

The People Shouted

Joshua 6:1-25

- We're entering the middle of a story from the history of Israel today
 - As God's people enter their promised land and conquer Jericho
 - If you're not familiar with this account, it is quite an unusual story of invasion
 - The city is well fortified and (as the text says) "straitly shut up" when Israel arrives
 - That's when the leader of Israel, Joshua, receives instruction from the Lord
 - They are not the kind of instructions you might expect
 - But we'll explore that today, from Joshua 6:1-25
 - Our theme: "The People Shouted"
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- The reason I said these invasion plans are unusual, is that they defy human thinking
 - They are plans from God, not from men
 - Left to our own way of thinking, we would have come up with other plans
 - Israel, likely, would have come up with other plans
 - But God had a purpose in mind for these plans
 - And we learn a good bit from them, even today
 - Israel must have learned a great deal more
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- Joshua has a history of confidence in God and trust in His word
 - And he's been given certain promises and certain instructions by God regarding this task
 - Entering and obtaining the promised land
 - He's been reminded to have courage
 - And to continue trusting God
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- Let's observe the beginning of this first battle in his mission...

Joshua 6:1

1 Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

- This is city that is concerned and prepared
 - In fact, that's an understatement based on what we learn in the passages just previous
 - One resident, Rahab, said in chapter 2 "I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you."
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- God reminds Joshua this is true...

Joshua 6:2

2 And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.

- There is no reason to doubt
- God has given them this city

- And of God gives His people a city, no army ever assembled (or that ever could be assembled) can stand against them
- It's as simple as that
- Now the instructions...

Joshua 6:3

3 And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.

- To the human military mind, this may not sound too illogical - yet
- There is certainly a potential for intimidation, as anticipation within the city would no doubt build
- What could happen next would be left to their imagination
- And the imagination conjures a myriad of things in circumstances like this
- What is next, then?

Joshua 6:4

4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.

- This is still sounding pretty good to human understanding
- Who knows what fury would follow the blowing of the trumpets!
- Would they then scale the walls
- Or fire something beyond them
- Or batter the gates?
- Not exactly
- And this is where we observe the foreknowledge of God
- Which we don't have
- We find it difficult to see what He sees
- But He sees accurately...

Joshua 6:5

5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

- The plan of man requires brute strength
- It requires the man to do something
- Not to simply wait for something to happen
- Rarely has a general been known to order his men to simply wait for walls to fall
- But that is, in essence, what God is asking of Joshua and Israel
- Yes, they are to do the marching and the trumpeting and the shouting

- But none of those activities are well-known for their wall destruction capabilities
- They must do what God says
- But what they do is not what accomplishes the task
- It is God who will bring the walls down
- The key for God's people is their confidence in Him
- And that's what Joshua had - confidence in God...

Joshua 6:6-8

6 And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD.

7 And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD.

8 And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

- Here we go
- It appears that Joshua is going forth to obey his Lord
- To embrace the unusual instructions
- To see God work on Israel's behalf
- And this must be an almighty encouragement to us
- If one man, not unlike us, could go into battle trusting
- How can we not, who are often facing far less, trust Him too?
- Let's go on...

Joshua 6:9-10

9 And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

10 And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

- Now we're getting into the details of Joshua's instruction-following
- He intends to keep God's word to the letter
- He knows the shout is a key ingredient in God's plan
- So he bids them not to make a sound or say a word until it is time
- And the time will come soon enough
- Let's read on...

Joshua 6:11-14

11 So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

13 And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the LORD, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

- I can only wonder what the people were thinking at this time
- On both sides of the wall
- The children of Israel, who were given these unusual instructions
- And the people of Jericho, who were experiencing the unusual from the other side
- Few of them would have had any clear idea what was happening
- But God saw everything
- He knew what would happen
- Not just with the walls, but inside men's hearts
- And while, even in obedience, men may doubt
- There is no need to doubt where God has spoken

- And He has...

Joshua 6:15-16

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city.

- It is clear that Joshua trusts God
- He follows God's specific instructions
- In His mind, the city was theirs
- And in reality, it was about to be
- His people would observe God's trustworthiness again
- And have this city

- First, a little background...

Joshua 6:17-19

17 And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

18 And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

- If you know your history of Israel

- And this journey in particular, then these are familiar details
- If you don't know them
- Just go back and read from the beginning
- We need to get to one of the highlights of the account...

Joshua 6:20

20 So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

- What God said was true
- Every word
- He was worthy of Joshua's trust
- Of Israel's trust
- He knew what was best
- This task was not difficult for Him
- He had given them the city long before those walls fell
- Because He said it was theirs
- And that was enough
- His word is final
- It is only up to us to trust
- Here are the final details of the story...

Joshua 6:21-25

21 And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

22 But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.

23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

- God keeps His promises
- He has proven over and over that we have good reason to trust Him
- For everything, in everything, and with everything

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