

# Joshua and the Captain of the Host of the Lord

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     What a very warm welcome to you all to this evening's service as we seek the Lord's blessing.
- And so let's begin the public worship of God singing to his praise in Psalm 9 from the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 9 at the beginning of the psalm.
- Lord, thee I'll praise with all my heart, thy wonders all proclaim. In thee, most high, I'll greatly joy and sing unto thy name.
- When back my foes were turned, they fell and perished at thy sight. For thou maintain'st my right and cause, on thrones sats judging right.
- The heathen thou rebuked hast, the wicked overthrown. Thou hast put out their names, that they may never more be known.
- [ 1 : 11 ]     O enemy, now destructions have an end perpetual. Thou cities raised, perished with them as their memorial.
- God shall endure for a, he doth for judgment set his throne. In righteousness to judge the world, justice to give each one.
- God also will a refuge be for those that are oppressed. A refuge will he be in times of trouble, to distressed. These verses to God's praise.
- Lord, thee I praise with all my heart.
- Thy wonders all proclaim. In thee, most high, I'll Hands touch my name.
- [ 2 : 28 ]     When God my foes were heard, they fell, and perish at thy sight.
- Pardon and changed my cried unto us, on Lord such a tripe right.
- The hidden, the re-enacted hearts, the wicked overthrown.
- Thou hast worked not to bear this valley, may never more be known.
- O envy, our disfunctions are uninterpreted love.
- [ 3 : 57 ]     The saints' grace perished with His hand, memorial.
- O challenger, for he'll heal us.
- Our judgment set His throne, and righteous man to judge the world.
- Just this to give me one. On all so well, our refuge be.
- Our love is our time, O praise. Our refuge will be in Christ.
- [ 5 : 20 ]     O come, O do it, friends. Let's call on the name of the Lord.
- Let's bow out. O most holy and most gracious God, in whose presence we are found once again, gathering around the word, the God-breathed scriptures of the Old and the New Testament.
- The only rule to direct and guide us to glorify God and enjoy Him. We bow before thee, O gracious one, that thou hast spoken to us in that word.

Thou the creator, thou the sustainer, thou the giver of life, who created all things and saw that it was all good.

But we rebelled in our sin. Because sin is rebellion.

[ 6 : 47 ] Rebellion against God. And what God made that was very good, became cursed. And man fell into a state of sin and misery.

And gracious God, we wonder that even in that state of sin and misery, the hand of God's mercy was outstretched still to sinners.

And it still is. And this is the gospel. That God has provided a saviour to save us from our sins.

To save us from death. To save us from standing before God at the day of judgment.

Without Christ. Without Christ. And if we are without Christ on that day, we will be cast into a lost eternity.

[ 7 : 56 ] O Lord, our God, we give thanks for the gospel of Jesus Christ. The one who has come. And he has come.

To save his people from their sins. Not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And O grant to us as we gather here this evening that we might know the presence and the power of God through the Holy Spirit.

Lord, our God. And we will be here today. Speaking to our souls. Speaking to our consciences. A word in season. A thought that would stir our hearts.

Bless us, Lord, together. Help us to worship together. Every soul gathered here this evening. And Lord, you know our thoughts.

You know everything about us. Our deepest and most intimate thoughts. The Lord knows. The psalmist spoke so wonderfully about that.

[ 9 : 19 ] Lord, thou hast me searched and known. Thou knowest my sitting down and rising up. Yea, all my thoughts afar to thee are known.

And grant us, Lord, repentance for our sins. For all our sins. Sins of commission and omission.

Secret sins. Presumptuous sins. All our sins. Help us not to hide them. Even in the dark recesses of our heart.

We cannot run away from God. We know that. Oh, forgive us how we can still try. Lord, grant you.

Your blessing on this congregation. On your servant who leads them. Watch over him where he is. Bless him in his own soul. In his own home and family.

[ 10 : 20 ] And in the ministry that he undertakes here. As the herald of the good news of Jesus Christ. And bless the congregation.

Every family. Every household. Every mother and father. Every grandmother and grandfather. Every son and daughter. Every child.

Lord, everyone. In the homes that make up this part of the island. And we pray, Lord, for every home.

Even those homes that are close to the gospel. Maybe who were once open. But now closed. Oh, Lord, come.

Now, Lord, seek out. Those people. And return them to your house. And your cause.

[ 11 : 22 ] And bless every family. Every relationship. Bless husbands and wives. Bless parents. Bless all the family relationships.

We live in a day when Satan would have. Would have nothing but to spoil and to mar.

And to destroy those relationships. Lord, help us to see how precious these relationships are. How precious family is. And help us to be in our guard always.

From the evil one who seeks to destroy what God has built. And what God has put together. Oh, let no man or devil put us under.

Bless. Lord, bless. Lord, bless. Every work of the gospel in the congregation. We commit that to you.

[ 12 : 28 ] Bless the elders and the deacons. All the communicants and adherents. And Lord, we pray for the communions in our presbytery.

Bless them where they meet. This weekend. We pray that. Oh, much blessing would follow. That great provision that God has made for us in this wilderness.

Not only word preached, but sacrament. Word and sacrament. Even the visible signs of our Saviour's body broken for us.

And our Saviour's blood shed for us. Visible signs to help us to believe. And to put our trust in him.

Oh, bless it, we pray. Bless the anticipation of it. And Lord, we give thanks for the truth as it is in Jesus.

[ 13 : 44 ] We give thanks for our Saviour. And we give thanks that he is risen. That he sits on the throne of the universe.

And that he rolls and overrules as the Lord of heaven and earth. Bless the poor and the needy. The sick and the suffering.

Every difficult providence in this congregation. Every grieving and mourning heart. Every empty heart. Oh, Lord, help us to realize that Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

For they shall be filled. And we need to be filled by God. Who alone can fill the emptiness in the heart.

Because that's the way we are by nature. Vanity of vanities, says the preacher. All is vanity. All is emptiness.

[ 14 : 47 ] Without Christ. Bless us now. Bless our brother leading us in the praise. Lord, be your mouth and wisdom. And bless us now as we read the word of God.

Help us to realize what a solemn thing it is. What a blessed thing it is, but what a solemn thing it is. And these portions that we're about to read.

Oh, the solemnity of it all. May it put us on our knees and our hearts to pray. And to pray without ceasing for the mercy of God.

Grant these things we pray with forgiveness for all our sins in Christ's precious name. Amen. Let's read the word of God as we have it in the scriptures of the Old Testament.

The book of Joshua, chapter 5 and verse 13. Joshua 5, 13. And we'll read down to the end of chapter 6, which is one narrative.

[ 16 : 04 ] Although the chapter ends as we have it or the other chapter begins, it's one narrative. And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand.

And Joshua went to him and said to him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship and said to him, What saith my Lord to his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot for the place whereon thou standest is holy.

And Joshua did so. Now Jericho was straightly shut up because of the children of Israel. None went out and none came in.

And the Lord said to Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho and the king thereof and the mighty men of valor.

[ 17 : 24 ] And you shall compass the city, all you men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of ram's horns.

And the seventh day you shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass that when they make a long blast with the ram's horns, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up, every man straight before him.

And 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 ram's horns before the ark of the Lord.

And he said to the people, Pass on and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord.

And it came to pass when Joshua had spoken to the people that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of ram's horns passed on before the Lord and blew with the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them.

[ 19 : 04 ] And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the reward came after the ark, the priests going on and blowing with the trumpets.

And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, You shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth until the day I bid you shout.

Then shall you shout. So the ark of the Lord compassed the city going about at once, and they came into the camp and lodged in the camp.

And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. and seven priests bearing seven trumpets of ram's horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually and blew with the trumpets.

And the armed men went before them. But the reward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on and blowing with the trumpets.

[ 20 : 16 ] And the second day they compassed the city once and returned into the camp. So they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early about the dawning of the day and compassed the city after the same manner seven times.

Only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city.

And the city shall be accursed, even it and all that are therein to the Lord. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

And you in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest you make yourselves accursed when you take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel accursed and trouble it.

But all the silver and gold and vessels of brass and iron are consecrated unto the Lord. They shall come in to the treasury of the Lord. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets, and it came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet and the people shouted with a great shout that the wall fell down flat.

[ 21 : 59 ] So that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city and they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and ass with the edge of the sword.

But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house and bring out thence the woman and all that she hath as you swear unto her.

And the young men that were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brethren and all that she had. And they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

And they burned the city with fire and all that was therein. Only the silver and the gold and the vessels of brass and of iron they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.

And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive and her father's household and all that she had. and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day, because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

[ 23 : 23 ] And Joshua adjured them at that time saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho. He shall lay the foundation that often is firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.

So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was noised throughout all the country. Amen.

And may the Lord bless that reading of his own holy and inerrant word. Our next item of praise is Psalm 97, from the beginning of the psalm.

Psalm 97. God reigneth, let the earth be glad, and I else rejoice each one.

Dark clouds him compass, and in right with judgment dwells his throne. Fire goes before him, and his foes it burns up round about.

[ 24 : 37 ] His lightnings lightened the world, earth saw and shook throughout. Hills at the presence of the Lord like wax did melt away.

Even at the presence of the Lord of all the earth, I say. The heavens declared his righteousness, all men his glory see.

All who serve graven images, confounded, let them be. Who do have idols boast themselves, let shame upon them fall.

He that are called gods, see that ye do him worship all. Sion did hear, and joyful was, glad Judah's daughters were.

They much rejoiced, O Lord, because thy judgments did appear. one to wait to God's praise.

[ 25 : 38 ] God bring in early the earth begun, and God's rejoices one, and close him come and him write, with judgment dwells his door.

I would behold him and his hold, it burns the proud of fire, his light in light in the heart, and soul and you could hurt.

Is that the presence of the Lord, like what it meant now he in at the presence of the Lord, all on the earth, I say, the hands degrade his righteousness, all men his glory, duty, to us tockear

Let him upon him fall. Ye that are born in God, see that ye do him worship on.

Thy oned, dear, and joyful was that good and daughters wed.

[ 28 : 42 ] They must rejoice, O Lord, because thy judgment did appear.

Seeking the Lord's blessing, then, I'd like to take a look at this portion of Scripture that we have just read.

And for our text, just to take the words we have in chapter 5 and verse 14, the response of the divine warrior to the question of Joshua, art thou for us or for our adversaries?

And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship him and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant?

And the captain of the Lord so said to Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

[ 30 : 02 ] And we can look at three things from this passage. First of all, we will look at this remarkable encounter between Joshua and the captain of the host of the Lord, the divine warrior.

Secondly, we will then look at the divine command. And then thirdly, the divine judgment. First of all, then, the divine warrior.

This narrative is probably one of the most famous in the book of Joshua, the fall of Jericho.

I'm sure it's one of the most famous narratives in the Bible, in that sense, and one of the most well-known narratives in the Bible.

In a sense, you can see from the passage that we have before us in the book of Joshua and in the preceding chapters that the people of Israel were getting ready for battle.

[ 31 : 18 ] In chapter 4 and at verse 13, we read, About 40,000 prepared for war. About 40,000 prepared for war passed over before the Lord and to battle to the plains of Jericho.

There was to be a great battle. The battle of Jericho. But what was remarkable about this narrative is that there was no battle to fight.

Because the Lord, the divine warrior, speaks. And what does the divine warrior say to Joshua, See, I have given into thy hand Jericho and the king thereof and the mighty men of valor.

Who is he who speaks? And if there was not a battle, how did the walls of Jericho fall? Well, the Bible tells us how the walls of Jericho fell.

In the letter to the Hebrews and in that great chapter of faith, we read this, Hebrews 11 and verse 30, By faith the walls of Jericho fell down.

[ 32 : 42 ] after they were compassed about seven days. Who is this divine warrior?

Here we have Israel crossing the Jordan, the Ark of the Covenant with them, the Ark of the Covenant that signified the presence and the power of God.

They had just celebrated when they came over into the promised land. They had celebrated the Passover. It's as if they had, if you are going to put it into our language, it's as if they had a communion season.

You have a communion coming up. And it should be and ought to be one where we have great anticipation for a communion season when we consider what it is.

As I was saying in the prayer, the Lord knows us. The Lord knows that we need help as his people as we go through the wilderness.

[ 33 : 47 ] Yes, the Lord calls us to believe, and we do believe, and we believe that word. We believe everything about the word of God.

But God knows us better than he knows. God knows us better than we know ourselves, and he knows what we need, and he knows that providing a visual sign as a remembrance, do this in remembrance of me.

Christ knows us, and he knows that we need to be reminded to see with our physical eyes. Although we have to see by faith, of course, past the physical elements of bread and wine.

So they had celebrated the Passover. And we see Joshua contemplating. And it came to pass, verse 13 of chapter 5, when Joshua was by Jericho.

Here is Joshua. Here is Joshua. And the picture before us is as if Joshua goes on, and he's looking at this great city, and he knows that this city has to be taken before he can go on and do what God commanded him to do, which was to take this land of promise, and to subdue their enemies, to defeat their enemies.

[ 35 : 12 ] And it's almost as if he's looking and thinking, how am I going to do this to this city, this great city? And there is, in the narrative itself, enough to tell us that somehow it seems as if Joshua was discouraged, and it came to pass, and Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes.

It seems as if his eyes were down. Somehow he was discouraged trying to work out the best way, the best tactic for doing battle with this city, Jericho, because he knew that to go on he must do this.

But he lifts up his eyes. He lifts up his eyes. And he sees a man, a man, a soldier, a soldier, with his sword drawn, ready for battle.

And he asks him a question, are you for us, or for our adversaries? And the commander of the army of the Lord, or the divine warrior, names himself, and he says, no, but as commander of the army of the Lord, I have now come.

I am the commander of the Lord's army, the army on earth and the army in heaven. I am the commander of the hosts of heaven.

[ 36 : 56 ] I am the commander of the cherubins and the seraphims and the angels, those heavenly hosts that cannot be numbered.

There's a remarkable narrative in 2 Kings and chapter 6 at verses 17 to 18 when we see Elisha's servant.

And his servant says in verse 15, and when the servant of the man of God was risen early and gone forth, behold, a host compassed the city both with horses and chariots.

And his servant said to him, Alas, my master, what shall we do? And Elisha answers and he says, fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

And Elisha prayed and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

[ 38 : 14 ] Full of chariots of fire all around Elisha. The New Testament tells us in Hebrews 12 and at verse 27, but you are come to Mount Zion to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem and to an innumerable company of angels.

Here is this divine warrior, all the host of heaven and the armies of Israel are his and they are under his command.

And he says to Joshua, this is who I am and Joshua, I have now come. I have now come to be with you as I was with Moses.

Chapter 1 and verse 5. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. And I have now come, Joshua.

I have come to save, I have come to redeem, I have come to judge, I have come to deal with sin. And there are echoes here of this divine warrior who is Christ in the Old Testament, a revelation of Christ in the Old Testament.

[ 39 : 36 ] And there are echoes here when he says I have now come to the time when he would come in the flesh to deal with sin once, to die on Calvary's cross for you if you're a Christian.

For you even if you're not yet a Christian, the Lord knows to die on Calvary. I have now come and I'm going to be risen from the dead.

I'm going to rise and I'm going to come again in the final judgment. And it's as if Joshua suddenly grasps the reality of who is in front of him.

He didn't grasp it immediately because his question was saying, are you for us or are you for our enemies? But he now grasps who is before them and he bows down and he worships and he says, what does my Lord say to his servant?

And Joshua had to learn a lesson. It's almost as if Joshua was saying to him the first time when he saw him, are you my servant or are you my enemy servant?

[ 41 : 07 ] but Joshua had to learn and he learned from this captain of the host of the Lord and he bowed down before him and it's as if this man said to him, Joshua, that's not the question you should be asking.

the question you should be asking Joshua is, are you prepared to bow down and be my servant? Are you prepared to submit yourself to God and to his purposes?

And the question for us is the same question, are we prepared to submit ourselves to God and his purposes? do we begin each day by saying to God, Lord, I bow down before you and submit myself to you.

Whatever this day holds, may it be fitting into your purposes. Well, I have to say that for myself and I can only speak for myself that more often, more often than not, it's a question of setting your own plans and trying to get God to fit into it somewhere.

And that's part of our weakness, that we so often think about him when we're ready to think about him, when it's convenient for me to call on God, I'll call on him, but I'm going to do what I'm going to do first, and I'm going to get it done.

[ 43 : 07 ] There's a lesson for us, brothers and sisters in Christ, a real lesson for us, that we must bow down first before our God and say to him, what saith my Lord unto his servant?

Well, that's a permanent battle in our souls, is it not? A permanent battle in our souls of service and submission to put the Lord first.

One commentator commented about this exchange between the captain of the host of the Lord and Joshua as being, this is the real battle of Jericho, a battle of submission to God's purposes and to God's plan.

And you see, this divine commander takes charge of the situation and he says to Joshua, take your shoes from off your feet, loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place where you stand is holy, holy, you're on holy ground.

command. This divine warrior is about to issue a divine command. The same words that he used when he spoke with Moses at the burning bush, take your feet from off your shoe, and he was going to issue Moses with a divine command.

[ 44 : 38 ] What was the divine command to Moses? Well, this is where it all began, the exodus, not just out of Egypt, but also into the promised land, out of Egypt, into the promised land.

It's remarkable when you read the narrative about the Mount of Transfiguration in Luke 9 and verse 31, you can read it for yourselves.

What were they talking about? Moses and Elijah, what was the conversation about? It was the exodus, the exodus, of the Savior, to Calvary and to glory, towards Calvary and into glory.



You can think about that for yourselves. The divine warrior is getting ready to issue the divine command. Secondly, then, the divine command.

See, I have given into thine hand Jericho and the king thereof and the mighty men of valor and he issues the divine command.

[ 46 : 06 ] And the divine command is given in the light of verse 1 of chapter 6. Now Jericho was straightly shut up because of the children of Israel.

None went out and none came in. The words that are used here for straightly shut up give us a picture of a city that was completely fortified.

Completely fortified. The city itself had a double ring of walls. The outer wall was six foot thick and the inner wall twelve feet thick.

This was a city that had withstood siege after siege over four hundred or so years it seems. And here they were, they had heard.

They had heard about the God of Israel and their hearts had melted as we know in chapter 2 from that remarkable narrative about Rahab.

[ 47 : 18 ] And I'll come back to that. But in the face of a city barred and locked seemingly impregnable here is the divine command.

I have given into thine hand Jericho and the king thereof and the mighty men of valor and he issues that divine command. This most unusual approach.

This was a divine instruction. There was a divine order. There was a divine battle formation. The soldiers, the priests with trumpets of ram's horns, the ark of the covenant, then soldiers and then the people.

people. What do we see in that narrative as you read down that narrative? Well you see Joshua's obedience. Joshua's obedience to the divine command and the people's obedience to Joshua relaying that divine command to the people.

What else do we see here? We see Joshua and Israel's faith in persevering over that sixth and seventh day or the six days and the seventh day.

[ 48 : 34 ] We see their faith persevering through. In the center of that procession was the ark, the presence and the power of God.

And we have the trumpets, the trumpets that were used to declare the presence and the power of God, the trumpets that were used at the time of Jubilee to declare liberty to the captives as God was building his kingdom.

This was a most unusual approach, but this was a divine approach, a divine command with divine instructions.

What does the Bible teach us about this? Well, it teaches us this, 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and at verse 4, the scripture tells us, For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down human imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the tearing down of strongholds, to the tearing down of strongholds.

[ 50 : 15 ] we read also this in 1 John chapter 5 and verse 4, we read these words, words which I'm sure you know well, as if he's asking the question, how are we going to win the day?

How are we going to overcome the enemy? 1 John 5, 4, for who, for whatsoever is born of God, or whosoever is born of God, overcomes the world.

And this is the victory that overcomes the world, even out of faith. Who is he that overcomes the world?

He that believes that Jesus is the Son of God. When I was preparing this recently, I was reminded about that hymn that was used by the Civil Rights Movement many, many, many years ago, We Shall Overcome.

And I looked it up, and of course it was a hymn, whether it was meant to be used by the Civil Rights Movement, is another matter altogether. But I thought the first verse of the hymn to be very interesting.

[ 51 : 45 ] The first verse of it goes like this, The world is one great battlefield, with forces all arrayed. If in my heart I do not yield, I'll overcome someday.

how shall we overcome? How's Joshua, the people of God to overcome?

Oh, by listening to the divine command, by believing it, following its every instruction, obeying it, every jot and tittle of it.

This is a holy war in front of us here. It's a holy war. And it's a divine victory. And it's led by the divine warrior, the divine warrior.

I love the pictures and scripture of the divine warrior. Exodus, and chapter 15, and verse three, I have to say that it's probably one of my favorite chapters.

[ 53 : 04 ] And I'm sure you have your own favorite chapters. But that's a remarkable chapter. And it's not dissimilar, the victory that he gave to his people.

Exodus 15, then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spoke saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and song. He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will prepare him in habitation, my Father's God, and I will exalt him.

And this verse, listen to this verse, the Lord is a man of war. The Lord is his name.

Isn't that a remarkable picture? Here is this divine warrior, this divine man of war, and his is a divine victory.

[ 54 : 07 ] The words of that psalm that you know well, psalm 89, thou hast an arm that's full of power, thy hand is strong and might, what kind of picture does it present to you, but a man of war, a man of war.

here was this man, the God man in our nature, before he came into our nature, with his sword drawn, ready for battle, ready for battle.

It also reminds us of these words, these incredible words of David when he faced Goliath. And David says, And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.

And so the divine instruction of the divine order, and off they went, once every day for six days, and in the seventh day, seven times, I wonder what the people of Jericho thought.

I wonder what on earth they were thinking. We know, of course, from the scriptures in chapter 2, and at verse 11, that their hearts were melted, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you.

[ 55 : 46 ] For the Lord, you're God, he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath. Rahab's words, it seems as if the Lord's fame had spread, the word of God had spread even to that city and into that city.

And I'll come back to that. what must they have thought, though, as they looked on from the ramparts of that city at this remarkable procession and this remarkable order of things.

I wonder if they thought, well, that's a bit daft or a bit mad. Are these people mad? God, this seems to us like foolishness.

But you know, of course, from the scriptures, 1 Corinthians 1.21, for since in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the foolishness of what we preach to save those who believe.

And that remarkable chapter itself goes on to speak about Christ crucified. To some it was foolishness. And he goes on to say, but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise.

[ 57 : 17 ] To shame the wise. God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are.

And Jericho was brought to nothing. Verse 20 of chapter 6, and the wall fell down flat.

And the wall fell down flat. Thirdly, the divine judgment.

Jericho had heard the word of God. that city had heard the word of God. We have the testimony of Rahab in chapter 2, and it's a remarkable testimony.

Chapter 2 and verses 9 to 11. And she said to the men, I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that your terror has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

[ 58 : 38 ] For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did unto the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side of Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.

And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt. Neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you. And listen to it.

For the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath. The word of God had come to Jericho.

I know, she said. She heard and she knew who this God was.

And it seems very clear from the scriptures that only this woman and her family believed, only they received the word of God.

[ 59 : 46 ] And she embraced this God. She embraced him. She took hold of the testimony of God. and the remarkable words that follow then in verses 12 and 13 of that chapter.

Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house and give me a sure sign that you will say that I am my father, my mother, my brothers and sisters and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.

Deal kindly. Deal with us according to covenant mercy and grace. The word she uses is the words of covenant language.

She had laid hold of the covenant God. That's the word she uses, the Lord your God. She lays hold of him and she asks for covenant mercy and grace for her family.

The same words that David uses in Psalm 51. Show me Lord, covenant mercy and grace. Forgive me for my sins.

[ 61 : 09 ] It's a wonderful testimony, a wonderful testimony. And as you know, lineage takes you all the way to Christ himself.

As we read in Matthew's gospel in chapter 1 and verse 5. The divine judgment of God, the mercy of God had come to this city and they had rejected him, all of them but Rahab and her family.

Now that's a thought. The mercy of God has been present in this community for a long time. This building stands and speaks about the mercy of God.

It should speak to every house and every person in this district. It speaks about the mercy of God and the gospel of God that goes out and says to people, why do you have to die in your sins when there is life for you in Christ Jesus?

The solemnity of divine judgment, this whole city is devoted to destruction. Verse 21 of chapter 6 is there a most solemn verse in scripture?

[ 62 : 46 ] Well I'm sure there are, but not that many. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and ass with the edge of the sword, the whole city devoted to destruction in the righteous judgment of God.

God, this was a city that was vile and corrupt and evil and perverse, that sacrificed their children and all sorts of corruption, they were renowned for their evil.

evil. This was a city full of sin that only by God's sovereign rule and authority had lasted as long as it lasted.

But God will always deal with sin. God will always deal with sin, no matter, no matter. matter.

When it may have taken place, years may pass by, years, but God will deal with sin. He will deal with sin.

[ 64 : 11 ] And just because it crossed my mind for the Christian, psalm 99 is a remarkable psalm.

And it says in verse 8 of psalm 99, Thou answered them, O Lord of God. Thou wast a God that gave pardon to them, though on their deeds thou wouldst vengeance have.

Who was he talking about? Moses, and Aaron, and Samuel. He was talking about the people of God. Thou wast a God that gave pardon to them, though on their deeds thou wouldst vengeance have.

Oh, not judgment in terms of condemnation, but judgment in terms of rebuke, of rebuke.

God will and must deal with sin. And when you see the terror of the judgment of God in this chapter, as you see it in other chapters, you have to see the cause of that judgment.

[ 65 : 35 ] You have to see the cause of that judgment that has caused the holy God to come out in judgment against that city.

Just as he came out in judgment against the world in Genesis chapter 6, when God looked down and he saw that every imagination of their hearts was only evil continually.

It's worth reading it. It's worth reading it because there are echoes here. There are echoes here of what God said in this remarkable chapter in Genesis 6.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually and it repented God that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him at his heart and the Lord said I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth both man and beast and the creeping thing and the angels of the earth for it repenteth me that I have made them but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and in this city Rahab and the family found grace in the eyes of the Lord because they believed the word of God and what will it be like for you for you we have to be reminded that God has a divine right to exercise his judgment against sin we are sinners we deserve nothing we don't deserve the least of his mercies not one and the

Bible tells us time and time again there is none righteous no not one and we should be so thankful the Lord every day that we wake up and say Lord it's a mercy that you haven't taken me in my sleep that you haven't come while I was asleep because I know that I deserve to be taken away and we do deserve it we deserve hell we are hell deserving sinners as we are by nature and all these judgments of God and this most solemn judgment of the divine judge should point us forward point us forward to another judgment that took place on Calvary what judgment took place on Calvary well that great judgment when the sinless one the one who had come in the flesh was hung on a tree bearing the sins of his people and

[ 68 : 43 ] God the Father God the Father pouring on him judgment and wrath because he stood in a room and in our stead and on him was poured out the whole wrath of God's judgment on us the judgment that we deserve poured out on him him the God man isn't it astonishing that the cry of dereliction came from the very lips of one who was holy harmless undefiled separate from sinners and yet because he came into this world to die the lamb of God to take away the sin of the world all the sins of all his people that cry should remind us of the very depth of sin how deep deep deep it is and my friends

Christ is going to come again and he's going to come again in the fullness of judgment he's going to come again as the divine judge and in a sense the divine warrior nothing will stand in his way if you liken Jericho to your own heart is Jericho a picture of your heart well if you're a Christian of course I suppose that's true because the wall came tumbling down in your heart at some point in your experience the walls of your sinful rebellion and resistance fell when God spoke the divine command and you were saved and the walls fell down and you were redeemed what is your heart like is your heart still shut up is it still impregnable are you still standing and saying that won't happen to me but Christ is coming again and nothing just as you see here not even walls that were four foot thick on the outer walls and twelve foot thick on the inner walls that was impregnable and had lasted four hundred years but when the iniquity of the

Amorites was full and that's a remarkable text and you can read it for yourselves in Genesis and it's not just talking about the Amorites it's talking about the Canaanites the Canaanites what say of the scriptures 2nd Thessalonians and 1 and verse 9 and let's read at verse 8 when Christ comes again in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe how will it be for you how will it be for you in the day of judgment my prayer is that you like

Rahab and one could go on talking about her yes she was a sinner of some repute but remember oh remember what the scripture says you can read it for yourselves but such were some of you when he's talking about the grace of God the grace of God can reach into the darkest soul and every sin deserves God's wrath and curse and judgment so may you take to heart the judgment of God the divine judgment of God and may you turn to the divine warrior and hear the divine command before that final day of judgment comes or before you die and leave this world where the three falls there shall die and you die in your sin because to die in your sin is a most terrible terrible situation amen may the

Lord bless these thoughts on his own holy word let's sing in conclusion in the psalm that we had psalm 97 and at verse 10 psalm 97 verse 10 hate ill all you that love the Lord his saints souls keep the feet and from the hands of wicked men he sets them safe and free for all those that be righteous sown is a joyful light and gladness sown is for all those that are in heart upright he righteous in the

[ 75 : 31 ] Lord rejoice express your thankfulness when you into your memory do call his holiness grace the last three verses to God's praise again on ye that love the Lord and saints so keep the deep and round among the wicked men He genesis give the cloth him he for all those that be righteous so there's a joyful eye

And gladness on His part of the world That are in hearts of light Ye righteous in the glory  
Christ And spread to the coldness When He entered your memory To call His holiness  
We'll stand for prayer.

Almighty God Have mercy on us we pray O send thy light forth And thy truth And may we  
know the reading and the guiding Of Almighty God as we part at this time Bless your word  
to us Even those parts that are hard for us To take and to accept But help us to be  
reminded That God is holy And if not the judge of all the earth do right So part as we pray  
with that blessing Which adds joy and no sorrow

O we pray for one another here Lord bless everybody here Especially those who are not  
yet saved And Lord save Save our families Save our sons and daughters Save our  
mothers and fathers Our grandmothers and grandfathers Save our children We know that  
God can do it Oh would gracious one That you would rend the heavens And come down  
And we give thanks that God came down And touched this earth And in what a  
remarkable way That was

So help us on this Lord's day To go back to our homes To think of these things As we  
begin a new week We give thanks that the week begins With the Lord's day And help us  
to make every day A Lord's day In our own experiences And in the quietness of our own  
souls Grant these things The forgiveness of sin In Christ's name Amen