Jericho: When God Tears Down My Walls

Bible Reading: Joshua 6 — NKJV

“And the Lord said to Joshua: ‘See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.’”
Joshua 6:2

There are times when I read a Bible story and think I know what it's about.

Jericho is about walls.

It's about Joshua.

It's about marching around a city for seven days.

It's about trumpets.

It's about a shout.

It's about walls falling down.

But the longer I sit with this story, the more I realize that Jericho also makes me look at my own heart.

Because I have walls too.

Some are obvious.

Some are so familiar I've forgotten they're even there.

And some I've built so carefully that I don't even realize how much energy I spend protecting them.

I Know What It Feels Like to See a Wall

Jericho was a fortified city. Joshua 6:1 describes it as tightly shut up because of Israel—the people were not going in or coming out.

From a human perspective, it stood directly in the way of Israel's advance into the land God had promised.

And I know what it feels like to look at something and think:

There is no way through this.

Maybe you know that feeling too.

Maybe it's a relationship that seems beyond repair.

Maybe it's something in your heart that you've struggled with for years.

Maybe it's fear.

Maybe it's insecurity.

Maybe it's anger.

Maybe it's unforgiveness.

Maybe it's something from your past that you keep carrying into your present.

Maybe it's a situation you've prayed about so many times that you've started wondering if anything will ever change.

Sometimes I look at a wall and think:

This is just the way things are.

It's never going to change.

I've tried everything.

It's too big.

It's been here too long.

But then I remember Jericho.

God was not intimidated by the wall.

And He isn't intimidated by mine.

God Gave the Victory

What strikes me about Jericho is that God didn't present the victory as something Israel had to manufacture.

Before the battle began, God told Joshua:

“See! I have given Jericho into your hand.”
Joshua 6:2

The victory was God's gift.

Israel still had to obey.

They had to march.

They had to carry out God's instructions.

They had to remain silent when God told them to be silent and shout when Joshua commanded them to shout.

But they weren't going to make the walls fall through military strength.

God was going to do it.

That's important for me because I like to fix things.

I like plans.

I like solutions.

I like knowing what I can do to make something better.

But sometimes God asks me to do something much harder:

Trust Him.

There are situations I keep trying to control that God may be asking me to surrender.

There are battles I keep exhausting myself fighting because I haven't stopped long enough to ask whether I'm trusting Him.

And sometimes faith looks surprisingly ordinary.

Walk.

Wait.

Obey.

Walk again.

Wait again.

Trust again.

What If Nothing Changes?

Can you imagine being an Israelite after the first day?

They marched.

Nothing happened.

Second day?

Nothing.

Third?

Nothing.

Fourth?

Still nothing.

Fifth?

Still standing.

Sixth?

Still standing.

The wall didn't begin collapsing because they became more powerful with every lap.

They were simply obeying God.

And I wonder how many times I've been there.

I've prayed.

I've obeyed.

I've waited.

I've tried to trust.

And the wall is still standing.

That's when doubt starts whispering.

Maybe this isn't going to change.

Maybe God isn't going to answer.

Maybe I misunderstood Him.

Maybe I should just take matters into my own hands.

But Jericho reminds me:

God's timing is not measured by what I can see.

The wall was still standing after six days.

That didn't mean God had failed.

It meant the seventh day hadn't come yet.

And maybe that's where I am sometimes.

Still walking.

Still waiting.

Still praying.

Still trusting.

And wondering why I haven't seen the breakthrough.

Maybe faith isn't just believing God when the wall falls.

Maybe faith is walking when the wall is still standing.

The Wall Wasn't Going to Fall Because Israel Was Strong Enough

Israel had an army.

But Joshua's instructions made it clear that this victory belonged to God.

The ark of the covenant went with them.

Priests carried the trumpets.

They marched according to God's command.

And on the seventh day, after they had marched around the city seven times, the priests blew the trumpets and Joshua told the people to shout.

Then the wall fell.

“So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat.”
Joshua 6:20

They didn't batter the wall down.

They didn't build siege ramps.

They didn't conquer Jericho through superior military technology.

God brought the wall down.

That's where I need to remember to stop measuring the size of my problem and start remembering the size of my God.

I see the wall.

God sees beyond it.

I see what I cannot do.

God sees what He can do.

But Jericho Was More Than a Wall

This is where I need to be careful not to turn Joshua 6 into a simple lesson about God giving me whatever breakthrough I'm asking for.

Jericho wasn't merely an obstacle standing between Israel and something they wanted.

This was God's judgment on Jericho, and Israel was carrying out God's command.

God had told Israel what they were to do with the city.

Joshua said:

“Now the city shall be doomed by the Lord to destruction, it and all who are in it.”
Joshua 6:17

The Hebrew concept here is often described as being devoted to destruction—something placed under the ban and given over to God.

Israel was not free to treat the victory as an opportunity to enrich themselves.

Joshua warned:

“And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things.”
Joshua 6:18

The silver, gold, bronze, and iron were to be put into the treasury of the Lord.

The people were not supposed to take what God had claimed for Himself.

That matters because sometimes I want God's blessing without God's boundaries.

I want the victory.

I want the breakthrough.

I want the promise.

But I don't always want the obedience that comes with belonging to Him.

Jericho reminds me that God's gifts don't give me permission to live however I want.

His victory is not an invitation to self-indulgence.

It is an invitation to worship.

And Then There Is Rahab

Rahab is one of the most beautiful parts of this story.

Jericho was under God's judgment, but Rahab and those with her were spared because she had protected the Israelite spies and trusted in the God of Israel.

Joshua 6:25 says:

“And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father’s household, and all that she had.”

She was brought out safely.

And Scripture tells us that she lived among Israel.

This is important because Rahab wasn't saved because she had earned her place among God's people.

She was rescued through faith expressed in action.

She had heard what the Lord had done.

She had believed.

And she acted on that belief by protecting the spies.

Her story reminds me that God's grace can reach people in places I might never expect.

It reminds me that my past doesn't have to determine my future with God.

And ultimately, Rahab's story points forward to Jesus.

Matthew 1:5 includes Rahab in the genealogy of Christ.

Think about that.

A woman from Jericho becomes part of the family line through which the Messiah comes.

That's grace.

God doesn't simply rescue us from destruction.

He brings us into His family.

What Am I Holding Onto?

There is another part of Jericho that makes me examine myself.

God had clearly told Israel what belonged to Him.

The victory didn't mean they could take whatever they wanted.

So I have to ask myself:

What am I holding onto that God has asked me to surrender?

Maybe it's resentment.

Maybe it's pride.

Maybe it's control.

Maybe it's a habit.

Maybe it's my need to be right.

Maybe it's an identity built around something Jesus has already forgiven.

Maybe it's something that God has clearly told me to leave behind.

Sometimes I pray:

God, tear down my walls.

But maybe God is asking me:

“Are you willing to surrender what I have told you to surrender?”

Because I don't want God's power merely to make my life more comfortable.

I want God's power to make me more obedient.

Maybe the Wall Isn't the Only Thing God Wants to Change

When I think about Jericho, I tend to focus on the wall.

But God was doing something in His people too.

He was teaching them to trust His word.

To follow His instructions.

To recognize that the victory belonged to Him.

To understand that what He gave them was not theirs to redefine.

And maybe that's what God is doing in me.

Maybe I'm so focused on asking God to change my circumstances that I'm missing what He wants to change in my heart.

Maybe the prayer shouldn't always be:

“God, make this easier.”

Maybe sometimes it needs to be:

“God, make me faithful while this is hard.”

Maybe I don't need to understand the whole plan.

Maybe I need to obey the next step.

Keep Walking

The Israelites didn't know exactly when the walls would fall.

They simply knew what God had told them to do.

And they kept walking.

That's where I find myself sometimes.

I don't know when the answer will come.

I don't know how God will resolve something.

I don't know whether the situation will change tomorrow, next month, or years from now.

But I can obey Him today.

I can pray today.

I can forgive today.

I can surrender today.

I can trust today.

I can take the next step today.

And maybe that's enough.

Because the wall doesn't have to fall for me to know that God is faithful.

What Is My Jericho?

So today, I want to look in the mirror.

Not at Joshua.

Not at Israel.

Not at Jericho.

At me.

What am I calling impossible that God is asking me to trust Him with?

What am I trying to control?

Where am I struggling to obey?

What have I allowed disappointment to turn into unbelief?

What am I holding onto that God has asked me to surrender?

Where have I stopped walking because I didn't see anything happening?

And perhaps the hardest question:

Am I more focused on the wall than I am on the God who told me to walk?

Lord, help me remember who You are.

A Prayer for the Walls

Lord,

I have walls.

You know I do.

Some were built because I was hurt.

Some were built because I was afraid.

Some were built because I wanted control.

And some were built because I didn't completely trust You.

I'm sorry.

I've spent so much time looking at the size of my walls that I've forgotten how great You are.

I've tried to fix things You may be asking me to surrender.

I've become discouraged because I couldn't see anything changing.

But today, I'm choosing to walk again.

Even if the wall is still standing.

Even if I don't understand.

Even if I don't know what You're doing.

I'm going to trust You.

And Lord, if there are walls in my heart that need to come down, tear those down too.

Take my pride.

Take my fear.

Take my bitterness.

Take my need for control.

Take whatever I am holding that You are asking me to release.

I don't want Your blessings without Your lordship.

I don't want Your promises without obedience.

I don't want a breakthrough if I'm unwilling to let You change me.

I want You.

And when the walls in my life finally fall, don't let me forget who brought them down.

Not me.

Not my strength.

Not my wisdom.

You did.

Thank You for being faithful when I cannot see what You're doing.

Thank You for rescuing Rahab and bringing her into Your people.

Thank You that Your grace reaches people who don't deserve it—including me.

And thank You for Jesus, through whom I can be forgiven, rescued, and brought into Your family.

So I'll keep walking.

One step.

One prayer.

One act of obedience at a time.

And I'll trust You with the wall.

Amen.

When I Look in the Mirror

Jericho reminds me that God's victory isn't something I manufacture.

It's something I receive.

But receiving God's victory doesn't mean I get to live however I want.

It calls me to trust Him.

To obey Him.

To surrender to Him.

And sometimes the hardest part isn't watching the wall fall.

It's trusting God while the wall is still standing.

Maybe that's where you are today.

Keep walking.

The wall may still be there.

But God is still God.

And that is enough.