

Joshua Chapter 6: The Lord Delivers Jericho into Israel's Hands

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INTRODUCTION

The Lord again places Israel in a vulnerable position. They must march around Jericho 7 times with only horns blowing, which makes them perfect targets for 7 days, but no one is injured. On the 7th day, God brings the wall down and delivers Jericho into Israel's hands. Is your God powerful enough to remove the obstacles in your way?

Israel's History Prior to Joshua Chapter 1

- God frees Israel from Egypt (Ex. 12:29-41).
- God leads Israel to the Promise Land, but they refuse to enter (Num. 13:1-14:12).
- Israel is cursed to wander in the wilderness for 40yrs (Num. 14:20-35).
- Moses is not allowed to enter the Promise Land (Num. 20:5-12, 24; 27:14).
- Joshua is appointed by God to replace Moses (Num. 27:15-23; Deut. 31:14).
- God delivers two Amorite kings into Israel's hands. (Num 21:21-35; Deut. 2:24-3:10).
- God brings Israel back to the Promise Land (Num. 33:40-56).

Joshua Chapter 1: *Victory before Entering the Land*

Israel is about to enter the Promise Land and God guarantees them victory. The key to their success is God's Word; they must know it thoroughly in order to obey it. God also personally encourages Joshua and guarantees him victory, 1:5.

Joshua Chapter 2: *The Two Spies Confirm God's Word about the Promise Land*

Israel begins to see God's faithfulness regarding the Promise Land. The two spies reveal that the people of Canaan are terrified of Israel because of what God did to the Red Sea and the two Amorite kings, Sihon and Og.

Joshua Chapter 3: *The Parting of the Jordan River and Israel's Crossing*

God continues to strengthen Israel as He performs a great miracle that confirms Joshua's appointment as Israel's next leader (3:7; 4:14) and shows Israel that He will drive out the Canaanites (3:10).

Joshua Chapter 4: *The Crossing of the Jordan and Stones of Remembrance*

The Jordan Crossing is completed and two memorials are used to commemorate this great miracle throughout Israel's history. This miracle shows the world that Israel's God is powerful, not just another god and it teaches Israel to fear their God.

Joshua Chapter 5: *A Tuning Point in Israel's History*

Rather than God's command to circumcise leaving Israel vulnerable, it prepared them to possess the Promise Land (according to the Covenant that guaranteed it, Gen. 17:1-14) and to observe Passover, Ex. 12:48. This marks a turning point in Israel's history: instead of being slaves in the land of Egypt, they will now be a nation with its own Land.

Joshua Chapter 6: *The Lord Delivers Jericho into Israel's Hands*

6:1-2, Jericho's nervous about keeping their gates closed (2:5, 7). 6:1 is a parenthetical interruption of the narrative that began at 5:13, i.e., the Commander of the Lord's army is still speaking to Joshua; this means that the Commander is God, 6:2.

6:3-5, The Commander of the Lord's army gives the orders. Joshua and his men must march around Jericho for seven days. On the 7th day, they march around seven times, blow the horns, and shout. The wall will fall underneath itself and they are to charge in.

6:6-9, the scene is this: thousands of soldiers in front, seven priests with rams' horns behind them, the Ark of the Covenant carried by priests after them, and thousands of soldiers at the rear, everyone marching as the horns blow.

6:10, the marching men cannot utter a sound, only horns blowing until Joshua signals.

6:11-16, what are the Jerichonians thinking? They are so terrified that the entire city is locked down, 6:1. And now they have a bunch of warriors circling their city day after day with only trumpets blowing, but they don't charge the city, they leave. Then on the 7th day the city wall collapses and pandemonium hits.

6:17-19, Jericho and all its possessions now belong to God; the entire city is under a ban. It's the "cherem" curse, from the Hebrew word *~I,XE*. The noun and verb both mean something that is *banned/devoted* to the Lord or to *destruction*. If anyone takes anything from Jericho, it will curse Israel because all this now belongs to God, 6:18-19.

6:20-21, Jericho's wall collapses (except where Rahab lived, 2:15) and Israel conquers the city. Israel's slaughter of Jericho makes some wonder if the God of the Bible is a God of hate and not love. First, God owns life, all life, Gen. 1:1-2:7; Deut 32:39. Second, God ordained this because these nations would become a sinful cancer to Israel, Deut. 20:10-18 (which they did, Judg. 2). Also, these nations were thoroughly wicked, Gen. 15:16. As for God being a God of love, look at the Cross: Ps. 22:6-18; Is. 53; Jn. 3:16.

6:22-25, Rahab and her family are spared because she blessed Israel, Gen 12:3. Eventually Rahab becomes part of the Messianic line, Mtt. 1:5.

6:26, the one who rebuilds Jericho will be (and is) cursed by God, 1 Kin. 16:29-34.

6:27, the Lord fulfills His promise to be with Joshua, 1:5; his fame spreads.

Conclusion: If you were part of the nation of Israel, what would you do with Josh. 6? How would it influence your life? Would it encourage you during your most trying times? Or, would you be part of the generation that came after Joshua, Judg. 2:10? What are you doing with Josh. 6 today? Does it fill you with courage in moments of fear and anguish? Or, have you forgotten what your Lord can do? Is this another "Bible story" or

is it as real to you as the air you breathe? Upon which rock do you stand, sinking sand or God's solid Rock, His Word, Matt. 7:24-27?