

We May Need the Jericho Plan

By

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“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.” Isaiah 55:8

I was putting my 6 year old daughter to bed, and we pulled out her little Children’s Bible, to which she said, “Oh Dad! Why do we always have to read the Bible?!” I said, “Because we love Jesus.” Then she settled into our routine. I flipped the pages across my thumb until she said, “Stop!” As she said “Stop” and I pulled open the book, I smiled to myself. It fell on the story of Joshua and Jericho. You see, this was the 4th time in the last few weeks that this story has been presented to me...once at an Influencers Board Meeting, once at the Influencers Regional Retreat, once by a good friend of mine and lastly, from a little Children’s Bible. When this happens to me, I pay attention, and I try to understand what God wants to tell me. He has a message for me and hopefully, for you, as well.

You know Joshua. He was the one, alongside Caleb, out of the 12 spies Moses sent into the land of Canaan, who had faith to believe that God would give the people the land He promised. While all the people were afraid and grumbling against Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb stood strong in the Lord. When God spoke to Moses, He honored the faith of Joshua and Caleb and punished the other 10 men and that whole generation, whom He would not allow to go into the Promised Land. Only Joshua and Caleb and their descendants were allowed to enter. You can read about this in Numbers Chapters 13 and 14.

Fast forward to Joshua Chapter 1. Moses had died, and God had selected Joshua to be the next leader of the people. Whereas Moses was also prohibited from entering the land due to an act of disobedience (Numbers 20), Joshua was the one chosen by Moses and God to take them in. God spoke to Joshua:

“I will give you every place where you set your foot.”

“As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

“Be strong and courageous.”

“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

So, with God's favor and blessing, Joshua began to exercise his leadership. The first thing he did, obviously drawing on the training he received from Moses, was to send spies into the land to see what they were up against. When the spies returned, they reported that the people of Jericho feared the Israelites. They had tremendous confidence that the Lord was with them, and that they could easily overtake Jericho. God continued to affirm Joshua, and He demonstrated His anointing on Joshua by drying up the Jordan River, so all the people would know God was with him. They moved courageously into the Promised Land with their sights set on conquering Jericho.

God visited Joshua in a very special way, as a man with a drawn sword. He told Joshua His strategy for taking Jericho. He was told to gather the people and the Ark of the Covenant, along with Priests blowing trumpets, and march the procession around the walls of the city. The people were to remain silent, where only the sounds of the horns could be heard. He told Joshua to get up early and do this every day for six days. On the seventh day, He told him to march around the city seven times and then, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!"

This had to be counterintuitive to Joshua. He was a warrior. He was one of the few who did not fear the people on the first scouting trip. He had a confidence and strength which came from the Lord. God had already told him he would give him every place he set his foot. If he was like you and me, he probably already had a creative, intelligent battle plan ready to go. Yet, God told Joshua to do something which would be very unusual. Thankfully, Joshua continued to exercise faith and trust in the Lord, and he obeyed God to the very finest detail.

And you know what happened. The walls came tumbling down and God gave them the city. Brothers, you have been chosen by the Lord for something very special. He has set you apart and gifted you to lead others into new territory for the Kingdom of God. He is speaking to you and affirming you, as He did with Joshua. Like Jericho, you may have a big challenge ahead of you with walls that seem impenetrable. Listen closely to what the Lord is telling you, for oftentimes, His strategies are far different from ours. We must yield ourselves to the Lord, and allow His presence to go ahead of us. So often, as men especially, we want to charge out into battle. This can be foolish and outside of God's plan.

Last year, when Promise Keepers brought a conference to Tulsa, we were struggling to figure out how to fill up the arena, how to promote it to churches and make it the most successful event it could be. In the midst of this struggle, as I sought the Lord, I felt

Him prompting me to put the Jericho plan into effect, literally. We gathered some men and early every morning, we marched around the arena in the 7 days preceding the PK conference. We prayed silently, and we even recruited a young trumpet player to blow a Shofar as we marched around. This seemed very strange to many, even to us who were participating, but it was an act of obedience and trust in the Lord. On the 7th day, the day the conference was to begin, we marched around 7 times and we shouted upon the completion. The walls of the Convention Center did not come crashing down, but I can tell that something happened. That night, as the speaker led an altar call for men to come to Christ, hundreds of men came pouring into the aisles, so many so that there were not enough Evangelism Counselors to handle them. I believe God had torn down the spiritual walls between Good and Evil. He made a way for men to find their way into the Kingdom. He destroyed the wall of separation and opened the floodgates of Heaven.

Brothers, God's ways are not our ways. Put aside your preconceived ideas and your experience and your pride, and listen to His plan. You may need the Jericho plan.