

LESSON 5



## VICTORY AT JERICHO

*Scripture Texts: Joshua 5:13-15; 6:1-25*

Israel had just entered the Promised Land when they met a foe that was impossible to overcome in their own strength. By faith in and obedience to God, His strength was made available to them. This is a type of the spiritual experience of saints. Strong foes would keep one from possessing the daily victorious life. No one is able to overcome these evil foes in his own human strength. But God, by His miraculous powers, gives victory to all who believe and obey Him, who cast away self-efforts and trust in His work.

The central object in the march was the ark, representing the presence of the Lord. The presence and leadership of the Lord gave victory. In our lives and work and problems, the Lord must be present and be given full leadership if we are to be victorious. It is through Him who loved us that we are more than conquerors. (See Romans 8:37.)

**MEMORY VERSE:** *Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.—Psalm 37:5*

**DAILY READINGS:**

- Mon.—Joshua 6** Marching around Jericho.
- Tue.—Numbers 4:1-15** How to carry the ark.
- Wed.—Psalm 18:1-24** The protection of God.
- Thu.—Psalm 18:25-50** Deliverance from enemies.
- Fri.—Acts 3:1-16; 4:1-4** Victory over spiritual enemies.
- Devotional Reading: Psalm 61** Trusting in God's strength.

### The Captain of the Lord

**Joshua 5:13-15; 6:1** In the last lesson we found that Israel had met the conditions God had commanded. They were now ready to conquer Canaan when the Lord would so direct. Joshua, **by Jericho**—was probably giving final attention and study of the city before the battle started. A man appeared close by with a drawn sword. He said He was **captain of the host of the Lord**—commander of His forces—certainly Jesus. Notice Joshua's immediate worship and submission. Three points reveal the identity of this Man: (1) He accepted worship (whereas angels refuse worship, Revelation 19:10; Judges 13: 15-16), (2) the ground where He stood was holy ground (compare Exodus 3: 4-5), and (3) in 6:2 He is called **the Lord**. Why had He come? To superintend the taking of Jericho, which was **straitly shut up** to keep Israel out. He promised victory and outlined the plan of attack and the result. Joshua removed his shoes.

### Plan of Attack

**Joshua 6:2-16** **I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king . . .** Not WILL give, but HAVE given. There is no victory without God, no allegiance to God without reverence before His holy and righteous power. We are reminded that the Lord's Prayer opens with the words: "Hallowed be thy name."

Joshua was commanded to have the people march about the city once each day, "all ye men of war . . ." and the

priests bearing "seven trumpets of rams' horns" before the ark. On the seventh day they were to march around the city seven times. Then the priests were to blow the rams' horns, the people were to shout, **with a great shout**, and the walls of the city would fall down flat, and every man would go **straight before him** to possess the city. No doubt the Canaanites gathered on the walls and scoffed at such unmilitary tactics. Did these silly people believe they could overcome a great city by marching about it with priests and soldiers and with an object carried before them which they called the ark of the covenant?

But in what appeared to be their weakness there was divine strength. God was in the midst of His people. The Israelites would have to capture other cities by the carrying out of military plans. But on this occasion, they were to put no trust whatsoever in arms, but were to rely only on the promises of God. Before we try our own powers, let us remember that supreme power is spiritual, supernatural, divine. Men and nations that expect victory under any other conditions or that rely upon any power other than spiritual power are doomed to defeat.

**And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, ye shall not shout . . . neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout . . .** Obedience was demanded from everyone. Probably some asked within themselves what was the use of all this tomfoolery. Why not go up and attack the city and be through with it? But they did not speak it to anyone else. Why? Because it took faith and patience to march around Jericho seven days and on the seventh day, seven times, and idle talk can bring discouragement to others. So are we sorely and frequently tried as we are compelled to march about our Jerichos until their walls fall down.

**So the ark of the Lord compassed the city.** Why? Because it symbolized the presence of the Lord. At the appropriate moment the horns were to be sounded. These trumpets were to call attention to the ark of God, which was the ark of the covenant or promise. It was a symbolic reminder to the people that they had nothing to rely upon for victory over the enemy but the promise of God.

### Further Instructions

**Joshua 6:17-19** Before this, Joshua had passed the Lord's Word to the people that the city and all in it was **accursed . . . and all that are therein, to the Lord.** Everything was to be destroyed except Rahab and her household. All silver, gold, brass, and other articles of worth were to be brought to the Lord's treasury.

We may ask ourselves if it was right to kill all these people. It was God's command. In that day God killed sinners to get rid of the sin. Thank God for the day of God's mercy! He now removes the sin and makes saints from sinners.

### The City Falls

**Joshua 6:20-25** **The people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets. The wall fell down flat**—flat enough for every man to walk over it **straight before him** into the city. The collapse of the walls was a miracle, but the people had a part in that miracle. The walls of wickedness in this world will never fall by our efforts alone, but neither will they come down without our efforts. God uses mankind to help perform His miracles, men and women acting together under His command in unity. Division among the followers of Christ is an outrage. Let us remember that the Prince or Captain of the host of Israel appeared to Joshua before the march about the city began. There is no victory without the Captain leading.

### JUST A THOUGHT

**Freedom not to listen is just as precious a right as freedom of speech.**