

flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

6 And Josh'u-a 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 Josh'u-a 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 rearward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

10 And Josh'u-a 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 Josh'u-a 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.

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, Josh'u-a said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city.

General Statement.

The camp of Israel was established after the crossing of the Jordan at a place afterward known as Gilgal. It was intrenched and fortified as a dwelling place for the aged, the women and the children, and as a head-quarters for the army during the war of conquest. Here the covenant of circumcision was removed, and the reproach of bondage was forever taken away; here the passover-lamb was slain, and the feast celebrated, perhaps for the first time in thirty-nine years. Here, too, Joshua received an encouraging revelation from on high. A strange form appeared before the leader bearing a naked sword, as if for war. The hero with fearless faith walked forth to meet the stranger, and demanded on which side he stood in the impending strife. The warrior proclaimed himself as the chief of the angelic host, and Joshua fell to earth before the Son of God. From this divine messenger he received full directions concerning the

capture of Jericho, whose walls frowned defiance before their path. In obedience to his orders, the host of Israel marched round the walls of the city, led by the priests and the ark, keeping step with the music of the sacred trumpets, as if in solemn procession. For six days the strange march was repeated, once each day. On the seventh day the camp was astrid at daybreak, and the host marched around Jericho not once, but seven times. When the last circuit had been made there was a moment of silence, a sudden command by the leader, and a loud shout from the soldiery. In an instant the walls of Jericho tottered and fell, the city was taken by the rush of Israel, and soon a smoking heap was the only memorial of the place where Jericho had stood. As the first-fruits of the conquest, it was consecrated to destruction. No Israelite was allowed to touch the plunder, but the entire city, with its population and its wealth, was devoted to destruction.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. Jericho. This was the most important city in the Jordan valley, for it commanded the two passes leading up to the mountain region, that by way of Bethel, and that by way of Jebus, or Jerusalem. It was not a large city, for the army could march around it seven times in one day. But it was surrounded by walls, which the Israelites could not overcome; and they could not, on the other hand, delay for a siege which would require months or years. **Straitly shut up.** Its gates were closed and its walls were guarded against the approach of the Israelites. **Because of the children of Israel.** The miraculous crossing of the Jordan had filled all the inhabitants of Canaan with alarm and terror, for they now realized their danger. See Josh. 2:9-11; 5:1. **None went out.** It was shut up from within and blockaded from without. (1) "Every carnal heart is a Jericho shut up." *Bishop Hall.* (2) *The world in sin is also a Jericho to be won for God.*

2. And the Lord said. The preceding verse is a parenthesis, by way of explanation; and this verse connects itself with verses 13-15 of the previous chapter. "The Lord" here is "the Captain of the Lord's host," named in the preceding verses. God appeared in the person of his pre-incarnate Son to encourage and direct Josu-a. (3) *We too, may have fellowship with the Son of God.* See 1 John 1:3. **I have given into thine hand.** The victory was to be wrought by the Lord's power, and not by the sword of Israel; and Jericho was to be God's gift. (4) *God intends that we shall be saved not by our own works, but by his own grace.* The mighty warriors of Jericho were to fall before the arms of Israel, because God was on Israel's side. But was the destruction and slaughter of the Canaanites right? It was, because, 1. It was by God's command, and 2. Israel was the instrument of God's will, not a mere conquering army. 2. Their crimes made the utter annihilation of these people an act of justice. 3. The salvation of the whole world depended upon Israel's

being kept a art from their contaminating influence, and their destruction was a necessity. 4. Death is not in itself a wrong, and each Canaanite received his personal judgment, for good or evil, in the eternal world. 5. As for the children, it was a thousand times better for them to die than to grow up to the iniquities of their parents.

3. Ye shall compass. The plan of capture is now disclosed. The army, headed by the ark and the priests, was to march around the city once each day for six days, leaving the non-combatants in the camp. The design of this proceeding was to impress the Canaanites with a sense of God's power, and to teach the Israelites faith in God. **Six days.** This was to test and train the obedience of the Israelites, and to make the final event more signal.

4. Seven priests. Seven the perfect number: seven priests, seven trumpets, seven days, seven circuits on the last day. **Trumpets of rams' horns.** Not the straight silver trumpets used in war (Num. 10: 2), but the crooked trumpets used in worship; since this was to be an act of religion. **The seventh day.** Notice that on this day alone the city was to be compassed seven times; thus making in all thirteen circuits. **Blow with the trumpets.** This blowing of the trumpets at regular intervals was to be the only sound heard during the march.

5. All the people shall shout. That was to be all their part in the destruction of Jericho's walls, but it illustrated God's way of working. It was the shout of a victorious faith, believing on the ground of God's promise only. (6) *Man's part in the conquest of sin is to sound out the message and the testimony of faith.* **The wall of the city shall fall.** It is vain to explain how the miracle was wrought, for God has a thousand ways for the accomplishment of his purposes. See in the *Lesson Commentary* and *Peloubet's notes* some remarkable scientific illustrations of the fall of Jericho.

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