

Joshua's Foolish Parade

March 20th, 2016 ~ The Foolishness of Faith ~ Joshua 6.1-24

Déjà vu All Over Again

- ❖ Moses recapped for the people their walk of faith
 - ✧ **Dt 1.27-8** ~ “Because the Lord hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, “The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; more over we have seen the sons of Anakim there.”
 - ✧ **Dt 9.1** ~ “Hear, O Israel: You are to cross over the Jordan today, and go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven...”
- ❖ The “today” of **Dt 9.1** was not literally referring to that day
 - ✧ After that Moses died and the people mourned him 30 days (**Dt 34.8**)
 - ✧ Then Joshua sent 2 spies into the land / Escaped into hills for 3 days (**Josh 2.1,22**)
 - ✧ Another 3 days before they cross Jordan / Dried up just as Red Sea (**Josh 3.16**)
 - ✧ 70 days from **Deuteronomy 1.3** to **Joshua 4.19**
 - ✧ All men circumcised and they remained encamped until healed (**Josh 5.8**)

The Beautiful Simplicity of Faith

- ❖ Note 4 things about the first **9 verses** of **Joshua 6**
 1. **vss 1-2** ~ The Situation
 - ◇ God referred to Jericho being sealed up as evidence of its demise
 - ◇ He spoke of its conquest in the past tense / “have given”
 2. **vss 3-5** ~ The Command
 - ◇ Summary of plan / March around city once for 6 days / 7 times on 7th day
 - Blow the trumpet / Yell / Wall will fall / Attack!
 3. **vss 6-7** ~ The Faith of Joshua
 - ◇ Joshua didn't hesitate to execute the plan / Spoke to priests then people
 4. **vss 8-9** ~ The Faith of the People
 - ◇ Priests led the way / Ark followed / Armed men were before and aft
 - ◇ The situation is the same as it was 40 years earlier but . . .
- ❖ These children possessed a faith their parents had not
 - ✧ The cities are still “great and fortified up to heaven”
 - ✧ Yet the people are unafraid / The have confidence in God
 - ✧ **MH Q:** “.. they needed not to fight, and therefore needed not to fear, because God fought for them.”

Xition: “Before going on let's talk a bit about ancient Jericho”

Design of Ancient Jericho

- ❖ The modern city of Jericho is about 2 miles away from ancient city
- ❖ Until 1860s ancient Jericho was buried in what was called Tell es-Sultan
 - ✧ 1867-68 ~ British engineer Charles Warren's excavations proved it was an ancient city
 - ✧ 1907-11 ~ German-Austrian dig revealed retaining wall ringed city
 - ✧ 1930-36 ~ John Garstang (British) found a collapsed wall & violent destruction
 - ◇ Garstang dated find at 1400 BC confirming biblical narrative of Jericho
 - ✧ 1952-58 ~ Kathleen Kenyan invited to study findings
 - ◇ Extensive studies of 20 different time periods of city
 - ◇ Documented fire as well as significant stores of grain
 - Presence of grain was very odd / Food would have been eaten or taken
 - Dated period of fire at 1550 BC due to absence of specific pottery
- ❖ Ancient Jericho design
 - ✧ Entirely encircled by retaining wall / Outer and Inner walls built atop them
 - ✧ Walking around retaining wall – circumference about ½ mile
 - ◇ Jews would have walked at some distance away

v10-11 ~ Day 1 / “You shall not shout or make any noise...”

- ❖ The first day they march around the city once (*only hear horns*)
 - ✧ They may have started that same day / Didn't wait to start the next day
 - ✧ Imagine the people of Jericho / Tense.. / Wondering what Jews were up to
 - ✧ Imagine the Jews marching around the city / Is this all we're to do?

v12-14a ~ Day 2 to 6 / “And Joshua rose early .. returned to the camp”

- ❖ The second day they rise early, repeat the procession, and return to camp
- ❖ What must the people of Jericho thought?
 - ✧ Surely they would have been emboldened over time / taunting
- ❖ What must the Jews have thought? / Did they have doubts?
 - ✧ Is this why they were not to talk? Would they have questioned / grumbled?

v15 ~ Day 7 / “But it came to pass .. around the city seven times.”

- ❖ They rose earlier this day - at dawn
 - ✧ The Jews and the people of Jericho knew something was different
 - ✧ Unlike previous 6 days, they kept going / Around and around and around
- ❖ Each circuit was probably a mile or more
 - ✧ I doubt they walked fast / Each revolution would have taken an hour
 - ✧ Everyone's tired / Priests worn out / That was God's intention

Xition: “And so the 7-day parade ends . . .”

Joshua said (v16) .. “Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!”

- ❖ v17 ~ “.. the city shall be doomed .. to destruction, it and all who are in it.”
- ❖ v18 ~ “.. abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed..”
- ❖ v19 ~ “.. silver and gold, bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord..”
- ❖ v20a ~ “So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets.”
- ❖ v20b ~ “.. the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city..”

Dr. Bryant Wood Sets the Record Straight

- ❖ Archeologist excavated Jericho in 1980s thru 90s
 - ✧ Doctoral degree in Canaanite pottery of late bronze age
 - ◆ Expensive Cypriot pottery not found / But imitation pottery was
 - ◆ Dr. Kenyan had excavated a poorer section of Jericho than had Garstang
 - ✧ Dr. Parr (*on staff with Dr. Kenyan*) met with team in 2012
 - ◆ Great 30” video on YouTube entitled “**Jericho Found!**”
- 1. Jericho was fortified as the Bible said
- 2. Jericho’s walls fell outward (*only instance known of in archeology*)
 - a. v20 ~ “The people went up into the city”
 - b. Section of northern wall (**Josh 2.15**) did not fall (*protecting Rahab and her family*)
- 3. The city was burned while filled with grain (*unusual – invaders would have valued it*)
- 4. The city lay abandoned for centuries afterwards (*cursed – not rebuilt for 400 years*)

Symbolism of Jericho

- ❖ Jericho a first fruits offering / 1st city to fall
 - 1. God commanded that it not be looted / All was to be destroyed
 - ◆ Achan disobeyed (**Josh 7.1**) / 36 men died (**Josh 7.5**)
 - ◆ Achan’s family executed (**Josh 7.24**) / God lets them loot future cities (**Josh 8.2**)
 - 2. The city was filled with recently harvested grain / but burned at God’s command
 - 3. The city was shut up ready for a siege but no siege was begun
- ❖ Strategic plan of attack was odd to say the least
 - ✧ Men armed for battle led a 7-day long parade
 - ◆ If oval was a mile in circumference, about 2,000 soldiers form one line
 - ◆ Roughly 600k soldiers (v3 “all”) would form about 300 ovals
 - ✧ 7 priests walked along blowing ram’s horns (*prayers*) before the Ark
 - ◆ Not silver trumpets (**Num 10**) used to summon people
 - ✧ They circle the city once each for 6 days, then 7 times on 7th day
 - ◆ 7 occurs 14 times between v4 & v16 (*days / priests / trumpets / times*)
 - ✧ This is not a military siege / It is a religious observance

Xition: “Song: Joshua fought the battle of Jericho is badly named . . .”

Battle of Jericho

- ❖ **MH Q:** “It was to try the faith, obedience, and patience, of the people, to try whether they would observe a precept which to human policy seemed foolish to obey and believe a promise which in human probability seemed impossible to be performed. They were also proved whether they could patiently bear the reproaches of their enemies and patiently wait for the salvation of the Lord. Thus, by faith, not by force, the walls of Jericho fell down.”
- ❖ **v20c** ~ “.. the people shouted with a great shout .. the wall fell down flat”
 - ✧ Everyone wants to say an earthquake occurred / But the text doesn't state that
 - ✧ God brought the walls down in miraculous response to the people's faith
- ❖ **v20d** ~ “Then the people went up .. every man straight before him”
- ❖ **v21** ~ All that breathed was killed in obedience to God's command
 - ✧ Conquest of Canaan was a holy war / Not politically correct to use the term
 - ✧ God pronounced judgment upon Canaanites / Sentenced entire culture to death
- ❖ **MH Q:** “The God of Heaven easily can, and certainly will, break down all the opposing power of His and His church's enemies.”

- 40 years in the wilderness created for God a new people
- Our wilderness experiences strengthen our faith
- They prepare us for the work we're to do
- These people acted in total obedience / and perhaps complete faith
- God “**fought the battle of Jericho**”
- Phil 1.6 ~ “.. He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,

And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

To God our Savior, who alone is wise,

Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Amen *pause* Go in peace . . .