



Biblical Manhood

Remembering Our Legacy, Fulfilling Our Destiny
November/December, 2017

The Destruction of Jericho

Joshua 6 records the fall of Jericho. The people of Israel trusted in the Lord and obeyed His directions. God's response was stunning, "So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city" (**Joshua 6:20**).

The people were able to capture the seemingly impenetrable fortress of Jericho. It was an amazing victory granted by the power of God. It is a testimony to God's greatness and His ability to do above and beyond what we think is impossible.

However **Joshua 6:21** is hard for many people to swallow, "Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword." This is a difficult verse for modern believers. It sounds cruel and unbecoming to God's character and God's ways.

How do we deal with such a difficult verse as this? How do we apply the truth of Joshua 6 to our lives today? I'd suggest the

following applications to help understand and apply this difficult truth to our lives today.

Judgment is God's last resort.

It's crucial to remember that this judgment on Jericho was not random or arbitrary. This applies to the entire invasion of Canaan by Israel. This judgment came after generations of rebellion toward God and provocation of His holy character.

In **Genesis 15:16**, God declares that Israel, the descendants of Abraham, will return to Canaan after four generations. Why would it take so long for them to return? The Bible says, "And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." God was being patient. He was giving the Canaanites time to repent. They had not gone beyond the mercy of God. God exercised great mercy and patience with the Canaanites.

In **Deuteronomy 9**, the LORD explains why He is driving the Canaanites out of the Promised Land. It's not because of Israel's goodness or righteousness. God has a very different reason, "whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving these nations out before you" (**9:4**). God emphasizes by the repeating it in **9:5**.

These verses point to that fact that God's judgment is a last resort. God only judges when His mercy and patience have been exhausted. The destruction of Jericho and that of the Canaanites was not a capricious act of an unstable deity. It was the result of His mercy and patience being exhausted over generations.

There is salvation for those who trust in God.

People often focus on **Joshua 6:21**. Yet, they conveniently forget **Joshua 6:22-23, 25**. There were people who were delivered from Jericho. Not everybody was destroyed. Those who believed God and trusted in Him were delivered. They were spared.

The people of Jericho, even the whole of Canaan, were not without evidence (**Joshua 2:9-10**). They had heard of the LORD, the God of Israel. They were exposed to His mighty power. They knew of His blessing on the Israelites who believed and trusted in Him.

Hebrews 11:31 declares, "By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she gave a friendly welcome to the spies." The people of Jericho were disobedient. There were not without the knowledge of God (**Romans 1:19-21**). They also received the specific revelation of God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt. They witnessed the miraculous crossing at the Jordan. They had all kinds of evidence to lead them to trust the Lord – to surrender to Him.

Unlike Rahab, they chose to be disobedient. Rahab chose to believe – to bow her life to the LORD, the God of Israel. If she did this, surely they could have also. They chose to resist Israel's God and bore the consequences. Rahab and her family believed Israel's God and received deliverance and life.

That's the point. Yes, there was full and total judgment. However, those who believed were delivered. Those who trusted Israel's God were saved. If they had acknowledged the

Lord and bowed to Him, they were delivered. Those who trust in the Lord don't have to fear His wrath. Those who take refuge in Him will never face His burning, fearful retribution.

When God's wrath falls, it is only by faith in the provision of God's grace, which He offers, that sinners can be rescued. Israel learned that lesson on Passover night in Egypt (**Exodus 12**). It is being taught here again. It is the message that we are to take from this text. There is salvation for those who trust in the Lord and His offer of grace.

God is just

Another application of this text is that God is just. God hates sin. He will not overlook guilt nor spare the guilty forever. He is perfectly just in judging sin.

We see this in two ways in this text. First, we see it in the invasion and destruction of Jericho. God was just in His judgment and destruction of Jericho. He had been longsuffering in His patience and mercy. At the same time, the wickedness of the Canaanites is graphically displayed in **Leviticus 18**. **Leviticus 18** is a litany of perversion and godlessness. The people were guilty of committing countless abominations before the Lord. God is just. He won't overlook sin and guilt forever. He has to judge sin to be true to His character.

Second, we see the truth that God is just in **Joshua 6:26**. The act of rebuilding Jericho would be rebellion toward God. God had judged and destroyed this city because of its sin. To rebuild this city was defiance of God. Rebuilding this city was a reflection of the

rebellion that brought judgment on the city in the first place.

The truth that God is just may not be palatable to modern man. Yet, this text is clear. He hates sin. He will not overlook guilt forever. He will judge sin.

Christians have a different war to wage.

Christians are not to engage in a holy war against other human beings. We are not to take up physical weapons for the cause of Christ against other human beings. The holy war of Israel was for a specific time, geography, and intent. It was intended to protect Israel's faith and worship and to carry out God's righteous judgment against sinful rebellion.

In the New Testament, we are taught that our battle is for the hearts and minds of people (**2 Corinthians 10:3-5**). We battle to liberate people from the chains of the world, the devil, and the flesh by the Word of God. When we see evil manifested, we are to oppose it as vigorously and purposefully as we can with the weapons that God has given to us.

We are also taught that our weapons are not physical weapons. They are spiritual weapons, which are made mighty by God. What are the weapons of the believer?

- The proclamation of God's Word
- The power of the Holy Spirit
- Prayer
- Worship
- Fellowship
- Loving our enemies
- The armor of God
- Faith in our Commander, Jesus Christ

God has given these mighty weapons us in our war for the hearts and minds of people.

Temporal judgments point to and preview the final judgment.

One final application of this text is that it points us to God's final judgment. The physical, temporal judgments of God in the Bible point us to the end – when God judges and puts down all His enemies. As devastating as this text is, it cannot compare with God's final judgment. This temporal judgment was horrific. However, it's only a preview of God's judgment of His enemies in the end. It will be more gruesome than this event can portray.

This text calls us to examine our hearts. God is just and He will judge sin. Are we prepared to face the judgment of God? Are we trusting in God's offer of grace through Jesus Christ? If you aren't, I implore you to turn from your sin to trust in Christ. If you are, I challenge you to renew your commitment to the good news of Jesus Christ.

World Prayer Plan

January

- 1-Afghanistan-The Church
- 2-Afghanistan-The Lost
- 3-Albania
- 4-Algeria
- 5-American Samoa
- 6-Andorra
- 7-Angola
- 8-Anguilla
- 9-Antigua
- 10-Argentina-The Church
- 11-Argentina-The Lost
- 12-Armenia
- 13-Aruba

14-Australia-The Church
 15-Australia-The Lost
 16-Austria-The Church
 17-Austria-The Lost
 18-Azerbaijan
 19-Bahamas
 20-Bangladesh
 21-Barbados
 22-Belgium
 23-Belize
 24-Benin
 25-Bermuda
 26-Bhutan
 27-Bolivia-The Church
 28-Bolivia-The Lost
 29-Botswana
 30-Brazil-The Church
 31-Brazil-The Lost

February

1-British Virgin Islands
 2-Brunei
 3-Bulgaria
 4-Burkina Faso
 5-Burundi
 6-Byelarus
 7-Cambodia
 8-Cameroon
 9-Canada-The Church
 10-Canada-The Lost
 11-Cape Verde Islands
 12-Cayman Islands
 13-Central African Republic
 14-Chad
 15-Channel Islands
 16-Chile
 17-China-The Church
 18-China-The Lost

19-China-Persecuted Believers
 20-China-Spiritual Warfare
 21-China-Missionaries
 22-China-Agencies Working in China
 23-China-Provision of Bibles
 24-China-Christian Literature
 25-China-Conversion of Soldiers
 26-China-Collapse of Communism
 27-China-Taiwan
 28-Colombia-The Church

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