

The Work & Walk Of Good News

Long Beach Alliance Church • February 2, 2014 • Pastor Chris Lankford

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.
-Joshua 1:9 (ESV)

1) God's Word Makes Us Strong & Courageous

- A) After Moses, God's people were led by Joshua, Moses' former assistant. Joshua is constantly reminded to be "strong and courageous" (Joshua 1:6-7, 9). This came through reading and focusing on God's Word (1:8-9).
- B) Joshua was one of two men (along with Caleb) who had been in the promised land before (Numbers 13:1-14:38). As the new leader of God's people, Joshua was commanded to cross the Jordan River and take the Israelites into the Promised Land (Joshua 1:2-4).

2) A Hooker & The Scarlet Rope Of Redemption

- A) The first obstacle for occupying the Promised Land was conquering Jericho, a fortified town across the Jordan River from Moab. Two spies were sent to Jericho. They find a local prostitute with whom to discreetly hide (2:1).
- B) The men get found out, but Rahab (the hooker) lies on their behalf, sending the search team away (2:2-7). Rahab explains her reasons by confessing faith (cf. Hebrews 11:31) in the God of Israel, and informing the spies of Jericho's great fear of Israel's power (2:8-11).

- C) Rahab begs for her life, and for the lives of those in her family, in exchange for helping Israel. The spies readily agree, initiating a plan by which Rahab and her family will be saved by a sign: a scarlet red rope, hung from the same window by which the spies escape, for identification during an invasion (2:12-24).

3) The Work, & Walk Of The Word

- A) After crossing into the Promised Land in miraculous fashion (3:1-4:24), Israel is "newly" circumcised (cf. Exodus 12:48), a complete identification with God. The people remember God in a "new" Passover celebration, finally enjoying God's Promised Land provision (5:1-12).
- B) The Commander of God's Army appears to Joshua (5:13-15) to inform him of the battle plan for Jericho. Like Moses before him, Joshua moves forward according to the Word of the Lord.
- C) God provides Joshua with the plan for Israel's conquest of Jericho (6:1-5), involving walking around the city of Jericho (roughly a half-mile jaunt), centered on the Ark of the Covenant (i.e. "Promise;" jar of manna, Aaron's blossomed staff, tablets of the 10 Commandments).
- D) While the "armed men" ('stripped' for battle) are first in the march around Jericho, the priesthood actually lead the procession, trumpeting the coming of the Lord (Ark Of Covenant) and God's people (6:6-14).
- E) The leadership of the priesthood indicates a distinctive spiritual event. This is an establishment of a spiritual people who "battle" in a spiritual manner. God is teaching both Israel and His enemies about His power.
- F) On the seventh day (a "new" creation by God), the people circle seven times, and the walls of Jericho come tumbling down, landing inward and flat, providing a ramp for the invasion (6:15-25). Only Rahab, with her scarlet cord, are spared -- and redemption with her (cf. Ruth 4:20-21 & Matthew 1:4-5).