

# God Gives Victory Over Jericho

Joshua 6:1-27

This story is probably one of the best-known stories in the Old Testament. Certainly it is one of the most dramatic because of the way God chose to claim the city for the Israelites.

Archaeologists have found the site of ancient Jericho but are still uncertain which city is the one delivered into the hands of the Israelites because it has been destroyed so many times. In light of the curse put upon Jericho in Joshua 6:26, the archaeological findings are interesting indeed.

While scouting out the city, Joshua was no doubt surprised to see a man with a drawn sword in front of him (Joshua 5:13). We don't know if this was an appearance of God himself, a preincarnate appearance of Jesus, or an angel; however, we do know that he was someone sent from God. Notice how the messenger responds to Joshua's question "Are you for us or for our enemies?" The messenger was the commander of the Lord's army. It was up to Joshua and Israel to be on the Lord's side, not for the commander to be on Joshua's side! In Joshua 5:15 we are reminded once again of one of Moses' encounters with God: the time at the burning bush when Moses was asked to remove his sandals because the place on which he stood was holy ground (Exodus 3:5).

In the middle of God's message to Joshua, the writer stops to mention a very important fact in Joshua 6:1: The people of Jericho had closed up their city, counting on its strong fortifications to protect them. It was so firmly sealed that no one could go in or out. This meant that no one from Jericho would get in the way as the Israelites marched around the city walls!

Notice that God not only told Joshua what to do, but also told him precisely what would happen (Joshua 6:5). Assuming that the word from God spread among the Israelites, imagine their increasing anticipation as the army marched silently around the city day after day and then seven times on the seventh day. The people knew that God was about to do something spectacular!

Just as promised, Rahab and her family were spared because of the faith she had shown in hiding the Hebrew spies. God's power worked to save her and the Israelites, while at the same time it was working to destroy the inhabitants of Jericho for their idolatry and immorality.

## **Devotion for Leaders**

**The One Thing:** A relationship with Jesus allows us to walk in confidence, as his power of forgiveness has given us freedom. His love for us provides us with what we need to be clean in his perfect eyes.

**Weaving Faith Into Your Life:** Take a few minutes to write down as many words as you can that show the character of God: powerful, patient, creative, and faithful, to name a few. After the list is complete, save it and use it as a devotional tool. Each day, meditate on one of these characteristics and how God has shown that characteristic in your life. Give God praise, and acknowledge his mighty work in your life.