

## Joshua 6

### Who fought the Battle of Jericho?

The last time we saw Joshua (chapter 5):

#### Chapter 5 The Commander of the LORD's Army

**<sup>13</sup> When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us, or for our adversaries?" <sup>14</sup> And he said, "No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, "What does my lord say to his servant?" <sup>15</sup> And the commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place**

Before we read chapter 6 "The Fall of Jericho"

The elephant in the room:

"The Holy Wars"

"God-commanded destruction of people groups"

"The Conquest of Canaan"

#### **2 common mistakes of modern readers, commentators, pastors:**

1. God of Old Testament is different from the God of the New Testament
  - Old = vengeful
  - New = peaceful
2. Old Testament is not really the word of God
  - Work of primitive people

Deuteronomy 20: 1-18

**20 "When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people <sup>3</sup> and shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, <sup>4</sup> for the LORD your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory.'**

Summary:

- Do not be afraid in the midst of military conflicts that seem overwhelming
  - God will be with you (like He has before); God will fight with you/for you in victory

**<sup>10</sup> “When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. <sup>11</sup> And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. <sup>12</sup> But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. <sup>13</sup> And when the LORD your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, <sup>14</sup> but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you. <sup>15</sup> Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not cities of the nations here.**

Summary:

- Cities outside Canaan were not under judgment of total destruction
  - If city surrenders, seek peace. People will pay tribute & become enslaved, not destroyed.
  - If city resists, lay siege and destroy every male and plunder its goods.

**<sup>16</sup> But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, <sup>17</sup> but you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD your God has commanded, <sup>18</sup> that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the LORD your God.**

Summary:

- Cities of the Canaanites were: “under the ban” ... “devoted to destruction” ...
  - Hebrew term: “*herem*” : people, places, material off limits to Israel and were “devoted” only to God by (1) destruction or (2) placed God God’s treasury
  - Terms “Canaanites” & “Amorites” served as catch-all terms for all the ethnically-similar groups above
- God’s reasoning:
  - Pagans will draw Israel into their abominable practices of idol worship
  - Israel will sin against the Lord their God

*“We should note that the instructions to Israel to annihilate the Canaanites were specific in time, intent, and geography. That is, Israel was not given a blanket permission to do the same to any peoples they encountered, at any time or in any place. It was limited to the crucial time when Israel was just establishing itself as a theocracy under God, to protect Israel’s worship, as well as to punish these specific peoples.”*

David Howard, PHD  
*Joshua*

**Big-Picture Principle:**

The conquest of Canaan is to be understood as fulfillment of the promise God gave Abraham.

**What promise to Abraham?**

**God’s Promise**

**12** Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Gen 12:1-3

**Promise Repeated**

**5** And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” **6** And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Gen 15:5-6

**Covenant Ceremony**

**12** As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. **13** Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. **14** But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. **15** As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. **16** And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”

Gen 15 :12-16

**Promise of:**

- New life outside of paganism
- Multitude of descendants
- Great nation
- Thru Abraham, all nations will be blessed
- Descendants will inherit this land (Canaan)

The promise happened in Canaan long ago---generations earlier than Joshua’s time

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**3 REALITIES to consider regarding the Conquest of Canaan. From God’s perspective:**

1. God was protecting Israel by annihilating certain pagan nations; protecting them from a SPIRITUAL CONTAGION
2. If there is any justice in the world, then there are people who do deserve destruction
3. God owns everything



## The Fall of Jericho

6 Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in. <sup>2</sup> And the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. <sup>3</sup> You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. <sup>4</sup> Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. <sup>5</sup> And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him." <sup>6</sup> So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord." <sup>7</sup> And he said to the people, "Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the Lord."

<sup>8</sup> And just as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the Lord went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the Lord following them. <sup>9</sup> The armed men were walking before the priests who were blowing the trumpets, and the rear guard was walking after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually. <sup>10</sup> But Joshua commanded the people, "You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout." <sup>11</sup> So he caused the ark of the Lord to circle the city, going about it once. And they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.

<sup>12</sup> Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. <sup>13</sup> And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord walked on, and they blew the trumpets continually. And the armed men were walking before them, and the rear guard was walking after the ark of the Lord, while the trumpets blew continually. <sup>14</sup> And the second day they marched around the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did for six days.

<sup>15</sup> On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. <sup>16</sup> And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city. <sup>17</sup> And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. <sup>18</sup> But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. <sup>19</sup> But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD." <sup>20</sup> So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. <sup>21</sup> Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

<sup>22</sup> But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." <sup>23</sup> So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. <sup>24</sup> And they burned the city with fire, and

everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. <sup>25</sup> But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

<sup>26</sup> Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, "Cursed before the LORD be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho.

"At the cost of his firstborn shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates."

<sup>27</sup> So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

So, now, what kinds of things was God doing? What was he teaching His people?

Who pushed the walls down?

How did the people contribute? How were they obedient?

How was God glorified?

Today, God often works through the instrumentally of His people  
When He does, we need to be careful to:

GIVE HIM GLORY	AVOID STEALING HIS GLORY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give Him the total credit</li> <li>• Accept praise for the work while identifying God's hand</li> <li>• God is good, even when we fail</li> <li>• Detail God's generosity from start to finish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting His praises</li> <li>• Obscure His splendor</li> <li>• Ignore His mighty hand</li> <li>• Chalk His work up to coincidence/luck</li> </ul>

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