



Study Guide: Joshua – Chapter 6

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This study guide provides an educational overview of Joshua Chapter 6 using a verse-by-verse structure, theological context, and application-oriented insights grounded in Scripture.

Introduction

Joshua Chapter 6 marks a pivotal moment in the book of Joshua and the history of Israel. It recounts the dramatic fall of Jericho, the first major conquest in the Promised Land. This chapter contributes to the book's flow by demonstrating the fulfillment of God's promises and the necessity of obedience and faith in His instructions. Readers should watch for the unique military strategy commanded by God, the role of the Ark of the Covenant, and the emphasis on divine intervention rather than human might. The chapter sets a tone for the conquest narratives that follow and highlights the importance of holiness and consecration in God's plan.

Context

The immediate literary context of Joshua 6 is the transition from the Israelites' wilderness wanderings to their entrance into Canaan, the land promised to their ancestors. The book of Joshua follows the death of Moses and details the leadership of Joshua as he leads the people in fulfilling the covenant promises made by God. The covenant framework is central: God has promised the land to Israel, and their possession of it depends on obedience and faithfulness. The key speaker in this chapter is the Lord, who gives Joshua specific instructions through a divine messenger. The setting is the fortified city of Jericho, a strategic and symbolic stronghold whose fall signifies the beginning of Israel's conquest under God's guidance.

Outline

The chapter can be divided into three main movements. First, the divine instructions to Joshua about the unique strategy for taking Jericho, including the role of the priests, the Ark, and the marching around the city walls. Second, the execution of these instructions over seven days, emphasizing the people's obedience and the ritualistic nature of the siege. Third, the dramatic collapse of the city walls on the seventh day, the destruction of



Jericho, and the consequences for Rahab and her family. Each movement highlights the interplay between divine command, human obedience, and the fulfillment of God's promises.

Verse-by-Verse Study

Verses 1-3: The chapter opens with the Lord appearing to Joshua, giving him detailed instructions on how to approach the city of Jericho. The emphasis is on the unusual military tactic involving the Ark of the Covenant and the priests, signaling that this battle is to be won by divine power rather than conventional warfare.

Verses 4-5: Joshua is told to have seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns ahead of the Ark, and the people are to march around the city once a day for six days. This ritualistic procession is a test of faith and obedience, underscoring the sacred nature of the conquest.

Verses 6-7: The people are instructed to remain silent during the marches, except for the sound of the trumpets. This silence symbolizes reverence and trust in God's plan, as human voices and efforts are set aside in favor of divine action.

Verses 8-11: On the seventh day, the Israelites are to march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. At the sound of a long blast, the people are to shout loudly, signaling God's intervention. The Ark remains central, carried by the priests, representing God's presence among His people.

Verses 12-14: The narrative describes the obedience of Joshua and the Israelites, who follow the Lord's commands precisely. The people's faithfulness sets the stage for the miraculous outcome and demonstrates their commitment to God's covenant.

Verses 15-16: On the seventh day, after the seventh circuit, the priests sound a long blast on the trumpets, and the people shout. This moment is the climax of the ritual, combining faith, obedience, and the power of God to bring down the city walls.

Verses 17-21: The walls of Jericho collapse, and the Israelites enter the city, destroying everything except Rahab and her family, who were spared because of her faith and assistance to the spies. This section highlights the theme of judgment and mercy within God's plan.



Verses 22–25: Joshua’s instructions to Rahab and her family are fulfilled, and she is integrated into the community of Israel. The chapter closes with a summary of the city’s destruction and a reminder of the ban (herem) placed on the spoils, emphasizing holiness and separation for God’s purposes.

Key Themes

One key theme is divine sovereignty and intervention. The fall of Jericho is not attributed to human military skill but to God’s power working through obedience. Another theme is faith expressed through obedience; the Israelites’ strict adherence to God’s unusual instructions demonstrates trust in His promises. The presence of the Ark symbolizes God’s presence and guidance. The concept of holiness and consecration is evident in the ban on spoils and the destruction of the city, underscoring the need for purity in God’s people. Mercy and judgment are also intertwined, as seen in Rahab’s salvation contrasted with the city’s destruction.

Cross-References

The story of Jericho’s fall connects with Deuteronomy 20, where God’s instructions for warfare emphasize the need for holiness and reliance on Him. Hebrews 11:30 references the faith of the Israelites in the walls’ collapse, highlighting faith’s role in victory. The Ark’s central role recalls Exodus 25–40, where God’s presence dwells with Israel, affirming His guidance in battles. The concept of herem, or the ban, is also seen in 1 Samuel 15, showing the seriousness of consecration and judgment. Rahab’s inclusion anticipates the New Testament theme of faith and redemption found in James 2:25 and Hebrews 11:31.

Application

Modern disciples can learn from Joshua 6 the importance of trusting God’s guidance even when it defies conventional wisdom. The chapter challenges believers to obey God’s instructions fully, recognizing that spiritual victories come through faith and dependence on Him rather than human strength. The presence of the Ark reminds Christians of God’s abiding presence through the Holy Spirit in their lives. The call to holiness and separation from sin remains relevant, urging believers to consecrate themselves to God’s purposes. Rahab’s story encourages inclusion and hope for those who come to faith, demonstrating that God’s mercy extends beyond past mistakes.

Summary



Joshua Chapter 6 narrates the miraculous conquest of Jericho through God's direct intervention and the Israelites' faithful obedience to His unique instructions. The chapter highlights the themes of divine sovereignty, faith, holiness, and mercy within the covenant framework. The fall of Jericho serves as a foundational event in Israel's possession of the Promised Land, demonstrating that victory belongs to God and is secured by trust in His presence and commands. The chapter sets a pattern for the conquest and calls believers to a life of faith, obedience, and consecration under God's leading.