

Joshua in: The Walls of Jericho

In the Bible: Joshua 1-6

After wandering in the desert for forty years, the Israelites had finally arrived at the land God promised to give his nation.

God addressed Joshua, "Prepare my people to cross the Jordan. It is time to give them the land that I promised. I will give you every place you set your foot. I will be with you the same way I was with Moses. I will never leave nor forsake you.

Walls of Jericho fact:
Moses had just died, leaving Israel with no leader. Joshua had been Moses' "right-hand man" for many years, and was ready to lead God's people.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be frustrated or discouraged. Obey the Book of Law that I gave to Moses. Be sure to obey everything written in it. For if you obey, you will be prosperous in all you do. Be strong and courageous. Be faithful to my requirements and you will be successful. I will be with you wherever you go!"

So Joshua addressed Israel to tell them all God said. The people responded, "We will follow you as we followed Moses. If anybody disobeys your words and decrees, he will surely die."

Walls of Jericho fact:
the name Joshua means "The Lord saves". In the actual Bible text God tells Joshua to be strong and courageous three times, signifying the type of task God was leading him to.

Joshua sent two spies to survey the land, giving them instructions to pay close attention to Jericho.

The spies travelled to Jericho and stayed with a woman, called Rahab, whose house was located on the outside wall of the city.

The king of Jericho was told that Israel had sent spies who were staying at Rahab's house, he immediately dispatched some of his soldiers to find them.

When the soldiers arrived at Rahab's house to arrest the spies, Rahab lied to them and said the spies had left the city. The soldiers rushed out from the walls of Jericho to chase after the spies. Meanwhile, Rahab hid them on her roof under stalks of flax.

When they came out of hiding, they made a deal with Rahab. "Because you have hid us from our enemies, we will spare you and all you hold in this house when we attack. Tie this scarlet cloth in your window so when we come, we know not to touch your house or harm any of those inside it. As long as you tell no one what we are up to."

"I will do as you say," replied Rahab.

After three more days of hiding in the nearby mountains, the spies returned to Joshua and reported their findings.

"The Lord has surely give us the land because the people are deathly afraid of us. They have heard about how the Lord saved us from Egypt, and how his hand is strong and mighty."

Walls of Jericho fact:
Jericho most likely means "moon city", as the city was the central location of moon worshippers. Probably the main reason why God wanted to destroy it in the manner he ended up using - to make a point.

The Lord then instructed Joshua to cross the Jordan and begin his siege of Jericho, and Joshua carried out the Lord's commands, "People of Israel, it is time to attack. One representative from each clan of Israel will lead the way carrying the ark in front of us."

As the ark was carried to the edge of the Jordan river, God caused the water to stop flowing so his people could cross on dry land. As soon as everybody was across, the water began flowing again. So the Israelites setup a monument of twelve stones beside the river to pay homage to God's great leadership.

After a few days, the Israelites were rested and ready for battle. Joshua looked up and saw a man with a drawn sword in front of him.

"Are you for us or against us?" asked Joshua.

"Neither," came the reply. "I am commander of the Lord's army, and have come to instruct you how to attack the city."

Walls of Jericho fact:
The walls of Jericho were doubled. 15 feet apart. About 30 feet high. Inner wall was 6 feet thick, outer wall about 12 feet thick. The foundations were shaky at best built on mud mortar and bricks.

Joshua fell face down to the man, and inquired, "What message does the Lord have for his servant?"

"You are to take your entire army and march around the city of Jericho, carrying the ark of the Lord, once a day for six days. Seven priests carrying trumpets and horns will lead the march. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times with the priests blowing their horns. When the priests give the trumpets a long blast, have the people shout loudly with the trumpets. The city walls will crumble and your army will advance straight in."

So Joshua commanded the priests and his army to march around Jericho one time a day for six days, and told them not to say a word while they marched.

On the seventh day, Joshua said, "People of Israel, we are to march around the city seven times today. The priests of God will blow there horns and trumpets. Do not shout or give a battle cry until I tell you."

The army marched around seven times, and the priests blew their horns. At the end of the seventh time around, the priests blew the horns long and hard. Joshua shouted to his people, "Shout aloud, for the Lord has given us this city."

So the people shouted and the walls of Jericho fell to the ground.

Joshua told the two spies to gather the people in the woman's house where they stayed and bring them back to the Israelite camp.

When they returned, the army of Israel attacked the city, and burned everything to the ground.

From that day on, the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

Walls of Jericho fact:
Archaeological digs have discovered the city of Jericho. Houses show signs of burning, walls indeed falling flat out, and food charred by fire looked to be untouched (God commanded them not to take any of the spoils of the siege).