



LEGACY INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 575, Monrovia, California 91016
www.legacyinstitute.org
mail@legacyinstitute.org

2 April 2014

IN THIS LETTER:

Jericho and the Days of Unleavened Bread • Lessons for Today

Dear Friends and Fellow
Laborers,

Ancient Jericho was a great fortified Canaanite city located on the west side of the Jordan River at the confluence of several trading routes. Jericho was famous for its high double walls built of bricks on top of a stone retaining wall foundation.

The double walls made the city impregnable to any army that would be foolish enough to try to take the city. And it stood squarely in the path of Joshua and the invading Israelites. Not only was the city famous for its impenetrable walls, it was also the center of pagan worship of the moon. The Canaanite word for moon was “*yerach*,” so the city was named for the moon goddess, the chief god of the Canaanite pantheon at the time of the conquest. Canaanite worship was based entirely on perverted pagan sexual fertility practices, including homosexuality and bestiality. They also practiced repulsive acts of child sacrifice. God wanted the city destroyed because of its rampant immorality.

Joshua first sent spies into Jericho to try to find a way to take the city. These spies were hidden by Rahab who helped them escape back to the Israelite encampment at Shittim. She believed God was helping the Israelites and ultimately became a God-fearing person². She later married into the tribe of Judah and was an ancestor of King David himself. The spies found no way into the city, but God had His own plan to show His sovereignty over all the so-called gods of the Canaanites, even



So the People shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets... that the wall fell down flat.....Joshua 6:20¹

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Prise_de_J%C3%A9richo.jpg

² Joshua 6:25, Hebrews 11:31 (K.J.V. unless otherwise noted)



...and the armed men went before them; but the rear guard came after the ark... Joshua 6:13³

as He had done over all the gods of Egypt. This was to be a battle on both a spiritual and physical plane. It was God against the gods of Canaan. That is why the Captain of the Armies of God met Joshua to encourage him just before the battle for Jericho began.

Joshua 5:13-15

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 unto him, and said unto 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 unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot⁴; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

This man was the Lord God, the Yahweh of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Before the battle began, Joshua commanded the army of Israel that once the walls fell, they must destroy all living things in Jericho and leave nothing alive. He also warned them not to touch any of the idols and other items of worship of the people because such things were an abomination to God.

Joshua 6:16-19, 22, 23

And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto 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 ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD. 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 ye sware 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.

³ http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/63/Tissot_The_Taking_of_Jericho.jpg; Joshua 6:13 (R.S.V.)

⁴ Exodus 3:5

God commanded Joshua and Israel to utterly destroy everything in Jericho. All was to be annihilated and burned. Only Rahab and her family were saved. The Bible clearly shows it was Rahab's faith in the God of Israel that allowed her and her relatives to be spared.

Hebrews 11:31

By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

James 2:25-26

Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Rahab faced certain death if she was discovered hiding the Israelite spies. But her faith in the God of Israel was so strong she courageously hid them and later helped them escape back to where the army of Israel was camped. Her FAITH saved her and all of her family. She later married into Israel and was the great-great grandmother of King David. That made her an ancestor of Jesus the Messiah. God does great things with those who put their trust in Him.

God also placed a curse on anyone who would try to rebuild Jericho—the *city of sin*.

Joshua 6:26-27

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 thereof in his 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.

God commanded Jericho to be left in ruins as a reminder to Israel about what happens to those who live a lifestyle of sin and think they will go unpunished by a sovereign God. Unbelievably, an Israelite from Bethel named Hiel (*Hebrew: "Live by God"*), rebuilt Jericho 400 years later!

Indeed, this foolish Israelite with the godly name rebuilt Jericho at the expense of his firstborn son and youngest son. What the Bible doesn't say is that it was a common Canaanite practice for small children to be sacrificed and their corpses placed in the foundations to strengthen the walls or gates of a city. Clearly this Israelite had become snared in the sinful pagan practices of the land, because they did not follow God's instructions. God had told them to wipe out all the godless inhabitants of the holy land and destroy all their images and places of worship.

Because they disobeyed God and left many of the inhabitants alive, they soon became influenced by the pagan women and the sexual fertility worship of the land. They even began to sacrifice their own children to Baal and Molech.

2Kings 17:16-17

And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

Jeremiah 32:33-35

And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. But they set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

LESSONS FOR TODAY

The Israelites did not heed the lessons of Jericho. In a repeat of the sins of our ancestors, modern Israel is refusing to listen to the voice of our ancient past. We too have created our own *Jericho of Sin* and turned to foreign gods and are sacrificing our children by the thousands because of legalized abortion.

The story of Jericho has many lessons for today's Christians:

- 1. The lesson of Rahab shows us that even sinners who do not know God can be accepted by God** and brought into the Church (Israel) because they come to have faith and believe God. Rahab was a pagan Canaanite and a prostitute. Yet she became the great-great grandmother of King David. (Salmon and Rahab had Boaz; Boaz and Ruth had Obed who had Jesse; and Jesse had David—Ruth 4: 20-22.)
- 2. There are NO walls too high and too impregnable for those who trust in the Lord God.** The unconquerable become conquered by those who TRUST God.
- 3. If you are faithful to God, your faithfulness can bring blessings on your family or save them from destruction,** even if they are non-believers. All of Rahab's relatives were saved by her faithfulness.
- 4. A Christian cannot allow one small particle of sin to remain in their lives. It will eventually destroy the Christian.** Jericho was utterly destroyed, but the pagan sinful practices continued in the land and influenced Hiel to rebuild the city of the moon goddess on the corpses of his own children. What a price to pay for keeping sin in your life. That is why the Christian—and even the Jewish people—search their houses for any last piece of leavening to PUT OUT before the Days of Unleavened Bread.
- 5. It took seven days to bring down the walls of Jericho. The seven days of Unleavened Bread are parallels of those seven days.** Seven is the number of completion. So we are to completely get sin out of our lives and keep it out.
- 6. A Christian cannot hold onto any sin or sinful ideas.** Hiel and Achan held onto sin. Even though God Himself brought utter and complete destruction upon Jericho, Hiel rebuilt the old sinful life again. All the Israelites were told not to take any abominable idol or other items used in the pagan worship of idols out of Jericho. But Achan took an abominable thing out of Jericho which caused the entire army of Israel to fail to take the city of Ai. Achan's sin affected the whole congregation. The Bible teaches us that a "*little leaven leavens the whole lump*" (1 Corinthians 5:6).

7. **God goes before the Christian into difficult circumstances.** Notice that when Joshua crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land just before the Battle of Jericho, a man stood in his way with a drawn sword. It turned out to be God Himself who was bringing the armies of heaven to fight for Israel against all enemies, spiritual and otherwise. God fights our battles with us. We are not alone (**2 Chronicles 32:8**).

Jericho is a wonderful story that provides Christians with encouragement to fight every battle against sin and be successful in obtaining the prize of eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

However, we must exercise faith by our actions. Joshua led the army of Israel around the walls for seven days in faith. Rahab risked her life to hide the spies because of her faith. We too must be courageous in our actions and deeds as a demonstration of the total and unflagging FAITH in the God we say we believe in.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

May all of you have a wonderful and faith-building Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

In service to the Captain of the Armies of God,



T. Leon Sexton

© Legacy Institute 2014

If you are interested in attending the Feast of Tabernacles in Chiang Mai, Thailand this year, please contact mail@legacyinstitute.org for more information.