

Be Vigilant

Joshua 6:15-20

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A. A Time to Shout (vs. 15-16)

1. To be – When we are purposeful about disciplining our lives to obey God’s Word, our commitment to His instruction is endless.
 - a) The actions of the people of Israel were determinative because they were endlessly committed to what God had instructed them to do.
 - b) When our commitment is relentless it refines us, and deepens our faith which shapes our determination to fulfill the Lord’s will no matter how impossible the obstacles may seem.
2. Rose – They were eager from early in the morning to the endless camp break and diligently did what the Lord had instructed them to do.
 - a) We must actively and continuously assert our will to His by denying fears, anxieties, and past bad experiences to the obedience of His will.
3. Marched around; God led - Their obedience to God was specific to the message God delivered through Joshua. They marched around Jericho seven times as the Lord instructed.
 - a) We must make sure what we are obeying is the truth because the main reason the Spirit of God is in us is to guide us into the truth (John 14:16-17; 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:10-15). The church’s mission is to be God’s pillar of truth (1 Timothy 3:15). This leads to fellowship with God (John 15:1-11, 13; 1 John 2:5-7).
4. Blew - Even though this made no strategic military sense, the people were completely determined in their hearts as they marched around the city and blew a horn that did not even make a nice musical tune. It is not the music, it is how we honor the Lord from our hearts. This is worship.

5. Joshua said to the people – After the people determinatively obeyed the Lord, Joshua continuously told the people to shout. They were having a worship service that did not require musical talent. Instead of a strategic military plan, God’s instruction was to worship Him.

- a) Tearing down walls begins with continuously, genuinely worshipping God.
- b) Shout – The people were commanded to raise their voices as loud as they could and to make a collective noise after the seventh time they completed their march around the city.
- c) It is a team effort – Everybody working together under the orders of God.

6. The Lord has given – The One who has all authority and power has generously handed over to Israel all that is in the land of Jericho.

7. The Lord has given – Trusting the Lord’s will, worshipping Him with all our hearts, believing Him to fulfill His promises, no matter how impossible they may seem was all that was needed 40 years earlier.

B. Don’t Allow God’s Goodness to Corrupt Worship (vs. 17-19)

1. To be – The city was completely and endlessly under the ban; no exceptions. Even though God provides us victory He does not want us to become corrupted by it.

- a) For many people success has corrupted their trust and outlook of God. Solomon, David and many others struggled when they became successful. God warned them of this in Deuteronomy 8:11-20.

2. Belongs to the Lord – The people must know that even though God had generously and powerfully put Jericho under their control, all that was in the land was still the Lord’s property. Nothing we have achieved belongs to us.

3. Shall live - The people of Israel must preserve all those who live in Rahab’s house so that they experience a true relationship with God. They would henceforth live as a result of God’s Word and protected by His salvation to Rahab and her family. God would leave the ninety nine to save just one person.

4. Whom we sent – It was Joshua who made the decision; he was completely comfortable to initiate the mobilization of spies to spy out the land. Joshua has always been committed, no matter the overwhelming odds, to trust and obey the Lord God (Numbers 13-14).

5. To keep themselves – God orders all of Israel who will enter the land to be careful to guard themselves from taking anything the Lord does not allow them to take. Years later the prosperity of a nation can cause our hearts to drift from God.

a) The nation of Israel no longer worshiped God. All that was in the land slowly corrupted them, leading them to worship idols as they enjoyed riches that came with the “milk and honey.”

· *“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”* (1 John 2:15-17; NASU)

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” (Matthew 6:24; NASU)

6. Ban – The city shall be utterly destroyed. God commanded all the people to not take anything for themselves. Ban also means “devoted”; they must remain devoted to God when they are exposed to all the riches of Jericho in God’s Promised Land. Remember that the people were coming from slavery to forty years of wandering in the wilderness, and then to immediate wealth.

7. Covet – They continuously need to be sure not to take anything that would impede God’s work because He views it as something that is under the ban. When God does not allow us to afford some of the pleasures of life we must not covet what others have. It can cause us to resent the Lord God.

8. Take some of the things – God desired that they are completely complicit with his command to not put anything under the ban into their possession.

9. Take some of the things – He is persistently teaching them, in the face of wealth, to be content in whatever state they were in. This is what leads to godliness. Contentment with godliness is gain (Philippians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 6:6; Hebrews 13:5).

10. To make the camp – Things under the ban must completely have no place in the camp of Israel. What belongs to the Lord belongs to the Lord. We must treat it like the ban; it is untouchable.

11. Trouble - To bring things into the camp that a part of the ban would disturb the people because of God's response for their disobedience. Achan could not resist and it cost him and many others their lives.

12. All the silver and gold and articles of bronze are holy - All the silver, gold and articles of bronze are consecrated for service unto the One under whose authority, power and might the nation was empowered to enter the land. God asks for ten percent of the one hundred percent that He owns.

13. Go into the treasure of the Lord – All Israel must intentionally make every effort to continuously place all the silver, gold and articles of bronze into the Lord's treasury. God told them to give rather than the priest taking it to Him. Giving to God is an intentional process.

C. Joyful Praise in the Midst of Adversity is Victory (v. 20; Ps. 34):

1. So the people shouted - Upon listening to the Lord's instructions Israel made a very loud, public noise by all those who were charged with walking around the walls. It does not matter the sacrifice. What matters most is the complete surrender to His will which is best demonstrated in worship.

2. Blew - It was not a call to war; it was a call to worship.

3. When the people heard – The people gave their undivided attention to make sure they clearly saw the Word of God fulfilled and when they understood that it was, they shouted. It was not their military might that made the walls fall flat. It was their willingness to listen with a sincere heart of obedience to God.

4. Shout – The people endlessly raised their voices once again crying out very loudly. When there was yet to experience victory they claimed it because they trusted in God's promises (Joshua 6:2).

5. Walls fell down – The walls kept falling until they were flat on the ground. When God makes a way He does not need our way to overcome our obstacles. Without God, Israel would have had to scale the walls and enter in through the gates of the city. With God, they did not need gates or walls to overcome.
6. Went up – Even though the people understood that the battle was heavy, they obeyed God and went up into the city. When God makes a way we must put on our armor and go to war.
7. Took the city - Israel maintained their attack until the City of Jericho was captured. The Lord's promise was fulfilled when Israel captured the city.
8. Took the city - No matter how valiant the warriors of Jericho were, God's is the Lord Almighty. God can allow the intensity of life to seem impossible to overcome so that we can be exposed to His ability and our need to depend on Him.