

## Lesson 1 – Joshua 6

Text: Joshua 6

Key Passages:

- Joshua 6:2 – Israel was about to take Jericho only because of God desired to give it to them.
- Joshua 6:3-5 – God’s detailed (and unorthodox) instructions for taking the city of Jericho.
- Joshua 6:17-19 – Joshua’s instructions for the men who were about to take the city of Jericho. Taking things from the city which were cursed by God would bring a curse on the whole camp.

Main Storyline:

After identifying Himself as God, the Commander of the Lord’s army continued to speak with Joshua. At the time, the people of Jericho had become extremely scared, having heard about what God had done to the Egyptians at the Red Sea and the destruction of the Amorite kings, Sihon and Og, and now having witnessed first-hand their crossing of the Jordan River. They had shut up the city of Jericho such that none were allowed to enter or leave at all.

Despite all of the preparations that Jericho had made for a battle, God told Joshua that he had already given Jericho to Israel; he only needed to obey His commands. The army was to march around the city with seven priests and the Ark of the Covenant one time for six days. On the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times. After the seventh trip around the city, the priests were to blow trumpets, all of the people were to shout, and God said the walls of the city would fall down flat.

God’s instructions for conquering the city were very unusual. Typically, in that day, attackers would take fortress cities like Jericho by conducting prolonged sieges/blockades on them in order to starve them out. Sometimes, attackers would use siege weapon such as battering rams to breach the gate or dig tunnels under the walls to penetrate them or make them fall down. God’s plan for taking the city was very untraditional, and it required faith in Him to obey His commandments.

Joshua and the people obeyed God’s commandments exactly. For six days, they woke up early, gathered together, and marched around the city one time, just as God had instructed. On the seventh day, they woke up early again, and marched around the city seven times. When they finished the seventh circle around the city, the priests began to blow their trumpets, and Joshua instructed the people to shout. He reminded them that God had given them the city and that everyone in the city, except for Rahab and her house, was to be destroyed. He told them not to take anything from the city, but anything that was gold, silver, bronze, or iron, would go into the treasury of the Lord. Then the people shouted, and simultaneously, the walls of Jericho fell down flat.

The army of Israel ran into the city and began to destroy it, as God had commanded. They killed all of the people and animals and burned everything that was not gold, silver, bronze, or iron. Joshua instructed the two men who had spied out the land to go to Rahab’s house and escort her and her family to safety. She was allowed to live with Israel and began following God just as the Israelites did.

After Jericho had been destroyed, Joshua made a prophecy regarding anyone who would rebuild the city. He said that the man who rebuilt it would be cursed. His firstborn son would die when he laid the foundations of the city, and his youngest son would die when he set up the gates to the city. This prophecy comes to pass in the days of Ahab (1 Kings 16:34). Word of Jericho’s destruction and Joshua’s leadership spread around the country, inspiring even more fear among the Canaanites.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) God’s very specific instructions must be followed exactly.
- 2.) God sometimes tells us to do things which are senseless to us, but we still must obey (Prov. 3:5).
- 3.) God keeps His promises to those who obey Him.