

The Battle of Jericho

Lesson 04 in the series, "Strong and Courageous"

I. Before attacking Jericho, Joshua was reminded that God is in charge.

"When Joshua was near the town of Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and demanded, 'Are you friend or foe?' 'Neither one,' he replied. 'I am the commander of the LORD's army.' At this, Joshua fell with his face to the ground in reverence. 'I am at your command,' Joshua said. 'What do you want your servant to do?' The commander of the LORD's army replied, 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.' And Joshua did as he was told." Joshua 5:13-15 (NLT)

Life Application: Good News! I don't need to bear the responsibilities of God-given assignments alone.

"The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." Deuteronomy 31:8 (NIV) (See also Hebrews 13:5.)

Note: The Lord sends angels to fight on our behalf. "If you make the LORD your refuge, if you make the Most High your shelter, no evil will conquer you; no plague will come near your home. For he will order his angels to protect you wherever you go." Psalm 91:9-11 (NLT)

II. God gave Joshua a supernatural battle strategy for conquering the stronghold of Jericho.

"Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. But the LORD said to Joshua, 'I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors. You and your fighting men should march around the town once a day for six days. Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. When you hear the priests give one long blast on the rams' horns, have all the people shout as loud as they can. Then the walls of the town will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the town.'" Joshua 6:1-5 (NLT)

Life Application: God has given us supernatural weapons to demolish strongholds in our lives.

"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." 2 Corinthians 10:4 (NIV) (See also Ephesians 6:11-18.)

III. Joshua and all the people of Israel courageously followed God's instructions.

"So Joshua called together the priests and said, 'Take up the Ark of the LORD's Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram's horn.' Then he gave orders to the people: 'March around the town, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the LORD.' After Joshua spoke to the people, the seven priests with the rams' horns started marching in the presence of the LORD, blowing the horns as they marched. And the Ark of the LORD's Covenant followed behind them. Some of the armed men marched in front of the priests with the horns and some behind the Ark, with the priests continually blowing the horns. 'Do not shout; do not even talk,' Joshua commanded. 'Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!' So the Ark of the LORD was carried around the town once that day, and then everyone returned to spend the night in the camp. Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the LORD. The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the LORD, blowing their horns. Again the armed men marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the LORD. All this time the priests were blowing their horns. On the second day they again marched around the town once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days. On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the town as they had done before. But this time they went around the town seven times." Joshua 6:6-15 (NLT)

Some important biblical symbols worth noting:

- *Seven* = completion/fullness. (Genesis 15:13-16)
- *Trumpets* = God's presence. (Exodus 19:16)
- *The Ark* = God's covenant with His people. (Exodus 6:7, 25:21)

Life Application: Some strongholds require time and repeated prayers/efforts to overcome.

"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7 (NLT)

IV. When the people shouted, all of the walls around Jericho fell except where Rahab lived.

“The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on their horns, Joshua commanded the people, ‘Shout! For the LORD has given you the town! Jericho and everything in it must be completely destroyed as an offering to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and the others in her house will be spared, for she protected our spies.’ When the people heard the sound of the rams’ horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the town and captured it.” Joshua 6:16-17, 20 (NLT)

Note: Rahab saved as many relatives as she could from God’s judgment. “The men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all the other relatives who were with her. They moved her whole family to a safe place near the camp of Israel.” Joshua 6:23 (NLT)

Life Application: We need to save as many of our friends and family as we can from God’s judgment.

“I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.” 1 Corinthians 9:22 (NLT)

V. Joshua did his best to ensure that the stronghold of Jericho would never be rebuilt.

“At that time Joshua invoked this curse: ‘May the curse of the LORD fall on anyone who tries to rebuild the town of Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay its foundation. At the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates.’” Joshua 6:26 (NLT) (See also 1 Kings 16:34.)

Life Application: When we gain victory over a stronghold, we must be careful NEVER to rebuild it.

“...should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?” Romans 6:1-2 (NLT)

VI. Joshua became a respected leader because he trusted God and obediently stepped out in faith.

“So the LORD was with Joshua, and his reputation spread throughout the land.” Joshua 6:27 (NLT)

Life Application: “...we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” Romans 8:37 (NIV)

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Connect Group questions:

1. When did you first hear the story of Joshua and the battle of Jericho? What did you learn from the story?
2. Share the scariest challenge you have ever faced. How did you deal with it?
3. Read Psalm 34:7 and 91:9-11. How does it make you feel to know that God has angels watching over you?
4. Read Joshua 6:6-20. Why do you think God had the Israelites march around Jericho 13 times? Have you ever had to go round and round with a problem in your life?
5. We all face strongholds in our life (habitual sins or chronic problems that seem impossible to overcome). What strongholds do people face in our society (poverty, abuse, lust, fear, addiction, anger, etc.)? How does our faith in God help us conquer strongholds? (See 2 Corinthians 10:4.)
6. Discuss Deuteronomy 31:8. If we believe this verse, why do we worry so much?
7. Joshua 6:27 says that after the battle of Jericho Joshua’s reputation spread throughout the land. Why do you think that happened? What reputation would you like people to spread about you?
8. Pray as a group for the desire to see lost souls come to Jesus.