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Joshua 6:1 – 27

~ *Our Spiritual Safari* expedition through the entire Word of God crossed over the Jordan River in a most remarkable manner with the children of Israel in our previous report; and Joshua met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. Those two instances are certainly both greater, in terms of the miraculous, than the parting of the Red Sea. I suppose I'm now classifying miracles as great, greater and greatest but, this river was a rushing torrent. The Jordan River may be a placid little stream in the summer, but in the rainy season it is downright dangerous. Joshua wrote "... the children of Israel passed clean over." – Well, since we know the Ark was leading Joshua, and we know the Ark speaks spiritually of Christ in the Old Testament, let's try a narrative like this: the children of Israel entered the Promised Land in the power of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We considered Joshua instructing the priests to remove twelve memorial stones from the waters in the Jordan where Israel had crossed over and place them up on the west bank as a monument for future generations to see and be reminded of how God had brought Israel into the Promised Land. This was something they could go back to and be reminded in assurance of God's deliverance; something memorialized they could trust and rest in. We also saw Joshua take twelve other stones from the west bank and put them down into the river. That spoke of the death of Christ. The waters passing over those stones signifies the Scriptures cleansing our sins and causing death to pass over us. If you have not read our previous report from Joshua and, indeed, all four reports thus far from this book of the Bible, then I highly suggest you go back and do so now.

In chapter four we saw the priests carrying the Ark. The Ark speaks of Christ in the Old Testament. The only reason the children of Israel were able to

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cross over Jordan is because Christ is the Captain of the Host and because He was leading them by commanding Joshua now. The way over Jordan led to the place of spiritual blessings; and Christ is the Captain of our Salvation. For us, that means we can enter into the Heavens; but only through the leading of Christ Himself. The second set of twelve stones placed on the bank speaks of His resurrection. When future generations asked what these things were all about – they were told how Jehovah led them and blessed them. Commemoration and communion were instituted, and we call it the Lord's Supper. That's where we meet around the Lord's Table to eat the Bread of Life and drink the Wine of His Blood. Christ went through death and judgment for you and me but rose up in resurrection. So, only through that death and resurrection can we enter into spiritual blessings. That's the ONLY way you and I will ever enter Heaven, too, by the way.

So, Israel must have had high hopes and expectations because they are now in the Promised Land the Lord had given them to possess, the land of milk and honey. Their hearts must have been thrilled with anticipation of all the joy and wonderful things to come. Interestingly, many of us find a lot of faults in our own nations today; and to be sure, there are many things that are very wrong in each of them. Even so, I love my country and way of life; and I desire to see it preserved. I love to see the flag flown and the Pledge of Allegiance – one nation under God – recited when believed. Even the Star-Spangled Banner at football games and race car tracks still evokes something nostalgic inside of me. Well – call me old fashioned, but it's truly unfortunate that we want to be the world power and tell the rest of the world how things are to be done; because we don't do things so well anymore – and that's because we have gotten far away from this Book, the Bible, we are studying today. Our vendetta attempt to straighten out the world is simply not going to work. A system run by corrupt men cannot operate with positive results until the hearts of those men who are running the corrupt system are changed. The only possible hope we have today is a return to the Word of God. You can just write that down.

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Alright, God prepared His chosen people to enter and possess the Promised Land. Even so, there is a very definite condition for conquest we must consider; so, let's review three important things we have previously been instructed in on safari:

1. Circumcision: the token of the covenant God made with Abraham. Possessing the land included continuing the commanded ritual. Joshua was commanded to make sharp knives in our last report - and they speak of the Word of God. Today, the Word of God will circumcise our hearts. Holy Writ is quicker and sharper than any two-edged sword. That sword divides and makes distinctions as all of the millions of gray shades are perceived in clear cut colors; yet focused on in stark black and white. We certainly need a return to Bible morality immediately. There will be no blessing for us or ANY nation until we come back to Scripture, learn it properly, correctly and completely - and then apply it to our lives.

2. The manna ceased when they entered the land, and they were given old corn to eat - and, again, that also speaks spiritually of the Word of God. Manna was thrilling, and I'm sure it led to a never-ending schedule of prophetic congresses and conventions, and our Spiritual Safari loves prophecy as much as anyone else - but most of you people who also love it - you who love Revelation - somehow never seem interested in the Pentateuch. People will pack an amphitheatre for a prophetic message on the red horses of Revelation - but are completely ignorant of Zechariah's prophecy. Most of them seem to be able to tell me how many steps are in the red horse's path - but they know nothing about the horse itself. People love that shallow stuff, but they can't locate the Book of Obadiah in their Bibles. Dr. Arno C Gaebelein once said, ".... men are always more interested in antichrist than they are in Christ Jesus." See, they love the manna - but, if they are honest, they will tell you they hate the old corn. Well, friends, it's time to come out of the wilderness and enter the land God has prepared for us. That means the manna has to cease - just as it did for the children of Israel. That means we need to go through the Bible and finally discover what it's really about. It's one thing to say you believe it, but it is

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another thing altogether to pick it up and learn it to decide if we sincerely believe it.

3. Joshua saw the Captain of the Hosts of the Lord – that is, the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared to Joshua. We know Joshua is taking orders from above now; and that's how Israel is conditioned for conquest. A very definite tactic will be used by Joshua in the first attack. That conquest begins at Jericho; and the city of Jericho is representative of the world. This crusade begins directly in the center of the land. Jericho is taken and then the city of Ai; and Ai speaks of the flesh – and with that, the land was straightly divided. Now, we will see Joshua made a big mistake going south first and making a compact with the Gibeonites. That led to Israel being required to conquer five kings of the Amorites. The conquest to the north will bring us the conclusion of Joshua's leadership in the wars. So, we will examine those three victories extensively as we progress through the historic Biblical book of Joshua.

All of the remaining inhabitants in the land stood in the way of Israel taking full possession of the territory. To lay hold of the full promise, the occupants would have to be conquered. You and I have three enemies in the world right now, my friends: the world, the flesh and the devil – Satan – himself. Let's be clear: Jericho = the world; Ai = the flesh; the Gibeonites = the devil. The Gibeonites come to Joshua very subtly. Remember, all the way back in the Garden of Eden, the serpent that came was "more subtle than all the rest." Subtlety is always Satan's modus operandi. The devil never makes a frontal, full force attack – Satan ALWAYS comes in through the side window, or the back door, so to speak. The smart enemy of the Bible doesn't attack the Word of God, either. Satan just happens to be too intelligent to do that. Satan will ALWAYS attack the man who believes God and teaches the Word of God properly, correctly and completely. I am not ignorant of the devil's devices, friends, believe me.

So, we see the children of Israel first come to Jericho; and the method Joshua used is the same we use today. The method of dividing the land has

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been followed by every outstanding general and captain of any army ever since recorded history began recording tactics. From the day we are studying to the present, dividing the people is the way to success and victory. Once they're in division they can be subdued piece-meal. Our country used that method in the Civil War, World War One, WWII, the Pacific theater and Viet Nam. General Lee tried to break the back of the north by going into Pennsylvania. That was a failure, and the north came down into Chattanooga and divided his army – and it was all over from there. Of course, that was a slaughter; but the north felt it was essential to win. Well, that's the way wars are won, friends....

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

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.

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.

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.

~ So, the day arrived for the campaign to begin, and Jericho was closed down. Barricading inside was really all the inhabitants of the city could do to defend themselves. The fighters were on the wall, the watchman would have been in the gate, and the brass is in the king's house getting information from the wall. Naturally, they expect the children of Israel to attack at the gate. When the information came in that they were encompassing the wall and had passed by the gates, I'm sure the king was highly confused. Then, instead of an attack, they just went back into camp.

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Well, we can be sure of one thing: the king and his cabinet huddled that night to discuss this puzzle with army intelligence. They had no idea what was going on and had no action plan, either. Then, the next five nights were a repeat performance. Believe me, the king didn't sleep at all this week. The army is likely worn out from shifting position all the way around the city day after day after day now. By day six, they must have been scratching their heads at this absurd strategy. I'm sure Joshua wasn't really sure of the strategy, either; but Joshua WAS sure the Lord had given the marching orders - and Joshua was sure he was going to obey them. Remember, the Captain of the Host of the Lord had appeared to Joshua in our last report. When God tells us what to do and how to do it, friends, we do well to execute His commandments His way....

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.

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.

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.

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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.

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 rearward 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.

~ Now, all of the pictures and depictions I have seen of this account have the Ark leading the way; but, if we read the record correctly, the Ark is in the back of the soldiers now; between them and the rearward – in the midst of them. I think that makes a huge spiritual difference, personally; a difference we won't go into at this time – but we sure will later. Pray about that now. So, they did that for six days and now, on the seventh, here they come again. They make the circuit round about the wall. The army inside is shifting all through the streets again as they're circled. After one time around, the inhabitants of Jericho likely breathed a sigh of relief; but wait – they're going around again. Seven times, as we read here – and most Christian's know the account – there they go....

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.

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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.

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.

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.

~ Now, there have been some very respectable men and women who have excavated the wall at the city of Jericho. Each new archeologist always seems to disagree about the dates of the falling down of the wall. One thing they DO agree on is that the wall fell down; and it fell down flat. The first expedition, led by Marston, was not very scientific; and his team so disturbed the ground that it would have made it impossible for anyone else coming along later to conclude anything close to an accurate estimation of the true date. Ms. Kellum did as fine and thorough a job as was possible, to be sure. At any rate, I leave the arguing over dates to other men because the only thing I need to know is the walls came down. The Word of God says the wall fell flat and that's a confirmed, historical and scientific fact.

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There's an old hymn that says "... Joshua fought the fight at Jericho" – except, no, there was no fight. All Joshua did was march his men around the city as he was instructed to do by God. God did the fighting, friends; and the ark was way out back of the priests. Some have even hypothesized the ridiculous notion that an earthquake came upon them. Well, for that to happen at the exact psychological moment that the children of Israel shouted – although it may have happened that way – is still under the command and total control of the True and Living God. It certainly was not a natural and coincidental earthquake. Others think the marching around loosened the wall which was made with mortar not tempered; and you can believe whatever you want to – as long as you understand the walls came down. I prefer it the way it's told: God took the victory and God took possession of the wall and its structural integrity. That just happens to make the most sense to me. It means the method we are given is FAITH. Faith is the only way you and I are going to get the victory over anything here on earth, friends. This is also one reason I don't get involved in the political aspect of religion around this forum: I don't think we are to fight the enemy at all. I happen to know we can't fight the world and win. It's just not going to happen.

1 John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith ~

Friends, only by faith will we ever win. Joshua didn't fight and he didn't win any battle. What Joshua DID was take possession of the land and everything that was in that city. The biggest problem believers have in their lives today is that they are trying to fight the battle. They do that because they are not listening to the Lord's instructions. Instead of trying to overcome the world, we need to start taking orders from the True Captain of our Salvation. As we read on, we see Israeli soldiers spared Rahab and all that were in her house. I wonder if it really was her family in her house with her that day – I tend to doubt it. Joshua also goes on to pronounce a curse upon anyone who rebuilt the city of Jericho. When we get to first Kings in chapter sixteen, we'll see that it WAS rebuilt. Well, the curse sure did come

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upon the man that rebuilt it - and his sons. That will be in the days of Ahab and Jezebel, by the way....

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.

26 And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.

27 So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country.

~ In the next leg of our Spiritual Safari we will discover someone was disobedient; and that a wedge of gold and a Babylonian garment was

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removed out of the destroyed city of Jericho against God's commands. We're going to consider exactly what that was all about, and precisely what the problem was in doing so as we move forward towards Revelation. Read this section of Scripture very carefully after praying for wisdom, judgment and discernment, and it will become much more meaningful to you. Reading the Bible in prayer with an educated, sincere, systematic guide is the only way to learn it, my beloved. It takes a LONG time. There is simply no other program, method, ritual or spiritual conduit that completes a connection to the Lord and can enable you to ever begin to even remotely understand the fundamental basics of what God wants to speak to your heart ~

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