

# It's a Given

## Joshua 6:1-8

### Pierre Cannings

#### I. Vision vs. 1-2

##### a. Obstacle

###### i. Jericho

1. **Jericho.** Settlement at Jericho goes back to the ninth millennium B.C., giving it the designation of the oldest city in the world. The site has occasioned much controversy, and archaeological interpretation has been complicated by significant amounts of erosion, which tends to confuse the layers that archaeologists depend on and totally obliterate large amounts of evidence.
2. **Jericho** was a beleaguered city. Orders had been given to close all the gates, and no traffic was permitted **in** or **out**. As Rahab had disclosed to the spies (2:11) the residents of Jericho were filled with terror because of **the** advancing **Israelites** (cf. 5:1).

###### ii. Shut tight

1. No one in or out
2. This would appear to have been a dual problem: it was a problem for the inhabitants of Jericho, since it was “because of the Israelites” that this happened, but it also was a problem for the Israelites, since their task of taking the city was made all that much harder because of this. The difficulty of the task magnified the great accomplishment of the taking of the city when it did take place.

##### b. See

###### i. See

1. See the vision not the walls
  - a. Walls Don't work with God
2. See the vision not the obstacles

###### ii. Given – The tense of the Hebrew verb is prophetic perfect (**I have delivered**), describing a future action as if it were already accomplished. Since God had declared it, the victory was assured.

###### iii.

1. King
2. Valiant Warriors
  - a. Ps 20:7; 33:16-17 Proverbs 21:31 Isaiah 31:1
  - b. The outcome of the entire affair is announced to Joshua at the outset: God had already given Jericho, its king, and its

warriors into Joshua's hand (v. 2). Thus, the extensive marching, blowing of trumpets, and shouting that the Israelites were to engage in is shown to be essentially ceremonial because God was giving the victory. This is reinforced by the comment at the end of v. 5, where God stated clearly that the wall would collapse through no effort on the people's part beyond the ceremonial actions just mentioned.

## II. Instructed vs. 3-5

a. You Shall

b. Roles

i. Men of War

1. Circle Once

2. Six Days (times are determined)

a. You can't quit

ii. Seven Priest

1. Priest - The priests are necessary in order to maintain the sanctity of the ark. The importance of their lead role is to offer one more reminder that this is Yahweh's battle, not the Israelites'. For the ark's symbolism see the comment on 3:17.

2. Carry Seven Trumpets of Rams Horns before the Ark

a. Before the Ark

i. Ark - The close identification of the ark with God himself noted in chap. 3 is also here in the explanation that the priests were "before the LORD" (v. 8); in v. 4, the phrase is "before the ark," and in v. 6 it is "before the ark of the LORD."

3. Seventh Day March Around Seven Times

a. Specific Day

b. Specific Amount of Times

i. The ritual nature of the episode is suggested by the absence of any military strategy, by the blowing of the trumpets, by the prominence of the priests and the ark of the covenant, by the solemn processions, and by the prevalence of the number "seven," which occurs four times in v. 4 alone and fourteen times in the chapter. "Seven" is the number of totality, completion, and perfection in the Scriptures; its predominance in this chapter

emphasizes the completeness of Yahweh's victory on Israel's behalf.

4. Blow the Trumpet

- a. The trumpet referred to here is the rams' horn (*shofar*). The *shofar* is capable of a variety of tones but cannot play a tune, so it is used primarily for signals in worship or warfare.
- b. These instruments were "jubilee trumpets" (lit. Heb.) used in connection with Israel's solemn feasts to proclaim the presence of God (Num. 10:10). The conquest of Jericho was not therefore exclusively a military undertaking but also a religious one, and the trumpets declared that the Lord of heaven and earth was weaving His invisible way around this doomed city. God Himself, in effect, was saying in the long blasts of these priestly trumpets, "Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in" (Ps. 24:7). When Christ returns, He, the King of glory, will enter cities in triumph. The conquest of Jericho was a similar kind of triumphant victory.

iii. All the People

1. Shout

- a. Great Shout
- b. It is commonly used in the Old Testament to designate a war cry or shout of alarm (e.g., Judg 7:21; 1 Sam 17:52; Isa 42:13; 2 Chr 13:15 [2x]). However, it is also commonly found as part of the vocabulary of praise in the Psalms and similar contexts and can be translated there as "to raise a glad cry" (e.g., Ezra 3:11, 13; Pss 95:1–2; 98:4, 6; 100:1). Both meanings of the term would be appropriate in the context of the circling of Jericho: by raising such a shout, the people would at the same time have been sounding a war cry, which would frighten the inhabitants of Jericho, and also praising God for the victory he was giving them

iv. All Will Fall

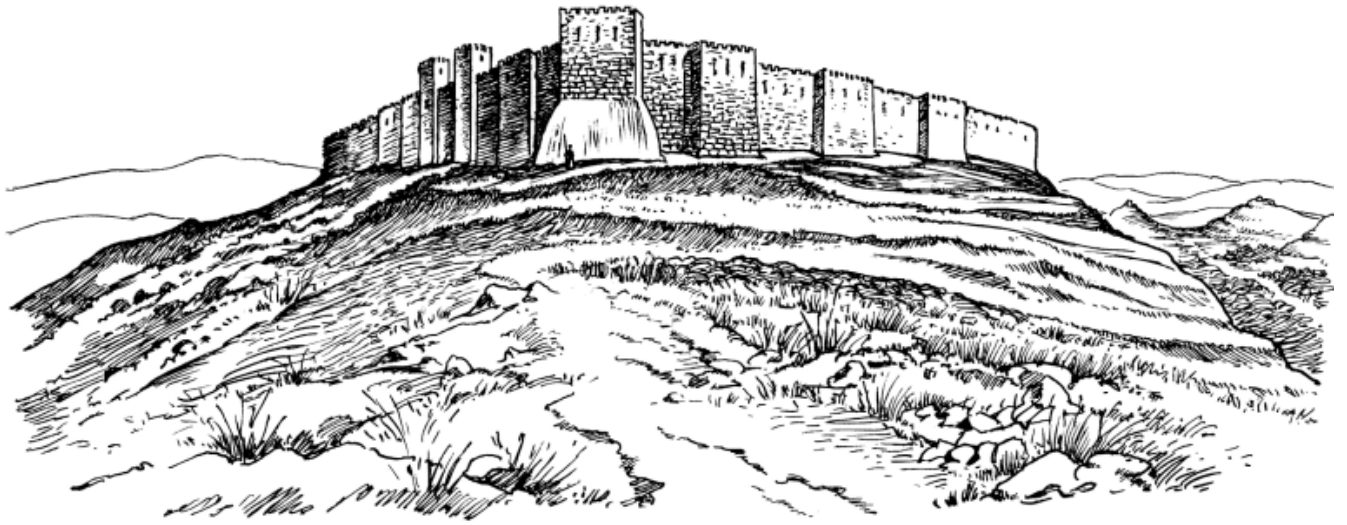
1. Fall Down Flat

- a. Every Man Straight Ahead

### III. Obedience vs. 6-8

- a. So Joshua
  - i. Repeats Instructions
    1. Called the Priest

2. Said to the People
  3. **Joshua** was an experienced military leader. Certainly these and similar objections to the divine strategy flashed into his mind. But unlike Moses at the burning bush who argued with lengthy eloquence against the Lord's plan (cf. Ex. 3:11–4:17) Joshua responded with an unquestioning obedience. He lost no time in calling together **the priests** and soldiers, passing on to them the directions he had received from his Commander-in-chief
- b. And it was So...
- i. The priest went forward
  - ii. Ark of the Lord followed



## Ark of the Covenant

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