

GRACE TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAWNSIDE
Wednesday Night Bible Study (Class Notes)

JOSHUA 6: THE FALL OF JERICHO

It is difficult to imagine which obstacle would be more intimidating: the flood-swollen Jordan, or Jericho. Having witnessed the wonders of God's parting the Jordan, Israel should have every reason to trust that the Lord is with Joshua as they approach Jericho (Joshua 3:7). In this chapter all eyes are on this fortified city, a city built for a fight and filled with men trained for war. But this city, as the spies found out, was melting in fear (2:11), fully aware of Yahweh's power. The God of Israel was the God of heaven and earth, and he had a claim on Jericho. The manner in which the Lord took this city was carefully tuned to make a point, both to the surrounding peoples and to Israel.

- A. God's commands and Israel's obedience before the fall of Jericho
 - 1. God's promise of victory against Jericho. (1-2)
 - a. Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel:
 - b. The Lord said to Joshua:
 - c. I have given Jericho into your hand:
 - 2. Instructions for the action against Jericho. (3-5)
 - a. You shall march around the city:
 - b. All you men of war:
 - c. The wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him:
 - 3. Joshua tells the priests and the people what to do. (6-7)
 - a. Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests:
 - b. Take up the ark of the covenant:
 - c. And he said to the people:
 - 4. The march of the first six days. (8-14)
 - a. When Joshua had spoken to the people:
 - b. Advanced and blew the trumpets:
 - c. So, he had the ark of the Lord circle the city, going around it once:
 - d. So, they did six days:
 - e. So, they did six days:
 - 5. The march of the seventh day. (15-16)
 - a. On the seventh day:
 - b. Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!

6. The command to destroy the city and to save Rahab. (17-19)
 - a. Only Rahab the harlot shall live:
 - b. By all means abstain from the accursed things:
 - c. But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord:

- B. The fall of Jericho.
 1. The walls come down and the city is destroyed. (20-21)
 - a. The people shouted with a great shout:
 - b. The wall fell down flat:
 - c. They utterly destroyed all that was in the city:
 - d. They took the city:

 2. The rescue of Rahab. (22-25)
 - a. Bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her:
 - b. They burned the city and all that was in it with fire . . . Joshua spared Rahab the harlot:
 - c. So, she dwells in Israel to this day:

 3. Joshua curses the man who would re-fortify Jericho. (26-27)
 - a. Cursed be the man before the Lord who rises up and builds this city Jericho:
 - b. So, the Lord was with Joshua:
 - c. His fame spread throughout all the country:

Chapter 6 Questions:

1. What does the shutting up of Jericho symbolize about the state of the city and its fear of the Israelites? (1)
2. Why did Joshua command the people not to shout or even speak until he told them to? (10)
3. How often did the Israelites march around Jericho the first six days? (11-14)
4. How often did they march around Jericho on the seventh day? (15)
5. What can we learn from Rahab's situation? How did her actions of faith and loyalty impact her future? (17)
6. What were they Israelites to abstain from? (18)
7. What was to be done with the silver and gold? (19,24)
8. What happened to the walls of Jericho when the Israelites shouted? (20)
9. Why was it important for the silver, gold, bronze, and iron to be placed in the treasury of the LORD's house? (24)
10. Who were the only inhabitants of Jericho that were spared? (17, 21-23,25)

JOSHUA 7: DEFEAT AT AI AND ACHAN'S SIN

Immediately after the triumph at Jericho, the Israelites fight against the city of Ai, but are unable to take it. God tells Joshua that Israel lost because of God's anger. One of the Israelites has kept some of the "devoted things" from Jericho for himself instead of destroying them. Therefore, Israel herself has become a "devoted thing," which will be destroyed unless the sinner is punished, and the stolen objects destroyed (Joshua 7:12). Following instructions from the Lord, Joshua assembles the Israelites tribe by tribe, then clan by clan, then household by household. God reveals Achan, of the tribe of Judah, as the culprit. He and his household, along with the devoted things he kept, are taken, and destroyed. The call to destroy devoted things also has overtones of sacrificial language. Like a burnt offering, the devoted things are to be destroyed by fire (Joshua 6:24; 7:15). Like a sacrifice, they are to be "devoted to the LORD for destruction" (6:17). The ban also means, of course, that Israel cannot profit from war.

A. Defeat at Ai.

1. Not all of Israel obeyed the law of the devoted things. (1)
 - a. The children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things:
 - b. The accursed things:
 - c. So, the anger of the Lord burned against:
2. Spies report from the city of Ai. (2-3)
 - a. So, the men went up and spied out Ai:
 - b. Do not weary all the people there, for the people of Ai are few:
3. Israel is defeated at Ai. (4-5)
 - a. About three thousand men went up:
 - b. And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men:
 - c. Therefore, the hearts of the people melted and became like water:

B. In a time of crisis, Joshua goes before the Lord.

1. Joshua's fear: God's unfaithfulness was the cause of defeat at Ai. (6-9)
 - a. Then Joshua tore his clothes:
 - b. Alas, Lord God, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all:
 - c. Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan!
 - d. Then what will You do for Your great name?
2. The real reason for defeat: Israel has sinned. (10-11)
 - a. Israel has sinned:
 - b. Israel has sinned...they.... they... they also:
 - c. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived:

3. The effect of the sin: Israel had no power against their enemies. (12-13)
 - a. Therefore, the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies:
 - b. They have become doomed to destruction:
 - c. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you:
 4. Instructions for judgment of the sin. (14-15)
 - a. The tribe which the Lord takes:
 - b. Then it shall be that he who is taken with the accursed thing shall be burned with fire:
- C. The public judgment of Achan's sin.
1. God reveals the identity of the head of the family that had sinned. (16-18)
 - a. Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken:
 - b. Achan the son of Carmi:
 2. Joshua confronts Achan, and he confesses. (19-21)
 - a. My son, I beg you, give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession to Him:
 - b. A beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels:
 - c. I coveted them and took them:
 3. The confession confirmed, and judgment executed. (22-26)
 - a. His sons, his daughters:
 - b. The name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day:
 - c. So, the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger:

Chapter 7 Questions:

1. Why did Israel send only 3,000 men to fight against Ai? (2-3)
2. Why was Israel defeated by Ai? (11-13)
3. How did Joshua find out that Achan was the one who sinned? (1,16-18)
4. What was Achan's confession? (19-21)
5. What was done to Achan, his family, and his possessions? (24-26)

JOSHUA 8: VICTORY OVER AI, ISRAEL AT GERIZIM AND EBAL

The first of two covenant renewal ceremonies in Joshua (the other is in Joshua 24), this passage in chapter 8 tells of an assembly at Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, near the city of Shechem (though Shechem is not mentioned explicitly). Joshua builds an altar where sacrifices are offered; he writes down the law of Moses on the stones, then reads the words of the law—both blessings and curses—to the people. This ceremony fulfills to the letter the command of the Lord in Deuteronomy 27 to hold such a ceremony. In this passage, as in the rest of the book, Joshua is depicted as an exemplary leader: “As the LORD had commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses” (Joshua 11:15).

A. Plans for victory.

1. God encourages Joshua and gives him instructions. (1-2)
 - a. Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed:
 - b. Take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai:
 - c. Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves:
 - d. Lay an ambush for the city behind it:
2. Plans made for an ambush upon Ai. (3-8)
 - a. Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor:
 - b. Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city:
3. Joshua stays with the people. (9-10)
 - a. Joshua lodged that night among the people:
 - b. Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people:

B. Victory at the second battle of Ai.

1. Preparations for the second battle of Ai. (11-13)
 - a. All the people of war who were with him went up and drew near:
 - b. Joshua went that night into the midst:
2. The ambush works; the fighting men of Ai leave the city. (14-17)
 - a. When the king of Ai saw it, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle:
 - b. And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them:
3. The trap is carried out against Ai. (18-20)
 - a. Stretch out the spear that is in your hand:
 - b. They entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire:

4. The complete defeat of Ai. (21-29)
 - a. They struck them down, so that they let none of them remain or escape:
 - b. Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear:
 - c. Until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai:
 - d. According to the word of the Lord which He had commanded Joshua:

- C. Blessings proclaimed from Mount Gerizim, curses from Mount Ebal.
 1. An altar built at Mount Ebal. (30-31)
 - a. Now Joshua built an altar to the Lord God of Israel:
 - b. And they offered on it burnt offerings to the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings:

 2. Blessings read from Mount Gerizim, curses from Mount Ebal. (32-35)
 - a. He wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written:
 - b. The stranger as well as he who was born among them:
 - c. Half of them were in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal:
 - d. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel:

Chapter 8 Questions:

1. What military strategy did Joshua use to defeat Ai? (3-8)
2. How many of the men of Ai were lured from the city? (16-17)
3. What did Joshua do to the king of Ai? (29)
4. What did Joshua build on Mount Ebal? (30-32)
5. What did Joshua read to the whole assembly of Israel? (34-35)

JOSHUA 9: THE GIBEONITE DECEPTION

Through trickery, the Gibeonites of central Canaan persuade the Israelites to make a treaty with them, so that they and their cities will not be destroyed. When the Israelites discover the trick, they honor the treaty, but consign the Gibeonites to be “hewers of wood and drawers of water” for the sanctuary.

- A. Two different strategies of attack against Israel.
 - 1. Canaanite kings gather against Israel. (1-2)
 - a. When all the kings who were on this side of the Jordan...heard about it:
 - b. They gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord:
 - 2. The Gibeonites approach Joshua and Israel in another way. (3-6)
 - a. When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard:
 - b. They worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors:
 - c. They worked craftily:
 - d. From a far country:
- B. How Joshua and the leaders of Israel were deceived.
 - 1. The Gibeonites explain their story to Joshua and the leaders of Israel. (7-13)
 - a. Perhaps you dwell among us:
 - b. From a very far country your servants have come:
 - 2. Joshua and the leaders of Israel accept the deception of the Gibeonites. (14-15)
 - a. The men of Israel took some of their provisions:
 - b. They did not ask counsel of the Lord:
 - c. So, Joshua made peace with them:
- C. The deception of the Gibeonites uncovered and dealt with.
 - 1. Joshua and the leaders of Israel discover they have been deceived, yet they abide by their sworn oath to the Gibeonites. (16-20)
 - a. The children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day:
 - b. All the congregation complained against the rulers:
 - c. Then all the rulers said to all the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them”:
 - d. Because of the oath which we swore to them: Later, King Saul broke this promise to the Gibeonites and his sin brought famine upon Israel in the days of David (2 Samuel 21:1-9).
 - 2. A glorious punishment for the Gibeonites: Joshua makes them servants to the Lord. (21-27)
 - a. Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers:
 - b. Your servants were clearly told that the Lord your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land:
 - c. So, they answered Joshua and said:

Chapter 9 Questions:

1. How does the reaction of the local kings to Israel's victories in Joshua 9:1-2 reflect the influence that our victories and achievements can have on others?
2. How did the people of Gibeon fool Israel? (3-13)
3. What did the men of Israel fail to do? (14)
4. What did Joshua make the Gibeonites to become? (27)
5. Despite being deceived, the Israelites chose to respect the agreement they made. How can this situation speak to the importance of honoring our word in today's world, even when circumstances are challenging?

JOSHUA 10: THE LORD FIGHTS FOR ISRAEL, THE SOUTHERN KINGS CONQUERED

The people of Gibeon, in central Canaan, enter into a treaty with Israel in Joshua 9. Hearing of this, five neighboring kings join forces to attack Gibeon, and the Gibeonites send to Joshua for help. The Israelites come to defend their allies, and in the ensuing battle, Joshua asks the sun and the moon to stand still. They do so for a day, and the battle is won for the Israelites. The account ends, "There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded a human voice; for the LORD fought for Israel" (Joshua 10:14). It is unclear why Joshua asks the sun to stand still; perhaps it is to allow the Israelites more time to defeat their enemies. In any case, the words he speaks are apparently part of a quotation from the "Book of Jashar" (Joshua 10:13). The same book is mentioned in 2 Samuel 1:18, though the work has long since been lost to antiquity. The verb used to refer to the sun's actions in the original poetic fragment in Joshua 10:12-13 can be translated "be silent" (or "be dark") instead of "stand still." Some interpreters have therefore speculated that the quotation refers to an eclipse or to some other natural phenomenon. As at Jericho and Ai, the victory at Gibeon belongs to the Lord, not to any military might on the part of the Israelites.

A. A miraculous victory for Israel.

1. Adoni-Zedek and his fear of Israel. (1-2)
 - a. Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai:
 - b. And how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel:
 - c. They feared greatly:

2. The southern kings of Canaan assemble for an attack on Gibeon. (3-5)
 - a. Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron:
 - b. King of Jerusalem . . . King of Hebron . . . King of Jarmuth . . . King of Lachish . . . King of Eglon:
 - c. That we may attack Gibeon:

3. The plea for help from Gibeon. (6)
 - a. Sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal:
 - b. Do not forsake your servants;

B. The defeat of the southern kings of Canaan.

1. Joshua and the people of Israel are faithful to their vow to the Gibeonites. (7)
 - a. So, Joshua ascended from Gilgal:
 - b. He and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor:

2. God's command and promise to Joshua. (8)
 - a. Do not fear them:
 - b. I have delivered them into your hand:

3. Joshua's response of faith. (9)
 - a. Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly:
 - b. Having marched all night from Gilgal:

4. God sends large hailstones to defeat the Canaanites. (10-11)
 - a. So, the Lord routed them before Israel:
 - b. The Lord cast down large hailstones from heaven:
 - c. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword:

5. God extends the day to maximize Israel's victory. (12-15)
 - a. "Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." So, the sun stood still:
 - b. So, the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it:
 - c. Till the people had revenge upon their enemies:
 - d. The Book of Jasher:

6. The completion of the battle. (16-21)
 - a. Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave.... pursue your enemies, and attack their rear guard:
 - b. Made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter:
 - c. No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel:

7. The execution of the Canaanite kings. (22-27)
 - a. Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings:
 - b. Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings:
 - c. And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees:

- C. Conquest of the South completed.
 1. The fall of the Canaanite city of Makkedah. (28)
 2. The fall of the Canaanite city of Libnah. (29-30)
 3. The fall of the Canaanite city of Lachish. (31-32)
 4. The fall of the Canaanite city of Gezer. (33)
 5. The fall of the Canaanite city of Eglon. (34-35)
 6. The fall of the Canaanite city of Hebron. (36-37)
 7. The fall of the Canaanite city of Debir. (38-39)
 8. Summary of the conquest of the southern Canaanite kingdoms. (40-43)
 - a. So, Joshua conquered all the land:
 - b. The Lord God of Israel fought for Israel:
 - c. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal:

Chapter 10 Questions:

1. Who joined forces to attack Gibeon? (5)
2. How did the LORD kill more of them than with Israelite swords? (11)
3. What other miracle occurred during the battle? (13-14)
4. What did Joshua do to the five kings? (23-27)
5. What other cities did Joshua destroy? (28-43)