

# JOSHUA 6

**1** Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. **2** Then the Lord said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. **3** March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. **4** Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams’ horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. **5** When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in.” **6** So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant of the Lord and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it.” **7** And he ordered the army, “Advance! March around the city, with an armed guard going ahead of the ark of the Lord.”

**8** When Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets before the Lord went forward, blowing their trumpets, and the ark of the Lord’s covenant followed them. **9** The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding. **10** But Joshua had commanded the army, “Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!” **11** So he had the ark of the Lord carried around the city, circling it once.

Then the army returned to camp and spent the night there. **12** Joshua got up early the next morning and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. **13** The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the ark of the Lord and blowing the trumpets. The armed men went ahead of them and the rear guard followed the ark of the Lord, while the trumpets kept sounding. **14** So on the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

**15** On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times. **16** The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!” **17** The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent. **18** But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them. Otherwise you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it. **19** All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury.”

**20** When the trumpets sounded, the army shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the men gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so everyone charged straight in, and they took the city. **21** They devoted

the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys.

**22** Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring her out and all who belong to her, in accordance with your oath to her.” **23** So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab, her father and mother, her brothers and sisters and all who belonged to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel. **24** Then they burned the whole city and everything in it, but they put the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the Lord’s house. **25** But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho—and she lives among the Israelites to this day. **26** At that time Joshua pronounced this solemn oath: “Cursed before the Lord is the one who undertakes to rebuild this city, Jericho:

“At the cost of his firstborn son  
he will lay its foundations;  
at the cost of his youngest  
he will set up its gates.”

**27** So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.



**Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel:** Jericho itself was on full alert; from a human perspective, this would be a hard, if not impossible, battle. Yet from God's perspective, the battle was already over, because He can say to Joshua I have (in the past tense) given Jericho into your hand. Jericho was not an exceptionally large city; but it was an important, formidable fortress city. If Israel could defeat Jericho, they could defeat any other enemy facing them in Canaan. Again, we see the wisdom of God as opposed to human wisdom, in that Israel faces their most difficult opponent first.

**You shall march around the city:** The method of warfare was one that made absolutely no sense according to military intelligence. It required total dependence on God.

**So he had the ark of the LORD circle the city...** It took courage for Israel to do this; Israel was wide open to attack during this time, and it would have been easy for the people of Jericho to attack them from the high position of the walls. Through six days of silent marching, they had a good look at the walls that seemed to be impenetrable – they knew that this was a battle bigger than they were.

**By all means abstain from the accursed things:** Joshua had to command the people of Israel to stay away from the accursed things. By this, he means the idols and things associated with the demonic and depraved worship of the people of Canaan. The severe judgment that is brought against Jericho, and all of Canaan didn't come because they were in the "way" of God's people. It came because this was a people who were in total rebellion against God and in league with the occult, as the artifacts recovered from this period demonstrate.

**The wall fell down flat:** This miracle was beyond normal expectation; no other city had been conquered this way. Israel couldn't depend on their prior experience or what had happened for others in battle. All they had was God's promise (JSH 6:5), but they believed that promise and acted according to that belief. We shouldn't be surprised when God fulfills His promise, but we often are. We wonder if the Israelites were surprised when the wall fell down flat. The people of Jericho were no doubt surprised.

**They utterly destroyed all that was in the city:** Why was Israel commanded to practice such complete destruction? Because the greatest sins of the Canaanites were spiritual. Such judgment seems harsh to us because it is harsh – and we must recognize, that at unique times, God has commanded that such judgment be made. It may happen either through an army that He has used (as is the case here), or through judgment that He directly brings (such as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 19:24-25).

**They burned the city and all that was in it with fire...** Joshua spared Rahab the harlot: In this, we see a contrast between judgment and salvation. All of Jericho heard about the God of Israel (Joshua 2:8-11), but only Rahab responded positively in faith towards God with that knowledge.

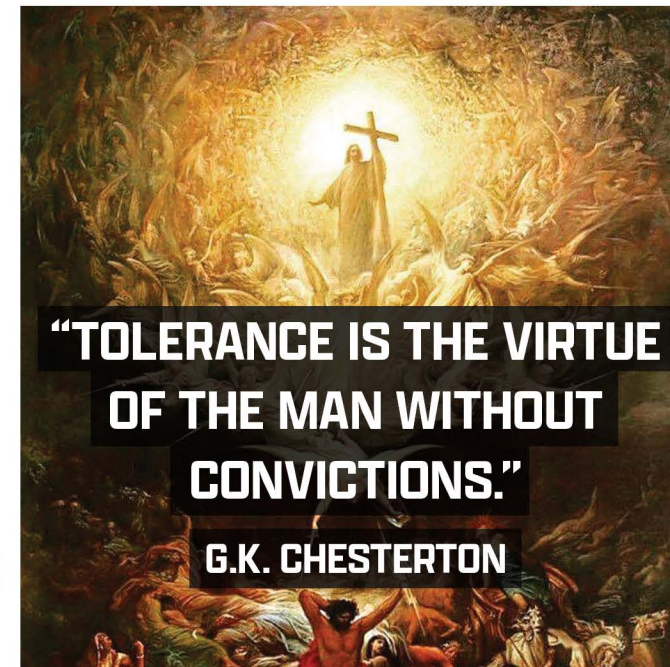
**They took the city:** Israel took, after God had given (JSH 6:2). It was clear that God gave, but that Israel had to take by obedient, persistent faith. So it is with all victory in the Christian life – God gives it to us in Jesus Christ; but we must take it from Him by obedient, persistent faith.

**So she dwells in Israel to this day:** This shows that Joshua was written at the time of Joshua; this was not the fanciful re-construction of an imaginative writer working centuries after the fact.



# #17

## BATTLE OF JERICHO



**“TOLERANCE IS THE VIRTUE  
OF THE MAN WITHOUT  
CONVICTIONS.”**

**G.K. CHESTERTON**