

# Jericho

by Richard E. Bieber

*We can shake the city and take the city by moving out among the multitudes, looking at the people, and spending time with those who are lost, sick, and slumbering, while praying and marching while the trumpet of God blows.*

**Scripture:** Joshua 6:1, Matthew 9:36, Matthew 10:1, Luke 4:18, John 4:35

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Kingdom Living"

## Description

Richard E. Bieber delivers a powerful sermon on the significance of everyday tasks in fulfilling God's purpose of shaking the city of Babylon. He emphasizes that caring for children, working, and doing chores are all part of the spiritual battle to bring God's kingdom on earth. Drawing inspiration from the story of Jericho, he explains the three stages of taking the city: patient observation, unified praise, and conquering evil by freeing the captives.

## Transcript

I had a phone call the other day from a woman who expressed very clearly what many of us can relate to.

"You keep talking about shaking the city. But I'm spending most of my time caring for my children. Two days a week I clean people's houses and scrub their toilets to help meet expenses. What does that have to do with shaking the city?"

i.e..... "It's all very well to use all this powerful spiritual language and promise mighty things. But what does it boil down to in real life? We've got kids to raise, jobs to go to, bills to pay, houses and cars to maintain. What strength am I supposed to have left to shake the city when I've done all that? What impact

can I possibly have on a world that denies God and defies God and could care less about his kingdom, when I have to look after kids and clean toilets?"

Who of us doesn't have mundane things to do.... chores. "My life is full of them, Lord!" And the Lord says,

"Do them ... look after your children, go to your job, fix those brakes, clean those toilets .... but never forget that the purpose of it all is still to shake the city of Babylon until Babylon falls and Jerusalem rises."

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven...." What else does this prayer mean? Of course it takes some struggle,

some frustration,

some trial and error as we strive to translate the vision into reality in the midst of daily life.

It's not a matter of letting someone else take care of our kids and clean our toilets while we get into some unearthly spiritual battle. No, taking care of kids, fixing cars, cooking, washing, are all part of the battle, if we look beyond the surface and see the purpose and hand of God.

Spiritually, we're standing with the Israelites, looking across the Jordan.

"The wilderness is behind you. You've come over the Jordan ...

now go in and take the Promised Land!"

"We've passed through a transition. No more Moses, no more pillar of fire, no more manna ... now it's warfare. We take off our shoes before the angel of the Lord, then we follow Joshua into battle."

The gateway to the Promised Land is the city of Jericho. To take the Land we have to take Jericho... and we have to take it God's way.

Now Jericho was shut up from within and from without because of the people of Israel; none went out, and none came in.

Joshua 6:1

Jericho is the town where you live ... Jericho is the world...Jericho is shut up from within and without. "We want to sleep. We don't want to wake up to the reality of a living God. We don't want to give account to God or men." And behind these slumbering human souls are the powers and principles of evil who say,

"We refuse to give up our captives, we will keep them! We're going to keep them drugged."

To take the city is to wake it up ... to force it into the consciousness that it stands under the judgment of a living God. To pull down the walls that keep it slumbering.

We don't do this with our bare hands. We do it by the power of God. We do it by being awake ourselves to God and to his Messiah. So, we wash toilets,

we care for children,

we work on a production line,

we bang away on a computer,

we teach drowsy kids,

we sell shoes,

we nurse,

we visit the sick. When we are awake to God as we 'do these things .... conscious, worshipping, confident .... God works through us right where we are! The power of heaven touches the earth. The kingdom comes. The will of God is done and Jericho's walls come down.

Now Jericho was shut up from within and from without because of the people of Israel; none went out, and none came in. And the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have given into your hand Jericho, with its king and mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark; and on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, the priests blowing the trumpets. And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, as soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up every man straight before him." So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord." And he said to the people, "Go forward; march around the city, and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the Lord."

Joshua 6:1-7

We're not going to bring down those walls of Jericho... God is. We're going to surround the city with worship. We're going to penetrate the city with the sound of the trumpet.

And as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the Lord went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the Lord following them. And the armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually. But Joshua commanded the people, "You shall not shout or let your voice be heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then you shall shout." So he caused the ark of the Lord to compass the city, going about it once; and they came into the camp, and spent the night in the camp. Joshua 6:8-11

This routine went on for six days. Imagine being inside Jericho and seeing hundred of thousands marching around the city without saying a word. Silence.... no sound but the ram's horn trumpets.

On the seventh day they rose early at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times: it was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout; for the Lord has given you the city...." So the people shouted and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people raised a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

Joshua 6:15-20

We take Jericho in three stages:

1. There is the long patient march around the walls.
2. There is the mighty shout of praise to God.
3. There is the conquest.

First, the long patient march around the walls, blowing the trumpets ... with our eyes open and our mouths closed.

In other words, get a really good look at the town where you live. Open your eyes and see what's there.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Matthew 9:36-38

Do you not say, "There are yet four months, then comes the harvest?" I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest." John 4:35

.....look at the people!

To march around the walls ... for us this means moving out among those multitudes ... look at the people.... out there in the places where we already are, where we live. Take a good look at, those sheep without a shepherd .... those lost sheep,

those sick sheep,

those slumbering sheep.

God has given the evil system that holds them blind and bound into your hand. But first, do what Jesus was always doing ... look at them. Lift up your eyes and see what the Spirit is showing you. Spend time with these people as Jesus did ... that publican cousin, that friend at work. Keep marching and looking and praying while the trumpet of God blows.

Second, the shout....

And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to

the people, "Shout; for the Lord has given you the city.".....So the people shouted,

and the trumpets were blown.

These mouths that for years had done so much murmuring and complaining and whining and grumbling and criticizing have silenced themselves before the Lord... six days. Suddenly, on the seventh day, there comes one unified, terrifying, earth shaking, heaven moving shout of praise!: No wonder the walls crumble.

The same thing happened on Pentecost. These disciples who had used their tongues for so much complaining and grumbling in the past are now lifting them in one glorious, unified utterance of praise to God ... many languages, many tongues... one word of praise .... and Jericho crumbled again. The walls fell flat.

God alone knows how much our tongues in past years have complained and grumbled and criticized. But now together we lift up one mighty word of praise and thanksgiving to the Lamb who died and rose again.

We will shake the city even while we scrub floors,

change diapers,

tune engines,

bake cakes,

if our mouths lay aside their complaining and start praising the God who has given Jericho into our hands, "...and so with the church on earth and the host of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn...."

Third, we go in and conquer.....

The walls fall before us, the gates of death yield and now we strike the powers of darkness with a living word and free the captives.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity.....

These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying, give without pay."

Matthew 9:36-10:1, 5-8

The new covenant version of the conquest of Jericho is the conquest of evil ... the freeing of the captives.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed.

When Jesus first told his disciples to proclaim the kingdom and heal the sick, they looked back over all the disappointments and failures of the past ... will I fail again? The answer was,

"No. Just go forward and speak the word.... touch those lives.... serve those people....

and you will see fruit... you will see fruit."

And so they marched around Jericho together in wonderful unity with each other because they were bound by one Lord to fulfill one purpose.

They shouted together as one voice. They took the city together as one Body. And we will too. Our wilderness days are over ... Jericho is before us.

"See, I have given Jericho into your hand."

So now let's march around Jericho and take a good look at it. Let's worship the Lord who gave it to us.

Let's free the captives in his name!

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