

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERICHO



Passages to Study: Joshua 5:13 - 6:27.

Read with the class: Joshua 6:1-5, 15-16, 20-25

Texts for memorization:

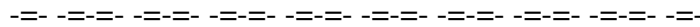
Younger: Hebrews 11:30

Older Hebrews 11:30 - 31



OBJECTIVES: To teach:

- 1. That to conquer the promised land would require much effort.
2. That God fights for us and with us and He reveals what we have to do.
3. That one needs to learn what is God's will and be willing to obey immediately.
4. The attitude of patience that ought to characterize those who await liberty.
5. That when obedience is present, God will respond and act according to His promise.



SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS: Inside a house, figures of Rahab and members of her family.

DEVELOPMENT:

- After the visit of the spies, Rahab began to tell her relatives about the step she had taken that would affect her future.
- Rahab's faith would be evident as she communicated the message of hope she had received from the servants of God.
- To escape the coming judgment, they had to BELIEVE the message and join her in OBEYING the instructions given by the spies.

Sug. Comment on the possible reactions of those who listened to Rahab. Some would consider it impossible that the destruction announced would really occur.

- They had confidence in the thickness of the city walls and the steps taken by the king for their security.
- They trusted in the efficiency of the soldiers who were carefully seeking the spies. Also, Jericho could be hermetically closed against enemies. (Josh.6:1)

Cns. How would Rahab describe to the others the things that were about to happen?

Apl. Compare the message that Rahab had to give with the message of the gospel given out in our day. There are several parallels between the two messages.

- As evidence of their faith, the "believers" (Rahab and her family) had to stay inside the house marked by the red cord, symbol of their trust in the power of God.
- They were to wait quietly until the spies came to take them out.

Cmt. The instruction was STAY IN THE HOUSE and WAIT, all of which required patience.

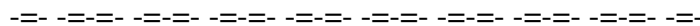
Cns. What would they be saying as they watched the Israelites marching around the city?

Apl. As believers we wait for the "setting free" that will occur with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to take us away.

- The testimony of Rahab and her confidence in God, was a rejection of her own gods.

Apl. The colour red is symbol of blood or redemption.

Lsn. The believer today is saved from eternal condemnation, for the blood of Christ has washed that person from all sin.



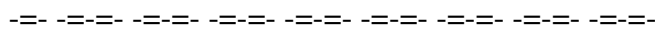
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SCENE No. 2 VISUAL AIDS. Near Jericho, figures of Joshua and the captain of the host (or army) of the Lord. Also a figure of the Israelites preceding and following the ark carried by the priests. Later add a figure of Joshua giving the shout.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Joshua talks with the captain of the Lord’s hosts. (Joshua 5:13-15)
- Cmt.** In this theophany (visible manifestation of the Lord), Joshua receives direct instructions from God. His response of falling on his face before Him demonstrates Joshua’s humility.
- The Israelites draw near to the city, led by their armed men.
- The ark of God is placed at the head of the remainder of the people, guiding the multitude in the act of marching around the city before conquering Jericho.
- The inhabitants of the city stay shut up inside, trusting in the protection of the enormous walls.
- They will learn too late that they have placed their trust in something that is incapable of protecting them against the destruction God brings upon the condemned city.
- Sug.** Mention the text Hebrews 10:31, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!”
- Sug.** Ask the students what things people are trusting in today to save them from eternal condemnation and show how such things are as futile as the walls of Jericho before the power of God.
- As the Israelites march around the city, they pass below a window very different to the others.
- Rahab’s house is marked with a red cord, an outward sign that makes visible the confidence those inside have placed in the God of Israel.
- Cns.** Forty years before, the children of Israel had experienced the protection of the blood of the lamb applied to the door of their houses in Egypt.
- On the seventh day, as the people march around the city, Joshua shouts, a sign to the people to shout also.
- The loud shout and the words, “Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city,” show clearly that the destruction is due to divine power and not due to the strength of the invading army.
- In their shout, the Israelites confess the name of the Lord. Their shout would be heard by the inhabitants of Jericho.
- Cns.** It is possible that in Jericho there were mockers who would laugh at the Israelites.
- Apl.** There always will be mockers, even in the days just before the coming of the Lord to take away His own.
- Apl:** His coming will bring about the destruction of the unbelievers. (2 Peter 3:3-4)



SCENE No. 3. VISUAL AIDS: Figures of a destroyed Jericho in flames, and Rahab and her family being led out by the spies and taken to Joshua.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Rahab was the person who received the message from the spies, and she had shared it with others.
- Relatives of Rahab believed the good news she brought them and obeyed the message together with her.
- Rahab and her relatives are taken away from a condemned city.
- Lsn.** They were saved because they took refuge in the house marked by the red cord.
- Cns.** The gospel is for sharing and not to be kept to oneself.
- Note:** VBV (Verse by Verse) notes are included.

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COMMENTARY: Verse by Verse - JOSHUA 6.

v.1 JERICHO.... STRAITLY SHUT UP for fear of the Israelites.

The authorities had forbidden any from going in or out.

Apl. The unconverted fear when it is evident that God is in the midst of His people.

Cns. The Israelites could have besieged the city and its inhabitants would have surrendered to them. But it was God's will to **DESTROY THEM** and manifest His power.

v.2 Encouraging words were given to Joshua. He in turn would communicate them to the people. There was going to be a complete surrender of: **1) Jericho; 2) Its king; and 3) its army.**

Joshua did not have to think up his own plan for this.

v.3 The march around the city would last several hours, once a day, for six days.

v.4 Seven priests were to march **BEFORE** the ark, blowing their trumpets.

The trumpets were of the kind used on the days of jubilee.

Cmp. Ex. 19:13; Lev. 25:8-54; 27:17-24; Num. 36:4.

Cns. 1 Thess. 4:16, "The trumpet of God." Used on occasions of great importance.

Instructions for the seventh day. Seven times around the city. **Seven** - Number of something complete.

v.5 After the last time around, a long blast would be followed by a loud shout from the people, and the walls would fall down.

Apl. Faith takes hold of the invisible. Who would believe that these enormous walls would fall at the sound of a trumpet and a shout?

Cns. It is an example of faith: **1) God says it, 2) I believe it, 3) I act upon it, 4) God responds.**

v.6 Joshua commands that they do **EXACTLY** as God has said.

v.7 The armed forces go first.

Cmt. They were not to use their weapons until God had done His work of making the walls fall down.

Cmp. v.21. They were armed but their use was limited until the right moment arrived.

v.8 They carried out the word of God exactly.

With them went the symbol of the presence of God -- **THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE LORD.**

The ark is mentioned 9 times. No doubt its presence attracted the attention of the people of Jericho, although it was covered by a cloth.

v.9 No doubt the trumpets made a deafening sound. The trumpets would give a prolonged sound after the last round of the city, but the walls would not fall down until the people shouted.

How would the people of Jericho react? Afraid? Worried? What would they have talked about day after day as the Israelites went around the city?

What would Rahab have been thinking? She remains inside without leaving her place.

The Israelites would be able to identify Rahab's house. Would they signal to her with their hands?

v.10 They were warned not to shout or make noise but be silent while they marched.

Apl. Faith requires obedience. God has His ways and the believer adapts to Him.

v.11 What would the people talk about in their tents, once they returned from their march each day?

Sug. They would be tired from so much walking.

v.12 Joshua was the leader.

vss.13-14 They were not to stop, but to keep walking. The Israelites fulfilled the will of the Lord.

v.15 Everybody got up early on the seventh day. It was a special and important day. The march on the seventh day was longer than on the previous six days.



v.16 Being so tired, what would their shout be like?

Cns. If the Israelites had to enter at this point to fight against Jericho, no doubt they would not have had sufficient strength.

Apl. God can work when we recognize our weakness and lack of ability.

Apl. To the unsaved: It is not the one who works for salvation that is saved, but the one who trusts.

Apl. To the saved: Dependence on God alone is required.

v.17 The only ones saved are those who have believed Rahab's message. She had been converted when the spies spoke to her.

SHE HID THE MESSENGERS. A work carried out by Rahab as a sign of her faith in the word of the messengers and of her commitment to the people of God.

Apl. When someone believes, it is seen in the works of that person.

v.18 The victory was God's.

The Israelites were not to take any advantage from the situation. They were to take nothing for themselves. They were warned against avarice, coveting something for themselves.

Cns. Imagine the fights that would have occurred if several had wanted to take away the same things.

Cmt. Disobedience would affect everybody. **ANATHEMA** Every article that was not going to be taken to the treasury of the Lord was to be left to be burned. **v.24.** Anathema sig. something consecrated.

v.19 The treasury of God would receive the precious metals.

v.20 FELL DOWN FLAT. It collapsed. Heb. 11:30. Word in original gives the idea of falling from above downward, to become prostrate. It did not fall **INWARD** nor **OUTWARD** but **DOWNWARD**.

Cmt. Some think there was an earthquake. However, Rahab's house was not affected.

v.21 Complete destruction.

Apl. When God destroys, it does a complete work.

v.22 Privilege given to the spies to go for Rahab.

Apl. They proved that their word was worthy of being believed.

Apl. When Christ comes, then we will fully realize the truth of His promises.

v.23 Rahab and her relatives were put outside the camp. They had to be received formally.

Possibly there were seven days of purification, due to their previous relationship with idolatry and paganism. See Num. 31:19.

v.24 God did not permit the Israelites to be enriched with the goods of the people of Jericho.

Lsn. The Israelites were to depend on God alone. Later on in other places, they were allowed to take for themselves spoils of war. Here at the start, there was a lesson to be learned - God was their Provider.

Cmt. Perhaps at the start of their stay in Canaan, some would think that the things left for burning, could have been useful to them. God wanted them to depend on Him.

v.25 Now Rahab formally joins the Israelites and forms part of the people of God because of having believed the message of liberty.

Apl. When one believes, that person becomes part of the people of God today.

v.26 A curse against the man who would rebuild the city.

The curse is not against any who lives there, but rather for rebuilding it as a stronghold. (Jos. 18:21; Jud. 3:13; 2 Sam.10:5)

During the reign of Ahab, Hiel disobeyed the word of God and lost two of his sons. See 1 Kings 16:34.

v.27 Joshua enjoys the confidence of the people for having faithfully fulfilled the will of God.

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