locked the Israelites out, but they had imprisoned themselves.

This is followed by *from faces of sons of Israel*. In this chapter, more than most, there are huge phrases missing from the Septuagint (the early Greek translation of the Bible). This may explain why your translation might exclude some phrases which are found here. *From the presence of Israel* (i.e., *from the faces of Israel*) is one of those phrases. My educated guess is that the Greek version did not rely heavily upon the science of textual criticism and probably whatever manuscript a group had was all that came into play when it came to translating a passage. That these manuscripts may have differed slightly probably was never a consideration. Since the missing phrases in the Greek amount to less than ten and are fairly insignificant, I will not point out each and every one of them. If you have an interest here (although I can’t imagine why you would), pick up either a Septuagint translation (I

<sup>4</sup> J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson’s Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, ©by T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, p. 133.

<sup>5</sup> Most of this was taken almost word-for-word from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 199–202.

am quite happy with mine, as it has the Greek and the English text<sup>6</sup>), or, pick up a copy of the New Jerusalem Bible, which places these portions of Scripture in parentheses.

Then we have the negative particle and the Qal active participle of *yâtsâ* (אָצַח) [pronounced *yaw-TZAWH*], which means *to go out, to come out, to come forth*. Strong's #3318 BDB #422. This is followed by the *wâw* conjunction and the negative particle and the Qal active participle of *bô* (בּוֹ) [pronounced *boh*], which means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. The participle was Joshua's way of emphasizing a continuing of events—the city of Jericho continued as a prison.

The inhabitants of Jericho knew where Israel was—camped across the raging Jordan River. They had assumed that no way could the Israelites cross the Jordan for several months, so they had begun to muster their defenses. When they realized the Israel was suddenly on the other side of the Jordan ready to attack, the inhabitants of Jericho suddenly closed up the city, bringing everyone inside, and began their preparations inside the city walls. When their G-2 reported back that Israel was crossing over the Jordan dry-shod, all of Jericho was in a panic.

In the Hebrew, *Jericho* is *y<sup>o</sup>rêchô* (יְרִיחוֹ) [pronounced *y<sup>o</sup>ray-KHOH*] (there are two other slightly different spellings and pronunciations as well). Strong's #3405 BDB #437. In the Greek, it is *Iericho* (Ἰεριχὼ, pronounced *ee-er-ee-KHOH*) (Strong's has the rough breathing; everywhere else I checked has the soft—Strong's #2410). Obviously, like most proper nouns, this is transliterated and not translated. Although the original meaning of *Jericho* is open to question, BDB connects it with *a region of fragrance* and W.F. Albright connects the name to the early Western Semitic moon-god, *Yarih*.

We certainly today have a much different view of a city than what existed at those times. In those days, a city was any wall-in town. I hesitate to give any numbers in terms of a population, other than to suggest that they were probably overwhelmed by the number of Israelites. In other words, we are not speaking of a city the size of Houston where it would take a several hours just to drive around the loop and the better part of a day to drive around the beltway. The head guy of the city was called a *king*. The current estimations given by several archeologists is that the city of Jericho was perhaps only seven acres in area and the perimeter of the walls was perhaps 650 yards. However, I should point out that these wall-in cities were not necessarily the entirety of the city, but the refuge area. The population certainly would be scattered around the city's walls for several miles and the outside population (which could have even been the bulk of the population) would withdraw into the walls in case of enemy attack.<sup>7</sup>

*Keller: The Jordan basin has a tropical climate. The village of Eriha, the modern successor of Jericho, gives the impression of being an oasis on the edge of a barren waste of chalk. Even palm-trees grow here although they are seldom found anywhere else in Palestine, except to the south of Gaza. The Bible too calls Jericho "the city of palm trees" (Jud. 3<sup>13</sup>). Golden red clusters of dates shimmer among the green foliage. From ancient times the spring called "Ain es-Sultan" has produced as if by magic this lush patch of vegetation. North of present day Jericho is a mount of ruins named after it, Tell-es Sultan. This is a battleground of archaeologists. Anyone wanting to examine it must buy a ticket. The site of the excavations lies behind a barbed wire fence.<sup>8</sup>*

Will Durant, who wrote the eleven volume reference work, *The Story of Civilization*, saw Jericho is being perhaps a bit more advanced. He wrote: *The tombs of these kings, excavated by the Garstang Expedition, contained hundreds of vases, funerary offerings, and other objects indicating a settled life at Jericho in the time of the Hyksos domination, and a fairly developed civilization in the days of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.<sup>9</sup>*

<sup>6</sup> It is Brenton's *The Septuagint with Apocrypha—Greek and English*; published by Hendrickson in 1992. I have no idea in what form these notes will be in years from now or who will read them, but I have had the best luck with selection and price from Christian Book Distributors at 1-Christian Book Distributors; PO Box 7000; Peabody MA 01961; 978-977-5000.

<sup>7</sup> This information came from *The Amplified Bible*, The Lockman Foundation; ©1965 by Zondervan Publishing House; p. 264, which in turn got its information from Sir Charles Marston's *New Bible Evidence*, a book with which I am unfamiliar.

<sup>8</sup> Werner Keller, *The Bible as History* (second revised edition), p. 160.

<sup>9</sup> *The Story of Civilization*; Volume I *Our Oriental Heritage*; Will Durant; MJF Books; ©1963; p. 300.

The NIV Study Bible and ZPEB both identify the modern Tell es-Sultan as the site of olden Jericho, as well as two dozen other ancient cities built one above the other. Because of this, the mound is now approximately fifty feet above the bedrock. Several of them had great, double walls, and none of these walls which have been excavated have been positively identified as ancient walls of Jericho.<sup>10</sup> The *tell* (which means mound) is roughly 400 x 200 yds., or approximately 10 acres in area. This site is about 10 miles NW of the entry of the Jordan into the Dead Sea and 17 miles east-northeast of Jerusalem. Nowadays, there is a modern road which cuts through the east side of the Tell and on the other side of the road is a natural spring, which would indicate why Jericho was built there. This spring provides the water for the modern oasis. However, the water has to be carefully administered and distributed throughout the city, in order to be of any sustaining value. The aqueduct system in this area even recently was insufficient to maintain a city of any size.

The city itself was probably the center of worship of the moon-god, as it is supposed that *Jericho* means *moon-city*. The attack by God upon this city was both an attack on the degenerate Canaanites and upon their religion and religious practices.<sup>11</sup>

Archaeology places inhabitants in the area of Jericho in the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C., beneath the strata of the Bronze Age lies the strata of the Stone Age. At this point in time, we do not even know whether human history goes that far back; but suffice to say that Jericho was one of the earliest sites for inhabitation. The oldest excavations have revealed a wall, a tower, round houses and evidence of the attributes of civilization, apart from a written language (not that one did not exist—we just don't have the evidence of one and the ancients often found very long-lasting ways to record information). Keller said that these round walls resembled Bedouins' tents and that no pottery from this era has been discovered. ZPEB places the time period of this village in the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C. Dr. Kathleen M. Kenyon, director of the 1953 British excavations, proclaimed, "Jericho can lay claim to being by far the oldest city in the world."<sup>12</sup> My thinking is that there were villages in Mesopotamia which probably pre-dated Jericho, but we apparently have no archeological evidence of any cities like Jericho in that area which pre-date Jericho. What is nice about this date is that most scholars who take the Bible literally place man on this earth 6000–10,000 years ago. The Biblical stand is that man began gathering in groups and building cities very early human history (Gen. 11).

Later, an apparently semi-nomadic people populated the area of Jericho. These people did not build permanent houses, but flimsy huts (perhaps their building skills sucked). The earliest pottery found in this area seems to be traceable to this second group.

The next evidence of occupation is a groups of people from approximately 3000 B.C., the Early Bronze Age. They built defense walls and a tower. There appears as though there was a lot of activity during this time period of building and rebuilding due to various catastrophes, e.g., earthquakes and fires. Sometimes new foundations were laid and sometimes the previous foundations were utilized. Some of the walls from this time period are erroneously associated with Joshua. On the other hand, if the dating methods employed on the previous occupants was inaccurate, it is possible that the dating of this time period is inaccurate as well. In any case, there appears to be no clear agreement among archeologists and scholars as to which walls could be identified with the Jericho that we will study throughout this chapter.

In 2300 B.C., the last group of settlers from the early Bronze Age were apparently destroyed by an invasion of nomadic people which some identify as Amorites. There was apparently a nomadic invasion which enveloped much of this area, the archeological evidence having been based upon the study of tombs in Jericho. In the Middle Bronze Age, around 1900 B.C., there appears to be another wave of new invaders, which apparently are the Canaanites, and evidence of their culture is found up and down the Palestinian-Syrian coast around the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C. Archeological evidence indicates that this occupation lasted for about 700 years. During this time,

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<sup>10</sup> You will see another, conflicting opinion later.

<sup>11</sup> This paragraph was paraphrased from *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 295, and interspersed with material from *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 3, p. 451, which was the source for most of the additional material on Jericho.

<sup>12</sup> Werner Keller, *The Bible as History* (second revised edition), p. 160.

there appears as though there was some outside rulership by the Hyksos, who seemed to offer little by way of culture, other than improved, sloping defensive walls, as opposed to the free-standing defense walls.

We gain some insight as to the day-to-day life of the occupants of Jericho at the time of the Patriarchs through the examination of their tombs. Many of the artifacts used by the living were buried with the dead and the presence of methane gas in the tombs has preserved some of these artifacts even until today. We have found excellent pottery, three and four legged wooden tables, stools and beds, baskets, trinket boxes made with bone inlay, metal daggers, and even some platters of fruits and meat have been preserved because of the methane gas.

In 1550 B.C., Jericho was violently overthrown, probably by the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty of the Hyksos. One of the archaeological benefits of such an invasion is that many of the artifacts are preserved by the felled walls and the walls themselves are hardened by the fires which are set.<sup>13</sup> For this reason, we have discovered cobbled roads throughout the city and one-room shops which opened out into the streets all from this time period. A two-story house with living quarters downstairs and a grain milling complex along with storage areas has been uncovered from this time period. The people of this area were not wealthy, as evidenced by both their tombs and homes, indicating that this was a typical town of that era, rather than some wealthy trade center. We will examine in more detail the walls of Jericho in v. 20.

Finally, the book of Joshua never names a particular group of people as the occupants of Jericho specifically. He has mentioned that the Amorites dwelt in the hill country and that the Canaanites dwelt along the ocean, but that only implies that the men of Jericho are Amorites, but does not state that outright.

**And so Y<sup>h</sup>owah said to Joshua, “See, I have given into your hand Jericho and her king, mighty ones of the valour.**

Joshua  
6:2

**And Jehovah had said to Joshua, “Observe, I have given into your hand Jericho and her king and her professional soldiers.**

In this verse, we have a continuation of the Captain of the army of Jehovah speaking to Joshua. This person is none other than Jesus Christ. His first order as Commander in Chief is to take this city of Jericho. The first word which God says to Joshua is the Qal imperative of *râ`âh* (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*], which means *to see*. Strong's #7200 BDB #906. The imperative means that this is a command; God commands Joshua, “*Look...*” or “*See...*” Even the rendering “*Observe...*” would be reasonable.

The next verb is the Qal perfect of *nâthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*], which means *give, grant, place, put, set*. The perfect tense indicates a completed action. We live in time and as our Lord spoke to Joshua, Joshua was in time and the conquering of Jericho was future. However, God exists outside of time and the conquering of Jericho had been completed as He decreed the falling of Jericho's walls in eternity past. Strong's #5414 BDB #678.

The last two words in this verse are as follows: the masculine plural construct of the adjective *gibbôwr* (גִּבּוֹרִים) [pronounced *gib-BOAR*], which means *strong, mighty, valiant*. Strong's #1368 BDB #150. It is followed by the definite article and the masculine singular substantive of *chayil* (חַיִל) [pronounced *CHAH-yil*] and it means *efficiency, army, strength, valour, power*; as well as that which is gotten through strength—i.e., *wealth, substance*. Strong's #2428 BDB #298. The two words together are rendered —*mighty ones of valour* (Young); —*the mighty men of valour* (Rotherham); [*and*] *the valiant warriors* (NASB). Even in all of this, we miss what has been given into the hand of Joshua: the professional soldiers of Jericho. These soldiers worked with weapons and they killed as their profession. They were good at it, which is why this group of Amorites owned a prime piece of real estate.

Rahab confirmed this some time ago, in Joshua 2:9: “**I know that Jehovah has given you the land and that the terror of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you.**” The spies also confirmed this in Joshua 2:24: **And they said to Joshua, “Certainly Jehovah has given all the land into our hands, and all the inhabitants of the land, moreover, have melted away before us.”** And Moses made the same

<sup>13</sup> Which, I am guessing is the result of Coleman lanterns which have tipped over next to leaky gas mains.

promise to the Israelites in his swan song: “And He will deliver their kings into your hand so that you will make their name perish from under heaven; no man will be able to stand before you until you have destroyed them.” (Deut. 7:24).

**“And you will encircle the city—all men of the war going around the city one time. Thus you will do six of days.**

Joshua  
6:3

**“And you will encircle the city; all the men of war will go around the city just one time. You will do this for six days.**

The first verb is the masculine plural, Qal perfect of  $\text{çâ}^b\text{va}^b\text{v}$  (סָבַב) [pronounced *saw<sup>b</sup>-VAH<sup>B</sup>V*], which means *to turn oneself, to go around, to surround, to encircle*. Strong’s #5437 BDB #685. This is followed by *all of [the] men of the war*. When it comes to the men of war, we are talking a huge number of soldiers—somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 (recall that 2½ tribes alone contributed 40,000 soldiers—Joshua 4:13). This was certainly not single file march. Such a maneuver would have required great organization and planning. It would require more of them than being pointed in the correct direction. You will recall that the forces of Israel had been given captains over 1000’s; over hundreds, over fifties and over tens. When I first read that, I thought to myself that seems like a bit much. However, with a simple-sounding maneuver like this, great organization is required. The men of Jericho had locked up their town to where no one could enter and no one could leave. They were frightened. It was a combination of the huge number of people which made up Israel and their allegiance with God.

Then we have the Hiphil absolute of  $\text{nâqaph}$  (נָקַף) [pronounced *naw-KAHF*], which means *go around, compass about, complete a circuit, encompass* for the other occurrences. Strong’s #5362 BDB #668. This is followed by *the city* and then two words: the feminine singular substantive  $\text{pa}^{\prime}\text{am}$  (פַּאֵם) [pronounced PAH-ahm or PAH-gahm], which means *beat, foot, anvil, occurrence, time*; obviously a pretty unusual array of meanings. Strong’s #6471 BDB #821. With that, we have the numeral *one*.

This is followed by the adverb  $\text{kôh}$  (כֹּה) [pronounced *koh*], which means *thus, here, hence*. Strong’s #3541 BDB #462. The remainder of the verse reads: *you will do six of days*. What occurs in this verse is a ritual which indicates Israel’s rest in God. They encircle Jericho and walk around it for six days, making claim to the territory given them by God. God is about to destroy this people and He is giving them one last chance. At any time, a man could exit the city and throw himself at the mercy of the Israelites. At any time, a man could join Rahab and her family in the safety of their sanctified house. God takes the destruction of a people very seriously. He never enters into such action capriciously. You can rest assured that these people have been given the chance to come to Him.

The order given in vv. 2–5 by the Commander and Chief of the Army of Israel is the condensed version. These orders will be expanded upon throughout the rest of this chapter, interspersed with the obedience to same. This is the writing style of Joshua, who recalled these events in his mind topically rather than chronologically, and then recorded them in that way.

**“And seven priests will carry seven horns—the jublations (horns) [or, possibly, ‘the ram’s horns’]—before faces of the ark and in the day of the seven, you will encompass the city seven times and the priests will be blowing in the trumpets.**

Joshua  
6:4

**“And seven priests will carry seven ram’s horns [or, horns of jubilation] before the presence of the ark and on the seventh day, you will circle the city seven times while the priests blow on the trumpets.**

After the words *seven horns* we find the definite article and the masculine plural  $\text{yôbêl}$  (יְבוֹבֵל) [pronounced *yohb-VAYL*], which appears to mean *rams* (Joshua 6:4–6) when plural and *jubilee* when in the singular (see Lev. 25:10–13). However, Gesenius does not even mention the rendering of *ram*; and my preference is to stay with as few meanings as possible for any given word. So, I will render this word *jubilee, jubilation(s)*. It’s a tough call, as this word has been primarily transliterated from language to language. Strong’s #3104 BDB #385. Barnes claims that the instrument here is better described as a cornet rather than a horn. However, the most important

point is that these are not the trumpets of war, but these are the cornets used to usher in the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee. In other words, they were ceremonial trumpets which signified Israel's rest and reliance upon God. Right about now would be a good time to study the **Doctrine of Horns (the Musical Instruments)—not finished yet!!**

Since God restored the earth in six days and rested on the seventh (because He was finished, not because he became tired) and man's work week since time immemorial has been a reflection of that. *Seven* represents the perfection of God's work.

One of the questions that I have had nagging me is, *why was all of this done? Why the Ark? Why the six days?* Israel had been instructed by God to offer any city a shot at salvation first, before destroying them. Israel was well-known to the people of that land; the story of Israel being taken out of Egypt was known throughout the ancient world, and some people, simply on the basis of that information, believed in their God, Jehovah Elohim. So, we may reasonably assume several things at this point:

### The Invasion of Jericho and the Ark of God

1. Since the Jews had been instructed to offer terms of surrender to any city before destroying it—which terms would have included the gospel of Jehovah Elohim—we may rest assured that it was done here as well.
2. The inhabitants of Jericho could see the Ark as it was carried around the city.
3. Even though the gospel information here is somewhat limited, God the Holy Spirit, through the reputation of the Jews and through the vision of the Ark, made real to the inhabitants of Jericho the gospel.
4. The inhabitants of Jericho observed this for 6 days. Any one could have come out and surrendered to the Jews. Anyone within Jericho could have exercised faith in Jehovah Elohim. Anyone in Jericho could have rejected their own gods for the God of Israel, whose testimony was the very Ark itself. Apparently, none chose to (apart from Rahab and her family).
5. Six days were given; that indicates that we have a comfortable amount of time during which to believe in Jesus Christ, but it is not an unlimited amount of time.
6. What was available to them, if they rejected the Lord during all their lives, was being burned with fire.
7. The number six is the number of man; the six days represents man and his time here on earth. During this time, he may receive the gospel of Jesus Christ; he may believe in Jesus Christ. However, after that, the judgment, and after that, burning in hell for eternity.
8. The burning of Jericho represented all of this.
9. God made the choice clear to the inhabitants of Jericho. Notice that their army did not come out to face Israel.
10. They could trust in man or they could trust in the Living God.
11. They could trust in their works (the walls of Jericho) or they could trust in the God of Israel.
12. Their walls did not keep them safe; but their walls only made them think that they were safe.
13. Their walls did not preserve their lives; their walls kept Jesus Christ out.
14. The burning of Jericho represents the burning of hellfire.
15. One more thing: Who tells us more about hellfire than anyone else in Scripture? Jesus Christ. Our Lord, as our Judge, is more qualified than any man to tell us about burning forever in the Lake of Fire. No book of Scripture and no person in Scripture spoke more about the burning of the body and soul in hell than Jesus Christ. Our Lord endured the equivalent of eternity in hell for every single one of us. All of the eternal misery which we deserve was gathered into 6 hours of time and poured out on our Lord. No one was more qualified to speak of hellfire than Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Judge; and the One who would endure hell for everyone of us.

“And it has come to pass, in a drawing out [or, prolongation] of in a horn of the jubilation, in your hearing a sound of the trumpet; all the people shout a great shout and wall of the city will fall down under it [lit., her] and the people will go up a man straight before him.”

Joshua  
6:5

“And it has come to pass, during the prolongation of the horn of the jubilation, while you are hearing the sound of the trumpet; the people will shout loudly, causing the wall of the city to collapse. Then, each man will advance on the city.”

What we find here is a more complex vocabulary and a slightly more complex sentence structure than we find in most of Joshua, although the general meaning is easy to ascertain. Let’s begin with a few other renderings:

*The Emphasized Bible*

And it shall come to pass when the ram’s horn soundeth, when ye hear the sound of the horn that all the people shall shout with a great shout,—and then shall the wall of the city fall down under it, and the people shall go up every man straight before him.

NASB

“And it shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat [lit., in its place], and the people will go up every man straight ahead [lit., before himself].”

*Young’s Lit. Translation*

‘...and it hath been, in the prolongation of the horn of the jubilee, in your hearing the voice of the trumpet, all the people shout—a great shout, and the wall of the city hath fallen under it, and the people have gone up, each over-against him.’

Now, you will notice that I don’t list five to ten different renderings. We are not as interested in getting a grasp of what is being said here, which is fairly obvious, except to garnish a few of the Hebrew nuances and usages. This verse begins with the oft-times used wâw conjunction and the Qal perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular of hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] simply means *to be*. Without a specific subject and object, it often means *and it will come to pass, then it came to pass* (with the wâw consecutive), or *it has come to pass*. Strong’s #1961 BDB #224. The perfect tense indicates a completed action, which indicates a certainty in future time. That is, God knows that this is how it will play out. He does not have to indicate that this is an incomplete action, as we often do, as it has not come to pass, but in His view, this verse had come to pass in eternity past when He set His plan in motion.

Next we have the very common bêt preposition. The preposition b<sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced *b’*] and it denotes proximity. It is translated *in, among, into, against, with, at, through, by*. When bêt is followed by an infinitive construct (as it is here), it forms a periphrasis for the gerund, generally translated as a verb and conjunction in the English. The proximity implied is more one of time. Therefore, the literal *in their being created* of Gen. 2:4 could be reasonably rendered *while they were created* or *when they were created*. What we have here in this verse is a proximity of time. No Strong’s # BDB #88. What follows is the Qal infinitive construct of mâshak<sup>e</sup> (מָשַׁךְ) [pronounced *maw-SHAK<sup>e</sup>*], which means, in general, *to draw out, to drag, to continue with something*. Its application is only a bit more difficult than that. It can mean ❶ *to draw up and lift out*; ❷ *to draw [a bow]*; ❸ *to procede, to march*; ❹ *to draw out a sound, to make a continuous sound*; ❺ *to draw out, to prolong a condition, to continue*; ❻ *and to trail seed* ( *to draw out seed while you are sowing*). Strong’s #4900 BDB #604. As we have seen many times, the infinitive construct is generally rendered *in a drawing out of*; but we have the bêt preposition again. My educated guess is that this continues the temporal nature of this future event, and would not be translated in the English. In any event, this strikes me as being a bit more complex grammar than Joshua seems to use. The next phrase is *in a horn of the ram* (or, *horn of the jubilation*). And, again, we have the bêt preposition followed by the Qal infinitive construct of *hearing*. What follows next is, literally, *a sound of the trumpet*. This gives us: “And it has come to pass, in a drawing out [or, prolongation] of in a horn of the jubilation [or, in a horn of the ram], in your hearing a sound of the trumpet.” To give a better idea of the temporal nature of the use of bêt, we could render this: “And it has come to pass, during the prolongation of the horn of the jubilation, while you are hearing the sound of the trumpet.”

the next sentence begins with the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of rûwa<sup>‘</sup> (רָוַע) [pronounced *roo-AHQ*], which means *to raise a shout, to give a blast*. This verb is found primarily in the Hiphil and not in the Qal, so our

application of the causal meaning of the Hiphil is to be inferred only inasmuch as the people are caused to shout based upon what is in their souls. In other places where this indicates a shout of victory, a shout of exaltation, etc., this is more clearly understood. Strong's #7321 BDB #929. The subject of the verb is *all of the people*, which is followed by *a great shout*. This gives us: “**All of the people will shout a great shout...**” As the NIV Study Bible rightly points out, these loud noises are as much psychological warfare as anything else, designed to strike panic into the hearts of the Amorites within the city of Jericho. You will notice that throughout the book of Joshua, we have a preservation of the lives of the Israelites. Even a perfunctory defense against the Israelites would result in the death of many of them. The inhabitants of Jericho were fully familiar with their own city and would have been able to take the lives of many Israelites had they been cool and calm about the attack of Israel. However, they saw no hope in their situation and were caused by that and the loud noises to remain in a state of unthinking, powerless panic.

This is followed by a conjunction and the Qal perfect of *nâphal* (נָפַל) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*], which means *to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply*. Strong's #5307 BDB #656. The subject is *a wall of the city*. The Hebrew does not use the definite article because the city was surrounded by one wall; so there is not a particular wall which is being referred to (with reference to Jericho). In the English, we are most comfortable with the definite article (as you will notice in even the most literal of translations).

What follows is the preposition *tachath* (תַּחַת) [pronounced *TAH-khahth*], which means *underneath, below, under beneath*. Strong's #8478 BDB #1065. With it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine suffix (which matches *a wall of the city*; giving us *under her*. Rotherham suggests that the wall fell mostly into the moat surrounding Jericho, noting that Jericho was built upon a hill.<sup>14</sup>

The subject of the next verb is *the people*, and the verb is *ʿâlâh* (עָלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*] and it means *to go up, to ascend, to rise*. Strong's #5927 BDB #748. This indicates that Jericho was probably built upon a hill or a plateau. This is followed by, literally, *a man*, which is often taken for *every man* or *each man*. This verse ends with the preposition *neged* (נֶגֶד) [pronounced *NEH-ged*], which means *what is conspicuous* when it is a substantive and, as a preposition, *in front of, in the sight of, opposite to*. Strong's #5048 BDB #617. With the preposition is the masculine singular suffix, which means that each man will advance straight ahead. This is absolutely important for the conquering of Jericho. The men of Jericho were frightened enough as it was; however, if the Israelites did not immediately advance upon the falling of the walls, their hesitation would have been perceived correctly as fear. Also, notice that God is not telling Joshua that there would a breach of the walls here or there but that every man would walk straight ahead, indicating that the entire wall surrounding Jericho would come down.

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## Joshua Conquers Jericho

**And so Joshua ben Nun called to the priests and so he said to them, “Lift up [the] ark of the covenant and seven priests will lift up seven trumpets of jubilations before faces of [the] ark of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.”**

Joshua  
6:6

**And Joshua son of Nun called to the priests, saying to them, “Lift up the ark of the covenant and let’s have seven priests lift up seven ram’s horns before the ark of Jehovah.”**

Now that we are back to Joshua’s narrative, the vocabulary and sentence structure is easier. We have one verb used in two slightly different ways here: *nâsâ’* (נָסָא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*], which means *to take up, to lift up, to bear up*. Strong's #5375 (and Strong's #4984) BDB #669. They are both physically lifting up the ark and seven priests are lifting up and sounding their trumpets (or, cornets).

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 240.

**And so they said unto the people, “Advance and encircle the city and armed ones will pass before faces of an ark of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.”**

Joshua  
6:7

**And so they said to the people, “You will advance on the city and encircle it and armed military types will pass before the ark of Jehovah.”**

In this verse, it is found as *they said* in the Masoretic text, but it is read *he said*. It is both written and read *he said* in five early printed editions, in the Aramaic, Syriac and Vulgate codices. However, what is going on is that Joshua gives the orders to the five star generals and they passed the orders on down through the ranks. So, although we do not know how for certain this read in the original text, both *he* and *they* correctly reflect the reality of what occurred.<sup>15</sup>

With regards to the guard which accompanied the ark, the NIV Study Bible writes: *The Hebrew for this term differs from that in v. 3 but may be synonymous with it. It is to be expected that the ark led the procession. If so, the present reference may be to a kind of royal guard.*<sup>16</sup> However, they reverse themselves when they call the *armed men* the main body of troops in their footnote for v. 9. Therefore, we ought to look at the Hebrew word, which is the definite article and the Qal passive participle of *châlats* (חָלַט) [pronounced *khaw-LAH TZ*], which means *to be readily prepared for war, to be equipped for war*. As a participle, it is found several times in conjunction with the main army (Num. 31:5 32:21 Joshua 4:13). Strong's #2502 BDB #323. For this reason, we should not expect that this is a specialized usage here, but, rather, a reference to the main body of troops.

Barnes and I differ slightly here—he sees the warriors marching first, the seven priests next, the ark and then the rear guard as being the order of the procession. I see the ark following behind the seven priests with a rear guard or a royal guard behind it. Behind all of this would be the troops. At some point in time, those bearing the ark and those marching with the ark will stop and the troops will march on past them in review, as it were. The key words here are the lamed preposition (BDB #510) and *pânîym* (פָּנִים) [pronounced *paw-NEEM*], which means *faces* (it is always in the plural); together, they mean *in the sight of, in the presence of, in your face, before the face of*. It does not indicate, however, that the royal guard went *before* or *in front of* the ark, but went in its presence, meaning that they were an attachment with the ark. Strong's #6440 BDB #815.

**And so it came to pass as a command of Joshua unto the people and seven the priests lifting up seven trumpets of jubilation before faces of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. They advanced and they blew in [or, with] the trumpets and an ark of a covenant of Y<sup>e</sup>howah following after them.**

Joshua  
6:8

**And as it came to pass as Joshua commanded the people and the seven priests who lifted up the seven trumpets of jubilation before the ark of Jehovah. They advanced, blowing into their trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of Jehovah following after them.**

This reads *before the faces of Y<sup>e</sup>howah* in the Masoretic text, but, as above, in five early printed editions, in the Aramaic, the Syriac and in the Vulgate codices, it is written *before the faces of the ark of Y<sup>e</sup>howah*.

One verb which we have rarely seen is the Qal perfect of *tâqa* (תָּקַע) [pronounced *taw-KAHG*], which means *to thrust, to clap, to give a blow, to give a blast*. It is used a number of different ways in the Bible. The key to the verb is its direct object. Strong's #8628 BDB #1075.

As the NIV Study Bible rightly points out, the focus of the attack upon Jericho is the ark. The armed men who will attack the city once the walls come down are mentioned several times in this chapter, but more often we hear about the ark of Jehovah. It is the God of Israel Who is besieging the city. It is the Holy God of the Universe who is using Israel as His arm to eliminate this group of terribly degenerate people from the earth, but it is God who is making the attack.

<sup>15</sup> In case you are wondering, Keil and Delitzsch go with *they said*, citing the fact that Joshua would not speak directly to the armies to levy such an order, but to his *shoterim*, those appointed to command his divisions. Given the incredible size of the army of the Israelites, Joshua would never issue an order directly to the grunts.

<sup>16</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 295.

**And the armed men were going before faces of the priests blowing the trumpets and the rear guard was coming after the ark marching and blowing the trumpets.**

Joshua  
6:9

**And the armed military type went before the presence of the priests, who were blowing the trumpets, and the rear guard came up after the ark, marching and blowing their trumpets.**

Only one verb which is difficult here: the Piel participle of  $\text{ʾāçaph}$  (אָצַף) [pronounced *aw-SAHF*], which means *transfer, transport, relocate, gather, to gather and remove, to remove*. This is a reference to those who are following the ark—they are gathering up the rear, you might say. This is translated *the rear guard* (Owen, Rotherham, NASB, NRSV and almost everyone else) and *he who is gathering up* (Young). Strong's #622 BDB #62.

Edersheim presents his view: *And now a marvellous sight would be witnessed from the walls of Jericho. Day by day, a solemn procession left the camp of Israel. First came lightly armed men, then followed seven priests blowing continually, not the customary silver trumpets, but large horns, the loud sound of which penetrated to the far distance, such as had been heard at Sinai... The same kind of horns were to be used on the first day of the seventh month (Lev. 23:24), and to announce the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:9). Thus heralded, came the Ark of Jehovah, borne by the priests, and after it "the rereward" of Israel. So they did for six days, each day once encompassing the walls of Jericho, but in solemn silence, save for the short sharp tones, or the long-drawn blasts of the priests' horns. The impression made by this long, solemn procession, which appeared and disappeared, and did its work, in solemn silence, only broken by the loud shrill notes of the horns, must have been peculiar.*<sup>17</sup>

**And the people Joshua commanded, saying, "You will not shout and your voice will not be caused to be heard and a word will not go out of your mouth until the day I say unto you, 'Shout,' and [then] you will shout."**

Joshua  
6:10

**And then Joshua commanded the people, saying, "You will not shout and your voices are not to be heard—not even a word from your mouth—until the day I tell you, 'Shout!' Then you will shout!"**

there will be a certain amount of jubilation and excitement felt by the people, particularly after marching around Jericho awhile and seeing that the inhabitants do not come out to do battle with them. In order to maintain order and to follow God's specific directions, Joshua makes it clear that the people are not to shout until he gives the command. Again, this is psychological warfare. The inhabitants of Jericho get to think this over and over in their minds, while there is deathly quiet outside. For six days, any man will have the chance to be saved. I like to think that during that time, some of the family of Rahab finally joined her, having thought through their alternatives. We are all given times of quiet reflection with which we can examine our lives and our souls and all unbelievers who have any sort of positive volition toward God at all are given that time and given the gospel.

**And so he caused an ark of Y<sup>e</sup>howah to encircle the city, going around it one time and so they came to the camp then spent the night in the camp.**

Joshua  
6:11

**And so Joshua ordered the ark of Jehovah to encircle the city, going around it but one time; then they returned to the camp and spent the night there.**

After the *wâw* consecutive, we have the Hiphil imperfect of  $\text{çâ}^b\text{va}^b\text{v}$  (צָבַח) [pronounced *saw<sup>b</sup>-VAH<sup>B</sup>V*], which means *to turn oneself, to go around, to surround, to encircle*. Strong's #5437 BDB #685. The Hiphil is the causative stem, and I so translated it. Keil and Delitzsch suggest that the Hiphil takes a more active meaning in this verse, and render this *So the ark of the Lord compassed the city...* On the one hand, *city* is preceded by the mark of a direct object; but, on the other,  $\text{çâ}^b\text{va}^b\text{v}$  occurs infrequently in the Hiphil as compared to the Qal, indicating the proper use of the stem here. Certainly the ark compasses the city as a result of the order of Joshua, who is only obeying the command of God, making the common understanding of the Hiphil stem apropos.

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 308.

As we have seen, the verb *bô* (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*], (which means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go*), carries with it the implication of the prepositions *to, in, into*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. The last verb is the Qal imperfect of *lûn* (לָוַן) [pronounced *loon*], which means *to lodge, to pass the night, to spend the night*. Strong's #3885 BDB #533.

McGee gives a rather colorful description of what is occurring: *The city of Jericho is prepared. Undoubtedly there are soldiers on the wall and watchmen at the gate. The military brass and its staff are in the city getting reports from the wall. Finally the word comes, "Here comes the enemy." Joshua and the army of Israel are marching toward the city. In front of the procession is the ark carried by the priests, and the priests carry horns. A watchman on the wall cries, "Here they come. Let's get ready. They apparently are going to attack at the gate!" So the forces of Jericho gather at the gate. They are ready for battle if the gate is broken down. Then a strange thing happens. The watchman calls down, "They're not going to attack here. They made a turn and they are going to attack at another place!" So the army on the inside shifts, and I think the march around on the inside. They are informed by those on the wall, "They are here...they are here...they are here." The Israelites go all the way around, and instead of attacking, they go back into camp! You can be sure of one thing: there is a huddle that night of the king and the military brass.*<sup>18</sup>

**And so Joshua arose early in the morning and so the priests lifted up an ark of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.**

Joshua  
6:12

**And so Joshua arose early the next morning and the priests again lifted up the ark of Jehovah.**

Again, as has been mentioned—there is only one ark of God, therefore it is not referred to with a definite article. To the Hebrews, this would be like preceding a proper noun with a definite article—it is a superfluous notion. After a good night's sleep, the Joshua gets up and commands for the process to be repeated the second day.

**And seven priests lifting seven trumpets of jubilation before faces of an ark of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, those walking [or, marching] a walk [or, those continually walking], blowing with the trumpets and the armed ones walked before their faces and the rear guard walked after an ark of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, walking on, blowing with the trumpets.**

Joshua  
6:13

**And seven priests lifted up their seven trumpets of jubilation before the ark of Jehovah—the ones marching, blowing their trumpets; and the military types walked before their faces and the rear guard followed after the ark of Jehovah, marching and blowing their trumpets.**

You will notice how this is almost a word-for-word repeat of v. 4; this is (from what I have read) typical of ancient Eastern literature.

The verb *hâlak* (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup>*], possibly Joshua's all-time favorite verb, is found five times in this verse, which is probably some sort of a record. It means *to go, to come, to depart, to walk*. Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229. We first find this verb as a masculine plural, Qal active participle followed immediately by a Qal infinitive absolute. When the infinitive absolute is used after the same verb, what is suggested is an indefinitely prolonged state of the action; that is, what is emphasized is continuance or prevalence, rather than intensification of the verb.<sup>19</sup> Besides, how the heck would you translate an intensification of *walking*? When you have tens of thousands of soldiers marching around a large city, the march is going to be a long, continuous action which never seems to stop. Why does God do this? He has told Joshua to go into the city and destroy all of the people so why does God prolong this? Is God sadistic? God is allowing time for those who are unbelievers to believe in Him. There are situations where some people, facing their imminent death, such as criminals on death row, who come to God. Unbelievers despise this. They hate the idea that someone is accepted by God after all the grief that they have caused. I will admit to some reticence here myself. However, that does not make the principle false. God takes any man as he is, no matter what he has done, no matter how moral or how immoral,

<sup>18</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 41.

<sup>19</sup> J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, p. 125.

and accepts him in the Beloved. All the person has to do is to believe in Jesus Christ and he is forgiven. I have read about one person on death row and know another one personally who committed crimes that are humanly unforgivable, but who believed in Jesus Christ and will spend eternity in heaven. Sometimes—in fact, often—their victims and the grief-stricken families of the victims, will spend eternity in hell. The key is faith in Jesus Christ. God will take any one of us if we come to Him. During this time period, God was available to all who believed in Him. We don't know how many people went to the house of Rahab and became members of the family of God. It may have just been her immediate family and perhaps there were more who came to her—in any case, those who did were spared and will spend eternity in heaven apart from the evil that we did. We all know about the thief on the cross who died in proximity to Jesus Christ, who believed in Jesus while on the cross. This man was a gangster and we have no idea how many people he killed and how much personal grief that he caused. In any case, he was saved in Christ and we will spend eternity with him as well.

**And so they encircled the city to the day the second, one time, and then returned [to] the camp; thus they did six of days.**

Joshua  
6:14

**Then they encircled the city on the second day—just one time—and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.**

Again, this matches Joshua's style exactly. He records God's commands first and then their fulfillment. McGee: *The next day the Israelites give a repeat performance. The watchman on the wall cries out, "Here they come again." Then the Israelites march around the wall and go back to camp. Each day for six days they do the same thing. By the sixth day, the midnight oil had burned long and late in the Pentagon inside Jericho. The army on the inside was tired of marching around the wall. Maybe some of the children of Israel were say, "What we are doing looks foolish!" If you had asked Joshua why he was doing this, he probably would have replied, "I take my orders from the Captain of the hosts of the Lord. This is what He has told me to do and I am doing it."*<sup>20</sup>

**And so it came to pass in the day the seventh then they arose early as a going up of the dawn and then they encircled the city as the manner the this, seven times only in the day the that, they encircled the city seven times.**

Joshua  
6:15

**And so it came to pass on the seventh day that they arose early with the dawn and they encircled the city as usual, except they encircled seven times on that day.**

About the only thing difficult to render here is the kaph preposition (*like, as*), the definite article and the masculine singular substantive *mish<sup>e</sup>pâṭ* (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced *mish-PAWT*] is a judgment or a verdict rendered by a judge (Ex. 21:31 Ezek. 44:24) (God can *be* the judge in context). It can also mean the act of deciding a case (Deut. 1:17 Prov. 16:33), or the place where a judgment is rendered (Deut. 25:1 I Kings 7:7). It can also refer to one's legal right, or one's privilege or due (Deut. 18:3 21:17 Jer. 5:28). It means *judgment, decision just decisions, judicial sentence or verdict*. Also, it can mean *manner, custom, fashion, kind, place*. Strong's #4941 BDB #1048. The second word is *zeh* (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*], which means *here, this*. It occurs twice in Deut. 13:17. This is a demonstrative pronoun and an adverb both; it can be rendered *thus*. In Job 14:3, we could get away with rendering this *such a one*. After spending some time in Strong's, Gesenius and BDB, I am not coming up with a reason to render this *then*, although several translators go with that translation in Job 9:29. Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260. These two words are rendered *according to this manner* (Young), *in the same manner* (NASB, NIV, Owen), *after this manner* (Rotherham) and *as usual* (*The Amplified Bible*). Although the others are more *literal*, so to speak, *The Amplified Bible* is probably the most accurate.

We do have an adverb here that we need to examine: *raq* (רַק) [pronounced *rahk*] means *only, provided, altogether, surely*—it carries with it restrictive force. Strong's #7534 & #7535 BDB #956. Then there appears to be a repetition of the same phrase unnecessarily here. Let me show you what others have done: *...in the same manner seven times only on that day they marched around the city seven times* (Owen); *...according to this manner, seven times; (only, on that day they have compassed the city seven times);* (Young); *...after this manner seven times,—only on that day they compassed the city seven times* (Rotherham). My only guess is that Joshua was fumbling a little with the words and thought, at first, that this might sound as though the Israelites, over a

<sup>20</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 42.

period of seven days, marched around the city seven times, so he made it clear that the march was seven times on that seventh day. McGee: *So on the seventh day the Israelites march around the wall again. The people of Jericho heave a sigh of relief when they get clear around. The army inside the wall has made its circuit too, and is relieved that it is over for the day. Everyone sits down to rest—when all of a sudden the watchman says, “Wait a minute, they are going to march around again.” So the Israelites make the circuit again. They do it a third and a fourth time...*<sup>21</sup>

Although this day was not identified as such, it would be reasonable to suppose that this was a Sabbath day—a day in which God would provide. There is a bit of practicality spoken to here as well. Since the Israelites were going to go around the city seven times, they had to get up quite early in the morning. Barnes suggests<sup>22</sup> that each go-around took perhaps an hour and a half and, with taking time out for meals, this entire scenario probably took the full day, with the attack occurring perhaps right at sunset.

Here is an interesting oddity which I picked up from the internet (bear in mind that *Jericho* means *City of the Moon*):

God's Judgment of Jericho and Numerology			
Scripture		Text/Commentary	
<b>Days 1–6</b>	The Israelites walk around the city of Jericho 6 times. Going around the city in one full circle is 360°.	6 X 360 = 2160	The <i>diameter</i> of the moon is 2160 miles.
<b>Day 7</b>	The Israelites walk around Jericho 7 times.	7 X 360 = 2520	This number indicates judgment (in this case, judgment against Jericho).

At this point, I am at somewhat of a loss. The number 2520 is a very important number in the Bible. 2520 in *lunar* years is equivalent to 2484 solar years, and 2484 years previous to this attack on Jericho, was the fall of man—man was under judgment for that time. The Tribulation will be 7 years, which appears to be lunar years, which is 2520 days (the judgment of mankind), at the end of this time, the sun become black and moon will become red, prior to the coming of Jesus Christ (Rev. 6:12). The time between Israel returning to the land (516 B.C.) and the taking back of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel was 2520 years (remember that we lose 1 year between 1 B.C. and 1 A.D.). Israel was under judgment at this time.

Take from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlj-9-BbbK8>

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

**And so it came to pass in the seventh time, the priests had blown in [or, with] the trumpets and then Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for Y<sup>e</sup>howah has given you the city;** Joshua 6:16

**And then it came to pass on the seventh go around—the priests had blown with their trumpets and Joshua then said to the people, “Shout, for Jehovah has give you the city.**

This wasn't a surprise; Joshua had already informed the people when he would come out and give the command back in v. 10. They were all expecting this; that is, he didn't suddenly run out to the people at the end and tell them to suddenly shout on a whim, but this was part of the overall plan concerning which everyone was aware. Practically, there is no way that Joshua could have shouted to where all of these people could hear. There were enough who heard who began the shout and the remainder continued it. He had seen to it that their orders were to shout at the seventh go-round.

<sup>21</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 42.

<sup>22</sup> *Barnes' Notes*, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 364.

“And it will come to pass the city, it [is] devoted—and all in it—to Y<sup>e</sup>howah; only Rahab the prostitute will live—she and all who [are] with her in the house for she hid the messengers which we sent.

Joshua  
6:17

“And it will come to pass that the entire city will be devoted to Jehovah; only Rahab, the prostitute, will be allowed to live—she and all who are with her in her house—because she hid the messengers we sent.

One of the things which some have a difficult time relating to is that a man’s word at that time was his bond. We live in a world where some people will say anything to get what they want. They will make any agreement, no matter what, because what they agree to is meaningless—they will only hold to the agreement as long as it suits their needs. They will lie to get what they want; they will like to make themselves look good (or, to keep themselves from looking bad). In other words, what a person says today cannot be depended upon, which is why we put everything into writing with signatures and witnesses, as many will make a verbal contract and then lie about it later if they want out of it. The spies spoke for Israel and made it clear that Rahab and her house would be spared for her kindness to them. Their promise was their bond; their word would stand. The real reason she was spared is that she was saved, reborn, converted, or whatever you want to call it. We’re not talking some abstruse, ethereal spiritual awakening, but she placed her faith in the God of Israel, Jesus Christ, and was saved for that reason.

In this verse, we have a mention of devoting the entire city to God. That means that we need to examine **the Doctrine of Devoting to God—begun but not finished yet!!!** What should be pointed out is that we do not have a recorded direct order from God to Joshua to place all of Jericho under the ban. Judging from the way Joshua wrote, very methodically—noting God’s orders to him, his orders to his generals, and then the fulfillment of the orders—that Joshua likely inferred this order from his study of the Law. Joshua was quite learned in this regard and knew that the firstfruits belonged to God (Deut. 18:3–5) and that the gold, silver and semi-precious metals belonged in the treasury of God (Deut. 7:25–26). If you examine those verses in context, you will find that they, by interpretation, are not pertinent here. Joshua, by application, made these verses pertinent. Why was there not a specific command in the Pentateuch to set aside the first city for God? God knew that Joshua would, through his study of the Word, correctly apply these verses in this one situation, and therefore, additional Scripture would be unnecessary.

One of the most important things for us to be able to do is to apply Scripture correctly. It takes a great deal of study and you must be willing to if not forgo, then to at least recognize the sins that you are committing for what they are. Too many people, e.g. pacifists, religious gays, anti-authority types, go to the Scripture to justify their lifestyle and their sins and they make poor application of a few Scriptures here and there without examining the entirety of God’s Word. One thing that you should know immediately is that you will not agree with everything that you find in God’s Word. You are a fallen person; you have an old sin nature. It is your nature to be in rebellion against God. If you agreed with Scripture 100%, you would not be human. There should be proclamations in there, limitations, prohibitions and/or actions by God which rub you the wrong way. That is because you are a fallen creature separated from God. So you can’t go to the Bible as a drug user, as a homosexual, as a *liberated woman*, as a criminal of any kind and expect to be fully justified by Scripture. You can certainly wrench a few Scriptures here or there that, apart from all else that is found in Scripture, seem to allow for your evil ways, but that in no way justifies them.

Rahab the prostitute is also mentioned in this verse. We studied here in great detail in Joshua 2, noting that she ended up in the line of Christ (and she is one of the very few women mentioned in the line of our Lord—Matt. 1:5).

“And only you [all] [even] you [all] keep from the devoted things lest you [have been caused to] devote [them] and you take from the devoted things and make a camp of Israel a devoted thing and bring trouble to it.

Joshua  
6:18

“And, in any case, guard yourselves from devoted things so that once you have devoted them, you do not take them into your camp and make Israel devoted to destruction, bringing trouble to it.

We actually find in this verse some moderately complex Hebrew. It begins with a conjunction and the adverb raq (רַק) [pronounced *rahk*], which means *only, provided, altogether, surely*. Here it is affixed to the wâw conjunction,

which I am certain has some affect on its meaning, but BDB and Gesenius do not mention this. Therefore, let me show you how others have rendered this combination: *but* (Owen, *The Amplified Bible*); *and surely* (Young); *and...in any wise* (KJV); *and...by all means* (NKJV); *but in anywise* (Rotherham). Obviously, we have little consensus here. In the less literal translation, I think I will go with *and, in any case*. Strong's #7534 & #7535 BDB #956.

This is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural masculine pronoun and the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative of *shâmar* (שָׁמַר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*] and it means *keep, guard, watch, preserve*. Strong's #8104 BDB #1036. Surprisingly enough, the Hebrew does not have a reflexive verb stem for the Qal stem. The Hithpael acts as a reflexive for the Piel stem and the Hiphil, under certain circumstances, can take on a reflexive meaning. Here, my first instinct is to translate this as a reflexive, rather than an intensification of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, so let me show you how others handled it: *but you, keep yourselves* (Owen); *...and surely ye have kept* (Young); *but in anywise do ye beware* (Rotherham); *and you, by all means abstain* (NKJV); *but, as for you, only keep yourselves* (NASB). However, such a reflexive use could have been accomplished with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural suffix (which we do not find). My thinking is that we are more dealing with an inadequate vocabulary on the part of Joshua more than anything else. Literally, this gives us: [And only you \[even\] you keep from...](#)

Next we have the preposition *from* and the masculine noun *chêrem* (חֵרֶם) [pronounced *KHĀ-rem*], which means ❶ *the net* of a fisherman or a fowler (Habak. 1:16–17 Ezek. 26:5 47:10); ❷ *the devoting* of something to complete destruction (Mal. 3:24 Zech. 14:11); ❸ *something devoted to complete destruction* (Deut. 7:26 I Sam. 15:21). The latter use seems to be the most common. It is something completed devoted to God or completely in God's possession, whether good or bad. Some things that were taken in battle were designated *chêrem*—they were not to be taken or used or sold by the Jews—these things were destroyed or burned. They completely belonged to God. When used in a negative sense, this word is often rendered *cursed thing*. (Deut. 7:26 13:17 Joshua 6:17–18 I Sam. 15:21). In Lev. 27:21, 28–29 Num. 18:14, *chêrem* is used in the good sense of something which has been set aside for God's exclusive ownership. Strong's #2764 BDB #356. *Chêrem* is found thrice in this verse. This is followed by the depreciating conjunction *pen* (פֶּן) [pronounced *pen*], which is best translated with the archaic Old English *lest, peradventure*. We can go with the more modern *so that + a negative*; or *else, for the aversion of, for the avoidance of, so that [you] avoid, in order to prevent*. Strong's #6435 BDB #814. Then we have the verb for *devote*: *châram* (חָרַם) [pronounced *khaw-RAM*] and, while it is usually translated *completely devoted to, devoted to, or completely destroyed*, the connection between the two concepts is that it is completely removed, either from man's use or from the planet earth. Strong's #2763 BDB #355 (& #356). Here, the Septuagint has a problem with the sentence structure. If you understand this verse as the less literal rendering that I have provided, you are less confused. [“And, in any case, guard yourselves from devoted things so that once you have devoted them, you do not take them into your camp and make Israel devoted to destruction, bringing trouble to it.”](#) It is the taking of these things into one's own tent which would bring trouble to Israel. The Septuagint, rather than use the verb *devoted*, uses the verb *to covet* instead. Even there, the meaning of the verse remains essentially unchanged.

What Israel is warned against doing is the Qal perfect of *lâqach* (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*], which means, *to take, to take from, to seize*. Strong's #3947 BDB #542. So far, we have: [And only you \[even\] you keep from the devoted things lest you \[are caused to\] devote them and you take \[or, seize\] from the devoted things...](#)

The final verb in this verse is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect of *ʿâkar* (עָכַר) [pronounced *aw-KAHR* or *gaw-KAHR*] and it means *to stir up, to disturb, to cause trouble*. Strong's #5916 BDB #747. Moses warned the Israelites about this in Deut. 7:26: [“And you will not bring an abomination into your house, and become a devoted thing like it. You will utterly detest it and you will utterly abhor it, for it is a devoted thing.”](#) We've already studied a case history of this in the **Doctrine of Devoting to God** in the previous verse. *If Israel took for herself anything that was under God's ban, she herself would fall under the ban.*<sup>23</sup> Or, whichever individual took from that which was banned, he too would also find himself under the ban, devoted to God, devoted to destruction. We will have a case history of this in the next chapter.

What was to occur in Jericho was different than what would occur throughout the Land of Canaan and in any other areas where Israel would expand to. First off, Jericho was the first-fruits of the land, and therefore was under the

<sup>23</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 296.

principle of the first-fruits. The first-fruits were to be offered exclusively to God, and then Israel was to enjoy the remainder. In this way, Israel recognized her Lord of the Armies. “You will not delay your harvest and your vintage; the first-born of your sons you will give to Me. You will do the same with your oxen, with your sheep. It will be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day, you will give it to Me.” (Ex. 22:29–30). “You will bring the very first of the first-fruits of your soil into the house of Jehovah your God.” (Ex. 34:26a). In general, the conquering of cities was to be as we find in Deut. 20:10–20: “When you approach a city to fight against it, you will offer it terms of peace. And it will come to pass, if it agrees to make peace with you and opens to you, then it will come to pass that all the people who are found in it will become your forced labor and they will serve you. If, however, it does not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you will besiege it. When Jehovah your God gives it into your hand, you will strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword. Only the women and the children and the animals and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you will take as booty for yourself, and you will use the spoil of your enemies which Jehovah your God has given you. Thus you will do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations nearby. Only in the cities of these peoples that Jehovah your God is giving you as an inheritance, you will not leave alive anything that breathes, but you will utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as Jehovah your God has commanded you, in order that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against Jehovah your God. When you besiege a city a long time, to make war against it in order to capture it, you will not destroy its trees by swing an axe against them; for you may eat from them, and you will not cut them down, for is the tree of the field a man, that it should be besieged by you? Only the trees which you know are not fruit trees you will destroy and cut down, that you may construct siege works against the city that is making war with you until it falls.”

**“And all silver and gold and artifacts of bronze and iron are sacred to Y<sup>e</sup>howah; a treasury of Y<sup>e</sup>howah they will go.”**

Joshua  
6:19

**“And all of the silver and gold and artifacts of bronze and iron are sacred to Jehovah; they will be placed in a treasury for Jehovah.”**

Throughout the Old Testament, there are analogies to what we learn in the new. The Canaanites—the inhabitants of Jericho—represent are old natures, our sin natures; and most of what they have produced is analogous to sin and human good. However, that which has inherent value, divine good, is preserved for and by God. **According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built upon it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be delivered, yet so as through fire** (I Cor. 3:10–15).

There is also some practicality here. When certain things are burned, they change composition dramatically (like wood and paper). However, the most that will happen to the gold or silver is that they will melt. With regards to the word generally translated *vessels*, this is the Hebrew word *kēlîy* (כֵּלִי) [pronounced *k<sup>e</sup>lee*], which is an all-purpose word standing for anything which has been finished, made or produced. It could be translated *an article, utensil, vessel, object, stuff, load, baggage, implement, apparatus, weapon, furniture, receptacle*. In the ancient world, a vessel was used for a great many things and it could take all shapes, forms and sizes. Things were stored in vessels, including food, utensils, clothing; vessels were used to carry liquid, to be used to drink from, to be used as food containers for a meal. They had such a wide variety of uses, that anything connected with a particular function in life was grouped under the general title of *vessel*. However, even that understanding of the word does not fully explain its wide usage in the ancient world. It doesn't matter that some of the items alluded to were not themselves vessels; a more modern rendering might be *accessories, articles, artifacts, instruments, equipment, manufactured goods*. This refers to anything which has been manufactured, including *clothing* (Deut. 22:5) and *jewelry and accessories*. Strong's #3627 BDB #479. You may recalled the slaughter of Midian by Moses and the Israelites: **And the sons of Israel captured the women of Midian and their little ones; and all their cattle and all their flocks and all their goods, they plundered. Then they burned all their cities where they lived and all their camps with fire...Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to battle, “This is the statute of the law which Jehovah has commanded Moses: only the gold and the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tine and the lead—everything that can**

stand the fire, you will pass through the fire, and it will be clean, but it will be purified with water for impurity. But whatever cannot stand the fire, you will pass through the water.” (Num. 31:9–10, 21–23).

**And so the people were caused to shout and then they blew in [or, with] the trumpets and so it came to pass in a hearing of a sound of the trumpet and then the people were caused to raise up a great shout, then the wall fell down under it [lit., under her] and then the people went up [into] the city a man straight before him and so they captured the city.**

Joshua  
6:20

**So the people were caused to shout. When they blew with their trumpets, and when the people heard the trumpet, they shouted aloud and the wall fell down. Then the warriors went directly into the city, each man walking straight ahead, capturing the city.**

Because of Joshua’s writing style, what we have here are sentences which are pretty much word-for-word what we already have studied. And, before I go into details concerning this verse, I might as well include what one of the detractors of Scripture maintains. Manfred Barthel’s explanation of this portion of Scripture is that the walls of Jericho had fallen down prior to this attack due to an earthquake. In fact, he asserts that both Jericho and Ai are both ghost towns at this time. The Israelites had no walls to go through because they were already down. This is also true of the walls of Ai, Barthel asserts.<sup>24</sup> All of this other stuff is made up. For many detractors of Scripture, they take the portion of Scripture that they like and run with it and throw out whatever portion offends their sensibilities. Barthel offers no explanation for his views nor does he substantiate his stand. In this same section, Barthel says that Rahab was included in the line of Christ because prostitution was a perfectly legitimate occupation that people from that era accepted. Including her name in the line of Christ was not a testimony to God’s grace, but rather no different than including the name of an accountant or an historian. The unbeliever, which Barthel is, does not want to be accountable to God as God really is. So, the solution of the very intelligent unbeliever is to keep the portions of the Bible that they like (which is very little), throw out the portions that they do not like (which is most of it), and to force as much of it as possible into the mold of their old sin nature. So, if Barthel was a very moral man who fought for his country in a war, then he would have little problem with Joshua’s destruction of the people in Jericho, but he would assert that Rahab was an innkeeper and not a prostitute. However, since Barthel was an immoral pacifist, then he would characterize what Joshua did as *bloody* but accept the occupation of Rahab as being as reasonable as any other occupational choice. Barthel: *We might take it to mean that the authors of the Old Testament did not regard the practice of the oldest profession as anything unusual or even disreputable. Among the worshipers of Baal, as with the Babylonians of Herodotus’s time, temple prostitution was an honorable, even an obligatory, form of service to their god, and ritual intercourse was a perfectly legitimate means of achieving communion with the godhead.*<sup>25</sup> You will notice that Barthel made an easy transition from the immoral practices of the heathen to supposing that the authors of the Old Testament also gave approval to similar activity.

A true Bible expositor will go with whatever is in the text, subject to textual criticism, despite how much he agrees or disagrees with it. J. Vernon McGee was not anti-war, but he certainly made it clear that he was unqualified to go to war. However, he never let this color his teaching of Scripture. He called himself a coward and yet developed Scripture properly. He did not have a need to justify his cowardice by altering Scripture.

The last phrase has the Qal imperfect of *lâkad* (לָקַד) [pronounced *law-KAHD*], which means *to capture, to seize, to take*. Strong’s #3920 BDB #539.

According to *The Amplified Bible* the important details found in this portion of the Bible have been fully substantiated by Dr. J. B. Garstang in his excavations of Jericho. Jericho had been completely burned by fire, but not plundered entirely.<sup>26</sup> For instance, there was stored grain which was burned, but undisturbed (when a city is taken, it is out of the ordinary to leave the foodstuffs). The silver, gold and bronze vessels were all missing, which would have been

<sup>24</sup> See Manfred Barthel, *What the Bible Really Says*; ©1982; © by Quill; pp. 130–132.

<sup>25</sup> Manfred Barthel, *What the Bible Really Says*; ©1982; © by Quill; p. 133.

<sup>26</sup> You will recall at the beginning of this book, there was mention made of excavations which were not pertinent to this time period which were still applied to this time period. I do not know who is right in this case, but I pass along the information nonetheless.

expected, even if the Israelites had not taken them. The walls had fallen, but the gate remained standing. There were sturdy houses built into the walls of the city. *The gate tower was "an imposing edifice" 54 ft. by 24 ft., remarkably well built of gray brick. Its ruins still stand 16 ft. high.* There is a mountain on one side of Jericho, a mountain ride which is found a mile west of the city.<sup>27</sup> Zodhiates adds that *the most recent archaeological research at Jericho has confirmed the Bible's account that the city was destroyed around 1400 B.C.*<sup>28</sup>

Let's go into a little more detail now. First thing that you need to know is that modern scholarship will, whenever possible, attempt to discredit the Biblical version. Some modern archaeologists go under the assumption that the Bible is a religious book filled with inaccuracies to support the religious views therein. Some archaeologists actually have a negative attitude toward the Bible to begin with and will look to discredit it whenever possible. And certainly there are some zealous believers who will look to make any archaeological discovery bear witness to the Scriptures, just as there are scientists who look to make any fossil a *proof* of evolution. That people have made up their minds apart from the facts as human nature. *As one academician recent quipped, "All the shouting and trumpet blowing tin the world will not cause fifteen-foot thick walls to collapse. The whole Joshua/Jericho account is just religious legend."*<sup>29</sup> Such views obviously belie the predisposition that God does not directly involve Himself in our lives (or that God does not exist). You must bear in mind that it is not easy to sort through these differing views.

*After the 1550 B.C. destruction of Jericho, the only Late Bronze Age occupation verified by archeological evidence dates mainly between 1400 and 1350 B.C. There was a definite abandonment of the town between 1550 B.C. and 1400 B.C. occupation. Tomb material also supports this period of occupation.*<sup>30</sup> After this period of time, while the Israelites were conquering Palestine, some pottery has been recovered indicating that there was some sort of occupation for the next several hundred years, but apparently not as a well-fortified city. Joshua will later in this chapter pronounce a curse upon the man who rebuilds the walls of Jericho, and they will remain unbuilt for 500 years. The history of Jericho continued down throughout the ages; however, that is another story for another time. Its significance, however, was never as great again as it was in the book of Joshua.

One of my sources not only had the walls identified, but seemed to know a great deal about the city's walls. *Jericho is one of the oldest cities in the world and one of the best fortified. The outer wall surrounded the city with stone about twelve feet high. In back of that there was an inner mud-brick wall about eighteen feet high. Behind that wall there was a sloping earthen embankment going around the inside of the entire city. At the top of the embankment was another mud-brick wall approximately fifteen feet high, below which the houses of Jericho's outcasts were placed. This is where the harlot Rahab no doubt lived. Archaeologists found the base of the outer wall had collapsed into piles of bricks.*<sup>31</sup> These brick walls were concentric circles around Jericho and were about 10–12 feet apart. Keller says that the inner walls was 12 feet thick and that the outer wall was 6 feet thick and 25–30 feet high.<sup>32</sup> I cannot account for the difference between the two figures except that maybe from the outside, the outer wall would require one to scale 25–30 feet; and from the inside that may have been only 12 feet high. The two leaders of a German-Austrian expedition, Professor Ernst Sellin and Professor Karl Watzinger, who examined this area in the early 1900's, maintained that the outer wall of Jericho fell about 1200 B.C. and was therefore the wall destroyed before Joshua. This apparently was a change from their original opinions.

In 1930, Professor John Garstang led an expedition of Jericho, and, after six years of digging, located another set of walls. His observations: *"The space between the two walls is filled with fragments and rubble. There are clear traces of a tremendous fire, compact masses of blackened bricks, cracked stones,*

<sup>27</sup> This information came from *The Amplified Bible*, The Lockman Foundation; ©1965 by Zondervan Publishing House; p. 264. They in turn got their information from *The Story of Jericho* by Garstang and from *Archaeology and Bible History* by Joseph P. Free.

<sup>28</sup> *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 583.

<sup>29</sup> *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 182.

<sup>30</sup> Most of this section on Jericho was either paraphrased or quoted directly from *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 3, pp. 451–455.

<sup>31</sup> *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 183.

<sup>32</sup> Werner Keller, *The Bible as History* (second revised edition), p. 160.

charred wood and ashes. Along the walls the houses have been burned to the ground and their roofs have crashed on top of them.”<sup>33</sup> At that time, most agreed that the inner ring was the one destroyed by Joshua. Garstang dated the destruction of this inner wall at about 1400 B.C. He came upon this date partially based upon the scarabs that he found in the ombs which were opened up near Jericho. Another archeologist, Father Hugues Vincent, dates their destruction at 1250–1200 B.C.

Keller: *Today we know that both experts were mistaken. Since their day, archaeologists have developed methods which allow us to understand excavation sites much better than was the case a few decades ago. Professor Garstang and Father Hugues Vincent both thought that walls from the early Bronze age belonged to the late Bronze Age. Today we know that this is not so. This mistake occurred because wind and weather had largely carried away the more recent layers which covered the earliest remains. It is in one area only, at the highest place on Tell-es-Sultan, on the northwest of the heap of ruins, that the remains of middle Bronze Age defence works, built on top of what is left of early Bronze Age walls, have been preserved at their full height. Scanty vestiges of late Bronze Age dwellings have been found only on the lower eastern slopes of the hill. We owe all this information to the great British archaeologist Kathleen M. Kenyon who by her extensive and successful excavations in Jericho during the fifties of the present century laid the foundations of our present-day knowledge. It was Kathleen M. Kenyon, too, who convincingly interpreted the very small amount of potter found at Jericho. She was also able to interpret the information provided by the graves which constitute the only evidence concerning the late period of ancient Jericho. According to her findings the walls of Jericho had to be rebuilt during the Bronze Age no less than seventeen times. The walls were repeatedly destroyed wither by earthquakes or by erosion. Perhaps this weakness of the walls of Jericho found expression in the Bible account of how the children of Israel, in order to conquer Jericho, merely had to shout their war cry when the priests blow the trumpets. The middle Bronze Age city dated from the time of the Hyksos and came to an end at the same time as they, around 1550 B.C. Thereafter Jericho remained uninhabited for about a century and a half. It is only about the year 1400 B.C., as is shown by pottery, objects founds in graves and the few late Bronze Age remains of dwellings on the eastern slope of the hill, that people began to settle there once more. This late Bronze age town, of whose existence we have only such sparse evidence, was again deserted by it inhabitants, however, around 1325 B.C.*<sup>34</sup>

Modern scholarship likes to place the events of this chapter right around the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. However, at the beginning of this century, John Garstang did one of the most thorough examinations of cemetery in connection with City IV at Tell es-Sultan, which is agreed by most to be the site of the Old Testament Jericho. He places the date of the events of this chapter right around 1400 B.C., which is in accord with 1446 B.C. date of the exodus. A scarab is a beetle whose image the Egyptians used as a seal, a symbol, and as an amulet. At the bottom of these small amulets was often the name of one of the pharaohs of Egypt. Garstang discovered that among the many scarabs discovered in the graves of that cemetery, none of them date from a period later than Amenhotep III of Egypt (1412–1376 B.C.). Another source claims that the latest pharaoh whose name was found on these amulets died in 1349 B.C. This could have been the same pharaoh, but I think instead there is a discrepancy of the dates. In either case, it would be possible to date the graves as circa 1400 B.C. If the destruction of this site occurred in the mid-1200's, then we are at a loss to explain why no scarabs are found from the numerous Pharaohs who lived between Amenhotep III and Ramses II. There were also 150,000 fragments of pottery discovered in this cemetery and only one single sherd is of the Mycenaean type. Since Mycenaean pottery began to be imported into Palestine from around 1400 B.C. and onward, we would be hard-pressed to explain why virtually no Mycenaean pottery was found in this cemetery of City IV unless it was *abandoned* around 1400 B.C.

Kathleen Kenyon was a later archaeologist who investigated Tell es-Sultan. She questioned Garstang's identification of the fallen walls to City IV because the earth-fill of those walls contained pottery fragments from a period of time a centuries earlier than 1400 B.C. She *affirmed right up to her death in 1978 that the evidence for a conquest of this city during the days of Joshua was plain missing.*<sup>35</sup> According to the book *When Critics Ask*, she

<sup>33</sup> Werner Keller, *The Bible as History* (second revised edition), p. 161.

<sup>34</sup> Werner Keller, *The Bible as History* (second revised edition), p. 162.

<sup>35</sup> *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 182.

confirmed that there had been an ancient city Jericho which was suddenly destroyed, but that particular city could not have existed any later than circa 1550 B.C., which would have been much too early for Joshua to have conquered it. However, these pottery fragments at best place an upper bound for the original construction of these walls, rather than identify when they fell. Archer illustrates by noting that if the walls of Avila in Spain or of Carcassonne in France fell today do to an earthquake, a similar conclusion of archaeological evidence would compel us to believe that they actually fell centuries ago. Archer: *No discovery of Kenyon or Vincent—or any other excavator at that site who came there with a prior a commitment to a 1250 date for the Israelite conquest of Canaan—as ever been able to shake the objective findings of Garstang and his team in regard to the scarabs and sherds found in the City IV cemetery.*<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, Kenya based her conclusion on a very limited excavation area (two 26-foot squares), and her dating was based solely on the fact that she failed to find any expensive, imported pottery from Cyprus, which was common to the Late Bronze I period (that is, the days of Joshua). But she grounded this conclusion on a small excavation area in an impoverished part of the city, a city obviously situated far away from the major trade routes.<sup>37</sup> What she did allow, however, is that there was one portion of a building remaining which could be dated to 1300 B.C.; this combined with Garstang's discovery of pottery from that same era places a population in Jericho at the time of the invasion by Israel. However, we know nothing about what these people were like. Millard in his book has a very instructive cross section of the excavation completed by Kathleen Kenyon, which gives us an idea of the amount of real evidence that we are actually dealing with.<sup>38</sup> Let me add here a quote from ZPEB: *Kenyon believe her excavations have shown that the strong Middle Bronze Age Hyksos city lay abandoned from c. 1550 to c. 1400 B.C. Most of the evidence for a town during the Late Bronze Age had been removed by previous expeditions or had disappeared through erosion. But burials in tombs and stratification on the town site (a portion of a house floor with an oven and juglet) testify to occupation in the Late Bronze Age II. Miss Kenyon dates this to the 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C., but not the 13<sup>th</sup>. Her dating, based on meager evidence, is within fifty years of the early date of the Conquest, but clearly does not aid the late date theory.*<sup>39</sup> A third evangelical archaeologist (so you know his predisposition), Bryant G. Wood argues that the ceramic evidence confirms a date during the 1450–1400 B.C. time period.

Will Durant, while not discounting Garstang's findings and his interpretation thereof, writes: *[Garstang] believes the material found in these tombs confirms the story of the fall of Jericho (Joshua vi); he dates this fall ca. 1400 B.C., and the Exodus ca. 1447 B.C. As this chronology rests upon the precarious dating of scarabs and pottery, it must be received with respectful scepticism.*<sup>40</sup>

Archer suggests for further reading his own *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, pp. 223–234, or John Bimson's work, *Redating the Exodus and the Conquest*; Sheffield; the University of Sheffield, 1978. *Bimson shows how much of the archaeological evidence has been systematically manipulated by a process of circular reasoning on the part of the leading interpreters of archaeological data. He reviews the objective testimony of the stratigraphy and the artifacts and comes to a firm conclusion in favor of the fifteenth century date of the Israelite Exodus and conquest of Canaan. This discussion is all the more impressive since Bimson himself does not hold to an Evangelical view of the inerrancy of Scripture but feels compelled to set the record straight so far as archaeology is concerned.*<sup>41</sup>

McGee on the archeological evidence: *The walls of Jericho fell down flat. I had the privilege of going to Jericho with a very special Arab guide who had worked with both John Garstang and Kathleen Kenyon who had led archaeological expeditions in unearthing the ancient city of Jericho. Garstang and Miss Kenyon disagreed as to the dates of the wall. But it had fallen down and was flat—that as obvious. Since the Arab guide had worked with both expeditions, I asked him what he thought as to the date of ancient Jericho. He went along with Garstang, and his reasoning was that when Garstang got there, he was probably not*

<sup>36</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; p. 157, which is also from whence much of this material was gleaned.

<sup>37</sup> *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 182.

<sup>38</sup> Alan Millard; *Treasures from Bible Times*; ©1985 by Lion Publishing; p. 98.

<sup>39</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 3, p. 707.

<sup>40</sup> *The Story of Civilization*; Volume I *Our Oriental Heritage*; Will Durant; MJF Books; ©1963; p. 302.

<sup>41</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; p. 157.

as scientific and didn't do quite the job that Miss Kenyon did. Because he disturbed everything, it would be impossible for anyone coming later to arrive at an accurate estimation. Well, I'll let them argue that. All I'm interested in is that the Word of God says the walls fell down flat—and the evidence is there today. The faith of the believer does not rest upon the shovel of the archaeologist. **“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days”** (Hebrews 11:30).<sup>42</sup> Durant, while not mentioning any archaeologist by name, writes concerning these disagreements: *It becomes apparent that the different dates at which we begin the history of these peoples are merely the marks of our ignorance.* He then footnotes the following: *The discoveries here summarized have restored considerable credit to those chapters of Genesis that record the early traditions of the Jews. In its outlines, and barring supernatural incidents, the story of the Jews as unfolded in the Old Testament has stood the test of criticism and archeology; every year adds corroboration from documents, monuments, or excavations... We must accept the Biblical account provisionally until it is disproved.*<sup>43</sup> For a first-rate historian who throws out the miraculous, that is a pretty strong statement.

You may recall that *Hard Sayings of the Bible* gave a fairly specific description of these walls. Around the perimeter of the city was a twelve foot wall of stone. On the other side of this wall was a mud-brick wall which was 18 ft. high. Behind that wall was a sloping earthen embankment which went around the inside of the entire city. At the top of the embankment was another 15 ft. high mud-brick wall. The authors ask: *So how did the Israelites get over these walls? If an earthquake was responsible for stopping up the Jordan River as the Israelites crossed over in the days just prior to the siege of Jericho (Josh 3:16), it is reasonable to assume that the same earthquake left cracks and serious fissures in the walls of Jericho. Some think there is evidence for an earthquake of the magnitude of 8.0 on the Richter scale (a quake, if that estimate is correct, that would match the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco). When a further quake at the time of the Israelites' seventh circling of the city on the seventh day hit (or, alternatively, as a result of aftershocks on the already weakened walls from the previous earthquake), the mud-brick walls collapsed over the out stone wall, forming a ramp for the Israelites to go up and enter the city and set it on fire. All archaeologists attest that there were great quantities of grain found within the city, indicating both that it was a very short siege and that the normal looting and plundering of whatever grain remained was not carried out since the Israelites were under an interdict that nothing should be taken; it was dedicated to the Lord for destruction (herem).*<sup>44</sup> *Hard Sayings of the Bible* adds that there have been Carbon-14 tests done from organic material from that Jericho site which gave a 1410 B.C. date, plus or minus 40 years.

### Evidence of the Biblical View of the Destruction of Jericho

In a paper published in the *Biblical Archaeology Review* (March/April, 1990), Bryant Wood, a visiting professor to the department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Toronto, gave evidence that the Biblical account was accurate, making note of the following:

<sup>42</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 43.

<sup>43</sup> *The Story of Civilization; Volume I Our Oriental Heritage*; Will Durant; MJF Books; ©1963; p. 300.

<sup>44</sup> *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 183.

1. The city which once existed on this site was strongly fortified, corresponding to the Biblical record of Joshua 2:5, 7, 15 6:5, 20.
2. There was evidence from the ruins that the city was attacked shortly after the spring harvest, which lines up with Joshua 2:6 3:15 5:10
3. The inhabitants did not flee the city with their foodstuffs in anticipation of a siege (Joshua 6:1).
4. The siege was brief, since the inhabitants of the city Jericho did not consume the grain which they had harvested (Joshua 6:15).
5. The walls were leveled in such a way that the invaders had access to the city (Joshua 6:20).
6. The city had not been plundered by invaders—the grain, for instance, was still there, which is unusual. An invading army would have certainly taken the foodstuffs. However, God had forbade the taking of anything from Jericho, save the metals which would not perish in a fire (Joshua 6:17–18).
7. The city was burned after the walls had been destroyed, which is in accord with Joshua 6:24.<sup>45</sup>

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Let me add to the above that it is generally agreed that Jericho was not occupied from around the late 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C. for awhile and that it was not until the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C., during the rule of King Ahab, that the walls were re- built once again.

Barnes views this as clearly miraculous, that God pulled the walls down. I personally have no problems with God performing a miracle. Recording a miraculous incident does not make the recording of the event any less accurate or historical. Here we are not given any details that would suggest that a miracle did or did not occur. Obviously, a very localized earthquake would have accomplished this task and God could have timed everything so that the seventh march around the city occurred simultaneously with the earthquake and on the other hand, He could have pulled the walls down Himself. I am not looking to de-miraculize Scripture, nor am I looking to insert a miracle where there is none. In either case, we are seeing the incredible power of God, which is where our focus should be. *“It is impossible,” says Hess, “to imagine a more striking way, in which it could have been shown to the Israelites that Jehovah had given them the town. Now the river must retire to give them an entrance into the land, and now again the wall of the town must fall to make an opening into a fortified place. Two such decisive proofs of the co-operation of Jehovah so shortly after Moses’ death, must have furnished a pledge, even to the most sensual, that the same God was with them who had led their fathers so mightily and so miraculously through the Red Sea.”*<sup>46</sup>

That the walls had to come down is obvious. The Israelites, although recently in battle on the other side of the Jordan, were an essentially peaceful people up until this time, a nomadic people whose skills were wilderness survival rather than war. Despite the fact that they certainly outnumbered the Amorites in Jericho and despite the fact that the Amorites were severely afraid of them, the Israelites had no skill in scaling walls as those found around Jericho. They had no means of toppling said walls. The best they could hope for, given their own abilities, was to (a) remain on the outside until the inhabitants of Jericho starved; or, (b) build some sort of ladder—and many of those—and use them to scale the walls, which would entail a great loss of manpower. The first several thousand Israelites that went up those ladders would essentially be unprotected and facing certain death. God did not raise up two million Israelites in Egypt simply to kill a large portion of them off with every invasion. Furthermore, this miraculous-in-appearance success told the Canaanites throughout the Land of Promise that God was clearly on the side of the Israelites. Such a victory was clearly more than man over man, and, as such, does not require God to have used *natural* means or a miracle. Often, as we see here, the distinction is immaterial. What is important is

<sup>45</sup> This list was paraphrased from *When Critics Ask*; Geisler and Howe, ©1992, Victor Books, p. 137.

<sup>46</sup> Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 50. Hess in another expositor with whom I am unfamiliar.

that the gods of the inhabitants of Jericho were no match whatsoever with the God of Joshua. This miracle, or mighty work of God, is attested to in Heb. 11:30: **By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days.**

McGee: *We hear the song, “Joshua Fight the Battle of Jericho.” The question is—did he? No, he did not. He didn’t fight at all. He just marched around the city. Who did the fighting? God did that, friends. And I think any other explanation is ridiculous. Some say that an earthquake took place at that psychological moment when the priests blew the trumpets and all the people shouted, and the shock toppled the walls. Others say that the constant marching of the children of Israel around the wall loosened the wall and it fell down. Well, you can believe that if you want to. I like the way it is told in the Word of God. God got the victory; Israel got the possession. A great problem that many believers have today is that they are trying to “fight the battle of Jericho” and overcome the world. But you and I need to start taking orders from the Captain up yonder, the Captain of our salvation.<sup>47</sup>*

Keil and Delitzsch: [For]...*the reason why God gave up this town to the Israelites without any fighting on their part, through the miraculous overthrow of their walls...we [will] have to look for in the fact that Jericho was not only the first, but the strongest town of Canaan, and as such was the key to the conquest of the whole land, the possession of which would open the way to the whole, and give the whole, as it were, into their hands. The Lord would give His people the first and strongest town of Canaan, as the first-fruits of the land, without any effort on their part, as a sign that He was about to give them the whole land for a possession, according to His promise; in order that they might not regard the conquest of it as their own work, or the fruit of their own exertions, and look upon the land as a well-merited possession which they could do as they pleased with, but that they might ever use it as a gracious gift from the Lord, which He had merely conferred upon them as a trust, and which He could take away again, whenever they might fall from Him, and render themselves unworthy of His grace. This design on the part of God would of necessity become very obvious in the case of so strongly fortified a town as Jericho, whose walls would appear impregnable to a people that had grown up in the desert and was so utterly without experience in the art of besieging or storming fortified places, and in fact would necessarily remain impregnable, at all events for a long time, without the interposition of God.<sup>48</sup>*

Now, Keil and Delitzsch suddenly pose the questions *why march around the city for seven days, why shout and why use the trumpets?*<sup>49</sup> And, let me add, why the seven priests? Prior to reading these questions, I thought that I had explained everything rather well, so far; and then I realized that I had left out that which was central to the falling of the walls of Jericho. So let me try to tie up these loose ends prior to the next verse. The seven days represents God’s perfection and God’s work. God delivered the city on the seventh day, which indicates that it was completely His work and not the work of man. This also gave the family of Rahab time to think over their decision and to move in with their daughter. If we are going to go positive toward God, He will allow us the time to think it through and to make the correct decision. Insofar as the shouting and the trumpets are concerned, we have almost a full seven days of quiet marching around Jericho, and the sudden noise, collapse of the walls, and attack by the Israelites psychologically paralyzes the inhabitants of Jericho, who offer little or no resistance to the onslaught, making them easy prey for a company of men not well-trained in warfare.

Keil and Delitzsch offer a reasonable explanation for the horns. The trumpet blast announced the presence of God. The first time that the Israelites heard this blast was from Mount Sinai. **So it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and he stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him with thunder** (Ex. 19:16–19). Whereas, this is not the only place where the Israelites heard the blast of the trumpet, we can assume that one of the meanings of this sound was the presence of God. This ingrained into their minds that not only was God present, but that He was doing all of the work. *Thus the fall of fall of Jericho became the symbol*

<sup>47</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 43.

<sup>48</sup> Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 50.

<sup>49</sup> Paraphrased from Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 51.

and type of the overthrow of every worldly power before the Lord, when He should come to lead His people into Canaan and establish His kingdom upon earth. On the ground of this event, the blowing of trumpets is frequently introduced in the writings of the prophets, as the signal and symbolical omen of the manifestations of the Lord in great judgments, through which He destroys one worldly power after another, and thus maintains and extends His kingdom upon earth, and leads it on towards that completion to which it will eventually attain when He descends from heaven in His glory at the time of the last trump, with a great shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, to raise the dead and change the living, to judge the world, cast the devil, death, and hell into the lake of fire, create a new heaven and new earth, and in the new Jerusalem, erect the tabernacle of God among men for all eternity (I Cor. 15:51ff.; I Thess. 4:16, 17; Rev. 20 and 21).<sup>50</sup>

Keil and Delitzsch again: *The appointment of the march round Jericho, which was to be continued for seven days, and to be repeated seven times on the seventh day, was equally significant. The number seven is a symbol in the Scriptures of the work of God and of the perfection already produced or to be eventually secured by Him; a symbol founded upon the creation of the world in six days, and the completion of the works of creation by the resting of God upon the seventh day.*<sup>51</sup> The Israelites did no work. They all wandered around the wall six times and then another seven times on the seventh day. Six, the number of man, caused them to fully observe the fortress which was Jericho, to see that there was no way for them to enter into Jericho. Each and every soldier, as he marched around Jericho, looked carefully for the wall the breach, for the entry which could be made, and as they walked by every linear foot of the walled city, it was clear to them that from a human standpoint, there was nothing that they could do, other than face a tremendous loss of life in order to storm this fortress.

One of the things that we must keep in mind is that what God demands to have on earth is often a shadow or an image of what is in heaven and some of these shadows we will not see until we are in heaven. **Now the main point in what has been said: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; hence, it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. Now, if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; who serve as a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for "See," He says, "that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain."** (Heb. 8:1–5 Ex. 25:40). The seven priests and the seven horns standing before the ark are very similar to the seven angels with the seven horns standing before the throne of God, ready to blow their horns to announce judgment upon the earth. **And I saw the seven angels who stand before God; and seven trumpets were given to them...And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. And the first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burnt up and a third of the trees were burnt up, and all the green grass was burnt up. And a second angel sounded and a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood; and a third of the creatures, which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed. And the third angel sounded and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the lakes; and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter. And the fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them might be darkened and the day might not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. And I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in mid-heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"** (Rev. 8:2, 6–13).

Edersheim: *The blast of those jubilee-horns all around the doomed city made proclamation of Jehovah, and was, so to speak, the summons of His kingdom, proclaiming that the labour and sorrow of His people were at an end, and they were about to enter upon their inheritance. This was the symbolical and typical import of the blasts of the jubilee-horns, whenever they were blown...[and] the advent of the kingdom of God always implies destruction to His enemies. Accordingly, the walls of Jericho must fall, and all the city be destroyed..The suddenness of the ruin of Jericho, which typified the kingdom of this world in its opposition to that of God, as also its counterpart at the end*

<sup>50</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, pp. 51–52.

<sup>51</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 52.

of the present dispensation. For *“the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night; and when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon woman with child; and they shall not escape.”* (paraphrase of I Thess. 5:2–3).<sup>52</sup>

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## Rahab’s Family Is Delivered Joshua Pronounces a Curse upon Anyone Who Rebuilds Jericho

**And so they completely devoted all which [was] in the city from man and unto, from young and unto old and unto oxen and sheep and asses to a mouth of a sword.**

Joshua  
6:21

**And so they completely destroyed everything which was in the city from men to women, from the young to the old, to the oxen, sheep, and asses all with the edge of the sword.**

We have an interesting construction here in the Hebrew—the combination of the min preposition (*from*), the wâw conjunction and the preposition ʿad (אד) [pronounced *ad*], which means *as far as, even to, up to, until, while*. (Strong’s #5704 BDB #723). Our understanding of these together would be *from...to* as in *from soup to nuts*. This was God’s direct command—to completely annihilate everything in the city, with the exception of the silver, gold and bronze, and the Israelites obeyed that command.

The *mouth* of the sword refers to the sword eating the lives of those before it, much like a wild beast kills by attacking and eating its prey. The mouth of the sword devours the enemy. Moses was quite specific in the taking of this land. In one of his last messages to the people, he said, *“When Jehovah your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and strong than you; and when Jehovah your God delivers them before you, and you defeat them, then you will utterly destroy them. You will not make a covenant with them and you will show them no grace.”* (Deut. 7:1–2). And again in Deut. 20:16–18: *“Only in the cities of these peoples that Jehovah your God is giving you as an inheritance, you will no leave alive anything that breathes, but you will utterly destroy [or, devote] them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as Jehovah your God has commanded you, so that they will not be able to teach you to do according to all the detestable things which they do for their gods, so that you do not sin against Jehovah your God.”*

At this point, many people object to Joshua’s wholesale slaughter of the people of Jericho, including the children, as needlessly harsh. First of all, your problem is not with Joshua but with God. Joshua was following the orders which God delivered to him. What Joshua had done thus far in response to God’s orders would have seemed to be pretty unusual. He has two million people who he rouses one day and they stand on the shore of the Jordan River during the torrent season and he sends his priests carrying an ark out to the water to stand as a prelude to crossing the Jordan. Then, in order to conquer the well-fortified city of Jericho, Joshua sends his troops marching around the walls again with the ark of God for seven days. These are not tactics that I would have chosen in order to enter the Land of Canaan and then to conquer its most fortified city. However, Joshua simply did what God told him to do. Our lives are quite simple. There are a great many mandates in God’s Word that if we followed them, we would eliminate about 90% of the problems that we have. A very small example: if we as a society obeyed God’s laws in the realm of our sexual behavior—that is, if we had sex only within the confines of marriage, if we did not divorce and if we did not engage in homosexual behavior—we would virtually wipe out sexually transmitted diseases in a generation; we would raise a generation of well-adjusted children (which we have not had for decades), we would almost eliminate the AIDS virus. Our marriages would be much stronger and more stable as they would be based upon friendship rather than upon lust. God’s mandate to destroy all of the people in Jericho was based upon God knowing all of the facts and being able to examine every single possible result which could occur. Not one single person was killed who was not given full opportunity to believe in Jesus Christ. Had any of those people been allowed to live and given another two hundred years with the opportunity to believe in Christ, they would not have

<sup>52</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; pp. 309–310.

done so (assuming that they did not during that last few moments of their lives). What was guaranteed was that had any of them been allowed to live, their absolute degeneracy would have infected a significant portion of Israel to the grave detriment of God's people. *This severe measure of killing every living thing was taken to prevent alien elements of Canaanite culture and worship, on the basis of their total corruption before God, from infecting Israel.* Perhaps this would be easier understood if given some specifics: 16.

the Canaanites and Amorites were involved in child sacrifice (Lev. 18:21, 24, 26). God gave them 400 years to change their minds about their evil behavior; and it was obvious that they all knew about the Israelites and God working on their behalf (Joshua 2). We have no idea as to how many sexually transmitted diseases would have been found in its inhabitants. Some of these are genetically transmitted, meaning that many of the children could have been infected. Such an outbreak could have decimated the population of Israel.

Let me add to this that the most difficult part for anyone to get is the killing of the children. God is the Lord of Life and gives life and He may mandate that it be taken as well. The children who were old enough had already been completely corrupted by their parents and culture. There was no saving these children. There would be certain ages of children whose bitterness would have become rampant, had their parents been executed and they allowed to live. I have mentioned that it is highly likely that many of the children had been infected with genetically transmitted diseases, which were originally sexually transmitted. Those children who were below the age of accountability (too young to have a notion about God), were automatically saved and taken immediately at death into Abraham's bosom; they will spend eternity in heaven. One could even see this as merciful to remove these children from an unholy environment and take them into the presence of God (I hesitate to say such a thing, due to the psycho element out there who do not have a clue as to how to apply God's Word). Of course, I realize that this explanation provides little by way of rationale for the unbeliever.

There will be times in Israel's history where these specific instructions will be given but not followed, much to the detriment of Israel (see I Sam. 15:3, 13–22).<sup>53</sup> It should also be noted that the destruction of the inhabitants of Jericho was actually rather small potatoes compared to what had been carried out in the past. God destroyed Sodom, Gomorrah and several other cities in this same area due to their severe degeneracy during the time of Abraham (Gen. 19:24–25). Prior to that, God wiped out the entire population of earth, save a handful of people, during the Noaic flood. **For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them (for God made it evident to them). For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks when they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore, God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed forever, Amen. For this reason, God gave them over to degrading passions, for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire towards one another, men with men, committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, malice, full of envy and murder and**

<sup>53</sup> Partially quoted and partially paraphrased from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 585 and from *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; pp. 157–159.

strife, deceit, malice; gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful, and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worth of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them (Rom. 1:18–32).<sup>54</sup>

There are several things we should add. God did not immediately wipe out these people. During the time of Abraham, God told Abraham that “...the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” (Gen. 15:16b). Even though this people had a degenerate bend even then, God took no steps to wipe them out at that time. He gave them another 400 years. Furthermore, God saw to it that the coming of the Jews, His people, was made clear to them. God saw to it that His power was manifested with the Israelites so that all of the inhabitants of the Land of Promise could grasp the fact that the True God of the Universe was the God Who was with them. Rahab understood this and she believed in Jesus Christ, thus delivering herself and her family. Every single person in all of Canaan had this same opportunity and God would have preserved each and every one of them.

Throughout the book of Joshua we will examine case after case of a degenerate population being wasted by Joshua and company as per the directives of God, Who knows all of the facts. *In every case the baneful infection of degenerate idolatry and moral depravity had to be removed before Israel could safely settle down in these regions and set up a monotheistic, law-governed commonwealth as a testimony for the one true God. Much as we regret the terrible loss of life, we must remember that far greater mischief would have resulted if they had been permitted to live on in the midst of the Hebrew nation. These incorrigible degenerates of the Canaanite civilization were a sinister threat to the spiritual survival of Abraham’s race.*<sup>55</sup> We will later examine case histories of situations when a heathen population was allowed to live and how deeply the infected the moral and religious life of the Israelite in the land (see Judges 2 as an example).

Now, perhaps I should touch on some application. God is not speaking to you or to me and there is no one out there whom God is telling us to destroy. There are no races, no populations, and no groups that God has called us to wipe out. There are times, in defense of our own country, that we may be called upon to serve in the military, and, as such, we should be the best soldiers in our outfit, as we know that our lives and our fate are in the hands of Jesus Christ, regardless of the circumstances. We have authorities over us in these circumstances and only in very rare instances should we question their authority.

The true nature of our war on earth is spiritual. *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenlies. Therefore, take up the full armor of God that you may be able to hold your ground in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm, therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. Furthermore, take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:11–17 Isa. 11:5 Isa. 52:7). We are able to lead our lives in the midst of a corrupt and degenerate non-Christian culture (whether in the Roman empire or in modern secularized Europe of America) and still keep true to God. We have the example of the Cross and the victory of the Resurrection of Christ our Lord, and he goes with s everywhere and at all times as we carry out the Great Commission.*<sup>56</sup>

**And to the two the men the ones spying the land, Joshua said, “Go into a house of the woman, the prostitute, and bring out from there the woman and all who [are] to her, as which you swore to her.”**

Joshua  
6:22

**Then Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land: “Go to the house of the woman, the prostitute, and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her just as you swore to her.”**

<sup>54</sup> This reminds me of a movie called *Kids*.

<sup>55</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; p. 158.

<sup>56</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; p. 159.

Recall that out of the window of the house of Rahab hung a red cloth, indicating that house was to be spared. There were careful orders issued all the way down the chain of command so that no one attacked that household.

In the midst of this verse, we have the Hiphil imperative of *yâtsâ* (אָצֵא) [pronounced *yaw-TZAWH*], which means, in the Hiphil, *to cause to go out, to lead out, to bring out*. Strong's #3318 BDB #422. This is followed by *min* and the adverb *shâm* (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced *shawm*], which means *there, thither, whither*. Strong's #8033 BDB #1027. Again, we go to the book of Hebrews for confirmation of this: **By faith, Rahab the prostitute did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace** (Heb. 11:31).

**And so the young men went in, the spies and then they brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all who [were] to her and all her kindred they brought out and then set them from outside to a camp of Israel.**

Joshua  
6:23

**And then the young men—the spies—went in and they brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all who were with her and all of her kindred they brought out and set them outside the camp of Israel.**

We do not know what happened inside the city walls during those last couple of days. No doubt Rahab, because of her profession, had become estranged from most of her family. Somehow, in all of what happened, during the great fear of the inhabitants of Jericho, it got noised around that shelter was to be found with Rahab, for those who believed in the God of the Jews. In this verse we have the phrase, *and all who were with her and all her kindred*. This covers a lot of ground and does not necessarily mean that we are dealing strictly with relatives. *Kindred* is the feminine plural noun *mishpâchâh* (מִשְׁפַּחָהּ) [pronounced *mish-paw-KHAWH*], which means *family, clan, class (of people), species (of animals), or sort (of things)*. Strong's #4940 BDB #1046. This family *sounds* as though it go back to her parents, although a family can include more than those related by blood. This certainly included in-laws, children of relatives, and possibly even those who *were family* but not by birth. Some of us have had *family* like that and some of us have been *family* like that. The phrase *all that were to her* implies that we have more people here than just blood relatives. Although we have no explicit listing of a person not related to her, we still have no reason to automatically exclude such a one. You will recall Rahab's testimony: **And Rahab said to the men, "I know that Jehovah has given you the land and that the terror of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you...Jehovah your God—He is the God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Now therefore, please swear to me by Jehovah, since I have dealt kindly with you that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth, and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." So the men said to her, "Our life in exchange for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it will come to pass when Jehovah gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."** (Joshua 2:9, 11b–14). Certainly that during some of those seven days, some of those who were uncertain joined Rahab in her house, which was certainly large enough to accommodate a great many people.

We do not know the exact order of what transpired. Keil and Delitzsch suggest that the wall outside Rahab's home did not fall; Barnes suggests that it did fell, having already been marked and observed by all the soldiers who marched around Jericho. Simultaneous to the attack upon Jericho, the spies and perhaps several other soldiers went and got Rahab and her family from their home and brought them out near to the camp of Israel. The other possibility, is that their wall remained standing and they were rescued after the attack upon Jericho. The reason this second possibility is less likely is that it would seem that had the wall to her home not fallen, then that would have been something worth recording. Because the Israelites marched around the city for seven days and all observed the red cloth hanging out of that portion of the wall, and because, on the seventh march around on the seventh day, the former spies were positioned right outside that portion of the Jericho wall, whether it fell or not, they went right to that portion of Jericho to retrieve Rahab and her family. My thinking is that the entire town was killed first and then Rahab and her family were brought out, although it could have been coterminous action. In either case, they were not brought immediately into the camp as they were unclean, ceremonially speaking. By v. 25, we will have recorded the fact that Rahab did become a part of Israel; and much later, as has been several times alluded to, she will marry into Israel and become a part of the line of the humanity of Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:5).

**And the city they burned in fire and all which [was] in it; only the silver and the gold and the artifacts of the bronze and iron they placed in a treasury of a house of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.**

Joshua  
6:24

**And they burned the city with fire and all that was in it; only the silver and gold and the artifacts of bronze and iron did they place in the treasury of the house of Jehovah.**

Again, Joshua records what is obeyed. As bleeding heart liberals, we have a very difficult time with what has occurred here. Even Jews of subsequent generations have a difficult time relating to this. We have no idea how degenerate these people were. We get a clue in Gen. 19, wherein most of the town showed up at Lot's door intending to rape the new *males* which they thought had entered into Lot's home. Had a large group of thugs showed up to your home expecting to rape your young male cousin who is in town visiting from Ohio, you would feel justified in killing them all. That is what we have here—we have a people degenerate beyond what we can grasp—probably not unlike one of the worst floors in a hard-time prison, and they will not allow themselves to be redeemed—therefore, all of them will be destroyed, along with all they have, with the exceptions noted in this verse and in a future verse in Joshua 7.

The fact that all was destroyed in Jericho, except for the gold, silver and artifacts of bronze and lead, which all went into the Lord's treasury, was testimony to the fact that the land of Canaan belonged to God and that Jericho was a gracious gift from God, as was the rest of the land. The Israelites acknowledged this by giving the firstfruits to God.

**And Rahab the prostitute and the house of her father and all who [were] to her Joshua caused to be kept alive; and so she dwelt in a midst of Israel unto the day the this because she caused to hide the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.**

Joshua  
6:25

**And Joshua saw to it that Rahab the prostitute and her father's houses and all that belonged to her was preserved; subsequently, she has lived among the Israelites even until this day because she hid the messengers that Joshua sent to spy out the city of Jericho.**

In this verse, we have the Hiphil perfect of *châyâh* (חַיָּה) [pronounced *khaw-YAW*], which means, *to live, to have life, to continue safe and sound*. In the Hiphil, it means *to keep alive, to deliver from death, to grant life*. Strong's #2421 & 2425 BDB #310. Hiding the messengers took place in Joshua 2, as you certainly recall. *But she had brought them up to the roof and she hid them in the stalks of flax, which had been laid out neatly on the roof* (Joshua 2:6). The phrase *even until this day* indicates that this book was written shortly after these events, but not immediately after these events. If Joshua wrote this down the next month, noting that Rahab was still living amongst the Jews would not be the way this would be stated. He would state that Rahab is now living among the Israelites. However, when Joshua did record this, probably near the end of his life, at the end of the conquest of the land under his hand, he notes that Rahab was living with the Israelites even unto the time that he recorded this. Definitely, that means that this was recorded while Rahab was still alive.

It is in this verse that we first find out that Rahab lived with the Israelites. We have pointed out that she is in the line of Christ. One thing that I have noticed is that an analysis of the inclusion of Rahab in the genealogical record of the humanity of Jesus Christ is often ignored. I don't mean that expositors don't point it out and then say a lot of nice things about Rahab. From whence did Matthew get this information? It is not here in the book of Joshua; nor do we find it in the book of Judges, the book of Ruth, or in I Chronicles. The male lineage is mentioned in these lines. Rahab is not mentioned in any of these lines. Now, there is no problem with mentioning women in these lines (although they certainly are not prominent), as we find the names and background of women in the book of Ruth. Therefore, we have two possibilities as to where Matthew went for his information. The standard answer, for those who thought this through, is that Matthew was inspired by the Holy Spirit and included her name just flat out, out of the blue because of all the legalism that he had seen in the Jews in his day and this rubbed their noses in their legalism. It was by inspiration of the Holy Spirit that he was able to include Rahab's name. Now, whereas I think that was a possible explanation for how Matthew thought to include Rahab's name in this genealogy, I think that it is fallacious in part. Matthew certainly included her name in the genealogy of the humanity of Jesus Christ as a slap in the face of the legalistic pharisees and legalistic Israelites—that is certain. However, I don't believe that this information just materialized out of the blue. I think that this indicates that there were extensive, careful genealogical

records available during the time of Matthew, far beyond what we find recorded in Scripture in either the Old or New Testaments. Matthew, who became a Biblical scholar, spent a great deal of time at the library and a great deal of time in the Bible when he wrote the book of Matthew, interweaving Old Testament Scripture with what occurred in the life of our Lord. When he came to this verse in the book of Joshua, he thought to himself that prostitutes are generally attractive, so that Rahab probably married some Israelite, and, when he could not find her name in the records of the Chronicles, that sent him to the library to find out who did she marry and who were their progeny. And when he found in some obscure genealogical record that Rahab was in the line of David as the wife of Salmon whose descendant was Boaz, he gleefully included it in his gospel record, writing: **and to Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab; and to Boaz was born Obed by Ruth; and to Obed, Jesse; and to Jesse was born David the king** (Matt. 1:5–6a). Matthew, a tax collector, wrote this because the Israelites looked down upon the tax collectors and the prostitutes, many of whom came to Jesus for salvation. To find that a prostitute was in the line of Jesus sent chills down his spine and he was thrilled to rub the noses of the legalists in this fact.

I should point out that there are a couple of objections to the inclusion of Rahab in the line of our Lord. First off, she and Salmon lived much too early to be the parents of Boaz. This is true; however, not every portion of the genealogy is without missing links. Generally speaking, the *less significant* links are not named, meaning that Rahab and Salmon could have been ancestors of Boaz, without having to be his parents. The other objection is that Rahab's name is written slightly differently in the Greek. In Matthew, we find it written hê HRachab (ἡ ῚΡαχάβ), but it written as HRaab (ῚΡααβ) in the Septuagint in both Joshua and in the Greek of Heb. 11:31 and James 2:25. The reason for this is that this name is transliterated and there is no fixed way of transliterating a word from one language to the next. Josephus referred to her as hê HRachabê (ἡ ῚΡαχάβη). Since Matthew possibly was first written in the Aramaic, a difference in the transliterating of a word through two different languages would be expected to occur. The fact that we have three different renderings here, at least two of which definitely refer to the same woman, and one of those most definite is closest to Matthew's spelling, indicates that we are speaking of the same person. I am not aware of any great conservative scholar who is of a different view.<sup>57</sup>

Now, for the analogy: the events recorded throughout Scripture reveal almost a parallel universe. That is, without going off into the realm of science fiction, there are many historically accurate incidents which occur in the Old Testament which parallel our Lord's coming in the New. Most of these have been dealt with extensively in expository literature, e.g., Abraham offering his only son Isaac to God as a sacrifice. However, give a moment's thought to Rahab, a gentile. Rahab is a gentile in the midst of a city of sin and evil. That she is a sinner is unquestioned. God calls her through two messengers and she responds with positive volition, realigning herself with Israel, God's people. God has reached us in the same way. She is the shadow for the great gentile salvation to come. For, although gentiles have always been saved throughout history, it was at the fall of Jerusalem when gentiles came to Jesus Christ in greater numbers. That we are in a world of sin and evil, there is no question; that we are sinners, we cannot deny. God calls to us through the gospel and the Holy Spirit—His truth and His light. We recognize Him as the God of the Universe and we respond by faith in him, realigning ourselves with God's people.

**And so Joshua gave an oath in the time the that, saying, "Cursed is the man before faces of Y<sup>e</sup>howah who rises up and builds the city the this—Jericho; in his first-born he will lay a foundation and in his youngest son he will cause her gates to be erected."**

Joshua  
6:26

**Finally, Joshua uttered an oath at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man in the presence of Jehovah who rebuilds this city Jericho. His first born will be given in exchange for the laying of the foundation and his youngest son will be given in exchange for the erection of the gates."**

At this point, it appears as though Joshua uses a bit more varied of a vocabulary, enough to warrant looking at some other translations:

<sup>57</sup> In fairness, I should point out that Rabbis who followed much later wrote bizarre fables that Rahab was married to Joshua, that she bore eight children, all of whom were prophets, etc. These are two of the several fables circulated in years past, none of which had any corroborating evidence.

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And Joshua imposed an oath at that time, saying,— Cursed be the man before Yahweh who shall raise up and build this city—Jericho, At the price of his firstborn shall he lay its foundation, And at the price of his youngest shall he set up its doors.
NASB	Then Joshua made them take an oath at that time, saying, “Cursed before the LORD is the man who rises up and build this city Jericho, with the loss of his first-born he shall lay its foundation and with <i>the loss of his youngest son</i> he shall set up its gates.”
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And Joshua adjureth <i>them</i> at that time, saying, ‘Cursed <i>is</i> the man before Jehovah who raiseth up and hath built this city, even Jericho; in his first-born he doth lay the foundation, and in his youngest he doth set up its doors;

The first verb is the Hiphil imperfect of *shâ'va* (שָׁוַע) [pronounced *shaw<sup>b</sup>-VAH*], which means *to swear, to seven oneself, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath*. Strong's #7650 BDB #989. Joshua begins the oath with the Qal passive participle of *ârar* (אָרַר) [pronounced *aw-RAHR*], which means *to bitterly curse*. Strong's #779 BDB #76.

The man under a curse here is said to first do the Qal perfect of *bânâh* (בָּנָה) [pronounced *baw-NAWH*], which means *to build* and in the perfect tense, it is a completed action. Strong's #1129 BDB #124. This is pretty much the common word for *build*. However, what he is building is *this city Jericho*. So that there is no confusion about this curse, Joshua elaborates:

After the noun *Jericho*, Joshua says, literally, *in his first-born*; what he is saying is *at the cost of his children* or *at the price of his first-born*. Keil and Delitzsch call this use of *bêyth* as denoting the price of a thing. What he does at the cost of his children is the Piel imperfect of *yâçar* (יָצַר) [pronounced *yaw-SAHR*], which means *to establish, to found, to fix, to lay a foundation*. Strong's #3245 BDB #413. With the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine suffix, we have *to lay its foundation*, where *its* refers to this city Jericho (although *Jericho* is an undecidable proper noun, *this city* is feminine).

The final verb is the Hiphil imperfect of *nâtsa*<sup>bv</sup> (נָצַח) [pronounced *naw-TSAH<sup>B</sup>V*], which means *to stand up, to set something upright, to erect*. Strong's #5324 BDB #662. What the cursed person would erect would be *deleth* (דֶּלֶת) [pronounced *DEH-leth*], which means *doors, gates of a city*. Strong's #1817 BDB #195. You do not erect the gate for a city without city walls. Joshua did not predict that Jericho would not be rebuilt—he simply placed a curse upon the person who would rebuild the walls. The key is not rebuilding the town, or rebuilding on that site, but rebuilding a fortified city there. The curse was that the builder would lose his first-born when his project was begun, and he will lose his youngest son once the project has been completed. This is how entrenched with evil this city was. Roughly half a millennium later, we read the fulfillment of this curse in I Kings 16:34: *In his days, Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the [loss of] Abiram, his first-born, and he set up its gates with the [loss of] his youngest Segub, according to the word of Jehovah which He spoke by Joshua ben Nun*. This indicates that Joshua was moved by the Holy Spirit when he spoke. Not every oath is honoring to God or honored by God, as was this (see I Sam. 14:24). Therefore, this does not mean that we can speak prophetically on some lame whim. At the time of Joshua, there was little by way of recorded Scripture; today, we have the full Word of God. If someone was speaking true prophecies today, then it would only follow logically that we should be recording and studying those prophecies with the same vigor that we give God's Word. However, nobody is going to record and disseminate them, and if they are, Christians will not wholeheartedly embrace them as God's Word, save a handful of undiscerning losers, overpowered by a personality rather than by the truth.

An additional historical note: the walls built up by Hiel were destroyed later by the Herodians (Herodius?). The walls were later rebuilt by Archeluis, and then destroyed by Vespasian. This information came from my notes from Thieme from a million years ago; Durant did not have cover this in his eleven volume set.

NIV Study Bible comment: *Jericho itself was to be devoted to the Lord as a perpetual sign of God's judgment on the wicked Canaanites and as a firstfruits offering of the land. This was a way of signifying that the conquered land belonged to the Lord. The curse was fulfilled in the rebellious days of King Ahab (I K. 16:34).*<sup>58</sup> To clarify

<sup>58</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 296.

what would come later, the curse that Joshua pronounced was not in occupying that same area as Jericho, but in rebuilding the walls and the gate of Jericho—rebuilding the almost impregnable fortress that once was. The Benjamites occupied this area later (Joshua 18:21), but they certainly did not rebuild the walls of the city as they were before. When Hiel built the walls 500 years later, he was not founding a new city but reinforcing an existing city.

It is oft time suggested that the parallel between Joshua and the city of Jericho will be much like the second advent of our Lord when He stands in opposition to the powers that be. Barnes suggests that St. Paul borrowed his imagery from Joshua, when he wrote: **For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first** (I Thess. 4:16).

**And so it came to pass Y<sup>e</sup>howah [was] with Joshua; and so it came to pass his fame in all the land.**

Joshua  
6:27

**And so Jehovah was with Joshua and his notoriety was in all the land.**

Because of what God did on behalf of Joshua, his name became known throughout the entire land of Canaan. The word *shōma* (שׁוֹמָה) [pronounced *SHOW-mahg*], which means *fame, reputation, report, tidings, notoriety*. This is a very unusual word for Joshua to use for two reasons: (1) it is not found in the writings of Moses; and, (2) it is only found in three other places in Scripture (Joshua 9:9 Esther 9:4 Jer. 6:24\*). It is very unusual for Joshua to use words which are not found all over. However, there is a very similar feminine noun and this has a very common verbal cognate, making it more likely that Joshua used this word. Strong's #8089 BDB #1035. It is open to interpretation as to whether this was the notoriety of Joshua or the notoriety of the God of Israel. It certainly is both Joshua and Jehovah whose notoriety was expanded; however, in view here is Joshua, who is relatively unknown to the inhabitants of the Land of Canaan. The God of Israel was already well-known to these same inhabitants. This was a simple fulfillment of what god had promised Joshua: **Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah said unto Joshua, "The day the this I will begin to magnify you in [the] eyes of all of Israel that they will know that as I was with Moses, I will be with you."** (Joshua 3:7). We will later read: **Now it came to pass when all the kings who were beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland and on all the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon,—the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, heard of it, that they gathered themselves together with one accord to fight with Joshua and with Israel** (Joshua 9:1–2). We have a number of ancients, who, with God being with them, gained great notoriety. Joseph in Egypt, although placed there in slavery and later wrongly accused and put into jail, had great success in Egypt. **And Jehovah was with Joseph, so he became prosperous; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian** (Gen. 39:2). David enjoyed the same success: **Then the fame of David went out into all the lands, and Jehovah brought the fear of him on all the nations** (I Chron. 14:17).

One of the important points made by one of the sources I read is that God's hand in the conquering of Jericho, while important, and significant; is still paled by His hand in the crossing of Jericho. Even as a *natural* miracle, the stopping of the Jericho at just the time of the crossing of Israel was an incredible feat which is far more important in scale than the conquering of Jericho.

At this point, something should be said of the general tactics of the Israelites. They made a bold move by crossing over the Jordan and attacking Jericho. What this did was split their enemies in two. The Israelites would take Jericho and then Ai, and from there move south, taking the cities of their enemies piecemeal. This division of the land kept the armies of the enemies from gathering up against them immediately. Such a tactic and a protection was as much to the easement of their strength in battle. Although God could certainly pit the Israelites against all of the cities in the Palestine area at once, such a confrontation initially would have made it quite difficult for the Israelites to maintain their cool.

A final note from McGee: *Jericho represents the world to the believer. It is strong and formidable and foreboding—the conquest depends upon faith* **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is**

*the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). Hebrews 11 reveals how faith worked in all ages in the lives of God’s choicest servants as they met the world head-on and overcame by faith.<sup>59</sup>*

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<sup>59</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 43.