

Fighting the Lord's Battle –  
His part; our part

**Joshua 5:1; 6: 1-5, 15-16, 20-23**

# After the Israelites crossed the Jordan River ...

Now when all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the coast heard how the Lord had dried up the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted in fear and they no longer had the courage to face the Israelites. (Joshua 5: 1)

# Map 3 THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

▲ Phillistine cities

□ Cities of refuge

(1,742) Elevation, in feet

? Exact location questionable

0 10 20  
Scale of Miles



4. In a northern thrust, Joshua moved from Gilgal all the way to Hazor (Josh. 11).

2. Joshua made peace with Gibeon, then moved through the Valley of Aijalon and defeated the five Amorite kings (Josh. 9–10).

1. Upon crossing the Jordan, Joshua camped awhile at Gilgal, then moved to take Jericho and Ai. Afterward, he returned to Gilgal (Josh. 1–8).

3. From Makkedah, Joshua launched a southern campaign against Lachish, Hebron, Debir, and Gaza. Victorious, he returned to Gilgal (Josh. 10).

5

5





Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. (Joshua 6: 1; NIV)

Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in. (Joshua 6: 1; ESV)



# Earlier ...

Before the spies lay down for the night, [Rahab] went up on the roof <sup>9</sup> and said to [the spies], “I know that the Lord has given you this land and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. <sup>10</sup> 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 to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. <sup>11</sup> When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone’s courage failed because of you, for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. (Joshua 2: 8-11)

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# Sihon and Og

- Sihon and Og were Amorite kings defeated by Moses and the Israelites earlier (Numbers 21: 21-35)
- King Sihon conquered the Moabites and ruled from Hesbon
- King Og ruled in the region of Bashan; his bed was over 13 ft long (see Deut. 3: 11)

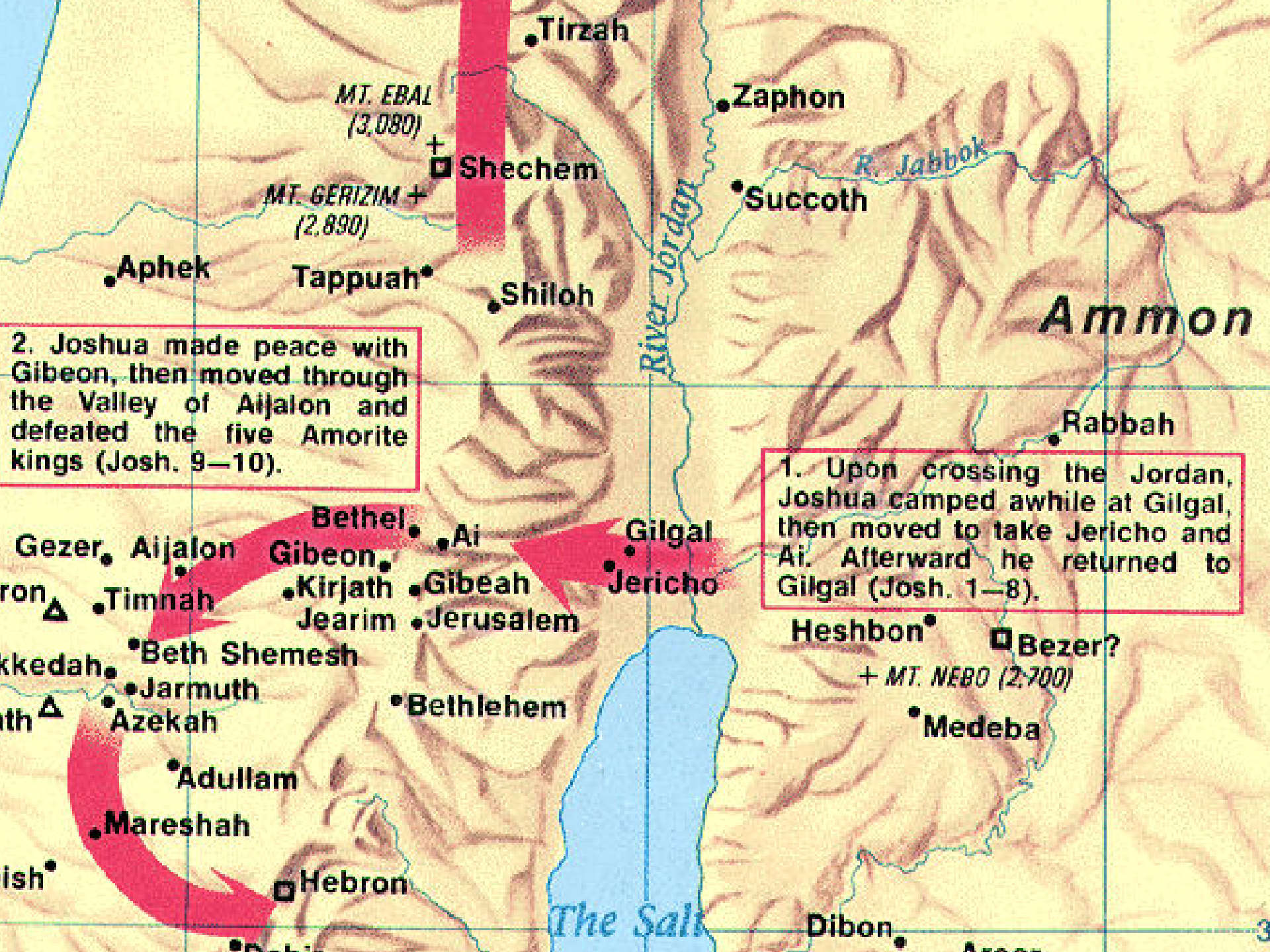


# The escape ...

So [Rahab] let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall. She said to them, “Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way.” (Joshua 2: 15-16)

Then the two men started back. They went down out of the hills, forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them.

(Joshua 2: 23)



Tirzah

MT. EBAL  
(3,080)

Shechem

MT. GERIZIM +  
(2,890)

Zaphon

R. Jabbok

Succoth

Aphek

Tappuah

Shiloh

Ammon

Rabbah

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1. Upon crossing the Jordan, Joshua camped awhile at Gilgal, then moved to take Jericho and Ai. Afterward he returned to Gilgal (Josh. 1–8).

Bethel

Ai

Gilgal

Gezer

Aijalon

Gibeon

Kirjath

Jericho

Timnah

Timnah

Jearim

Gibeah

Jerusalem

Ekedah

Beth Shemesh

Heshbon

Bezer?

+ MT. NEBO (2,700)

Jarmuth

Jarmuth

Azekah

Bethlehem

Medeba

Adullam

Adullam

Mareshah

The Salt

Dibon

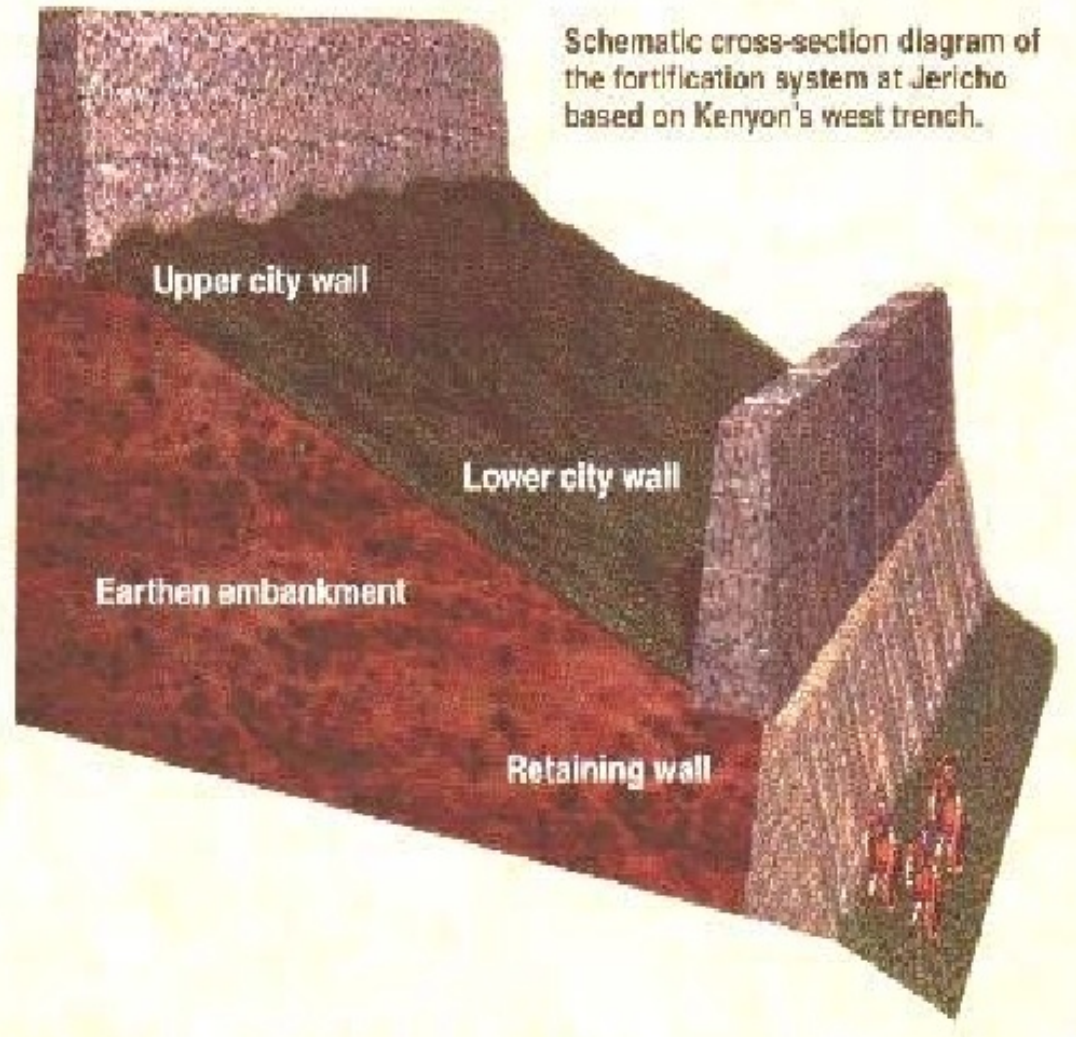
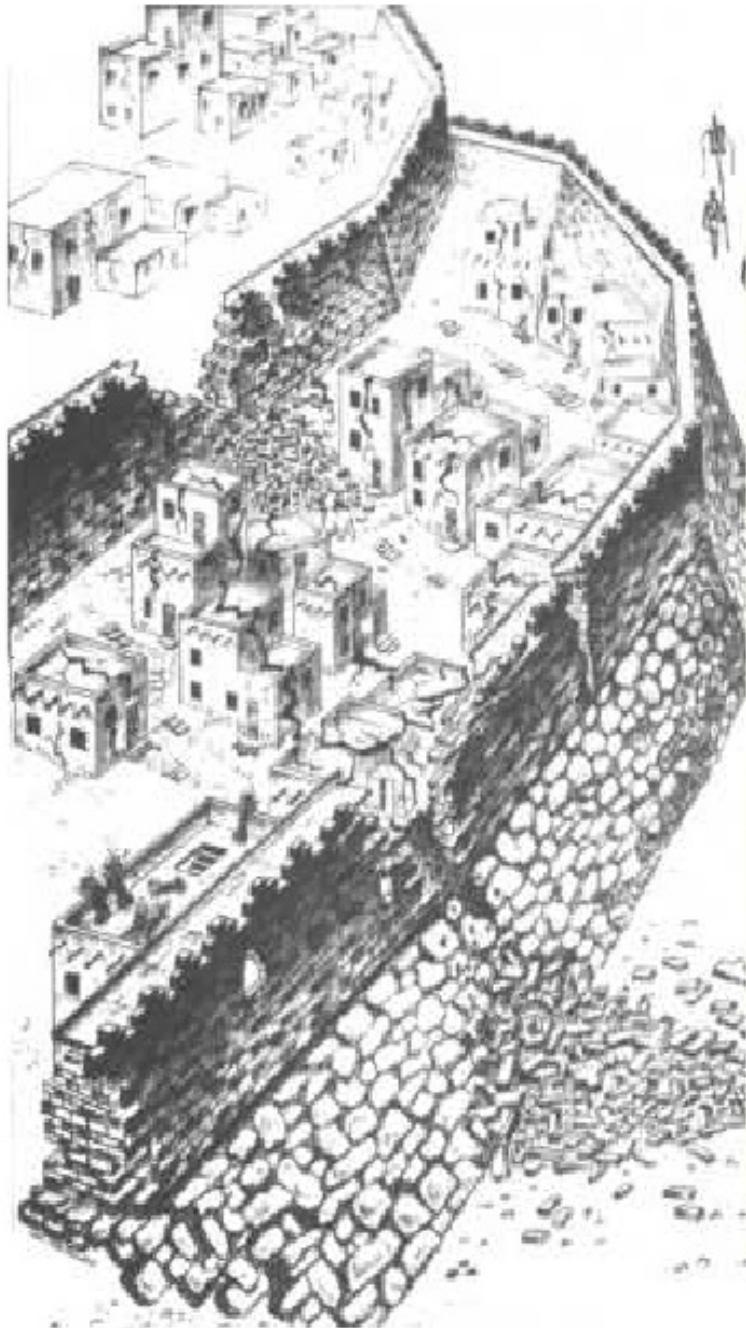
Hebron

Hebron



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# Walls of Jericho



## Prepared for a long siege

Now when all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the coast heard how the Lord had dried up the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted in fear and they no longer had the courage to face the Israelites.

(Joshua 5: 1)

Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

(Joshua 6: 1)

# Spiritual preparations for God's people

- Circumcision of all the males at Gilgal (Joshua 5: 1-9)
- Celebration of the Passover (Josh. 5: 10)
- Festival of Unleavened Bread (Josh. 5: 11)
- Manna stopped the day after (Josh. 5: 12)



# Timeline to the Battle of Jericho

- Crossing of the Jordan River (Joshua 3)
- Set up camp at Gilgal (Joshua 4: 19) – 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month
- Circumcision of all the males at Gilgal (Joshua 5: 1-9)
- Celebration of the Passover – evening of 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month
- Festival of Unleavened Bread – 15<sup>th</sup> day
- Manna stopped – 16<sup>th</sup> day

## God's battle plan (6: 3-5)

- Have all the armed men, along with 7 priests blowing the ram's horn in front of the ark, march around Jericho
- Do this for 6 days
- On the 7<sup>th</sup> day, do it 7X
- Then have the priests blow a loud trumpet blast, and the whole army give a loud shout

# Ark of the Covenant





# Ark of the Covenant

- Symbol of the presence of God Himself among His people
- Inside the ark: (Hebrews 9: 4)
  - Stone tablets with the 10 Commandments
  - Jar of manna
  - Aaron's staff that budded

# Remember what the people promised Joshua earlier?

Then they answered Joshua, “Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. <sup>17</sup> Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you as he was with Moses. <sup>18</sup> Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!” (Joshua 1: 16-18)

# Joshua's instruction to the people

So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant of the Lord and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it.” And he ordered the army, “Advance! March around the city, with an armed guard going ahead of the ark of the Lord.”

(Joshua 6: 6-7)



# Joshua's instruction to the people

Joshua had commanded the army, “Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!” So he had the ark of the Lord carried around the city, circling it once. Then the army returned to camp and spent the night there.

(Joshua 6: 10-11)

Joshua got up early the next morning and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. ... So on the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

(Joshua 6: 12, 14)

# The difference between this generation and the previous one?

- Joshua did not let the people know what will happen on the 7<sup>th</sup> day
- They did not grumble, become discouraged, and speak against Joshua
- “They did this for six days!” (Joshua 6: 14b)

# Lessons from odd battle plan and people's obedience to Joshua?

- God seems to be not in a hurry
- Don't get discouraged or grumble
- Don't try to speed things by taking matters into our own hands
- Faithfully obey God's instructions, which usually come bit by bit

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. (Psalm 37: 7)



# Joshua's instruction on the 7<sup>th</sup> day

On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times.<sup>16</sup> The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!<sup>17</sup> The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent.

# Joshua's instruction on the 7<sup>th</sup> day

18 But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them. Otherwise you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it. 19 All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury.” (Joshua 6: 15-19)

# What does “devoted” to the Lord mean?

- Animals were to be given to the Lord as sacrifices
- Silver and gold, and articles of bronze and iron go into the Lord’s treasury
- All residents of Jericho (and animals unsuitable for sacrifices) are to be killed



# God's guidelines for warfare

“When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. 11 And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. 12 But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. 13 And when the Lord your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, 14 but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the Lord your God has given you. 15 Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not cities of the nations here.

# God's guidelines for warfare

16 But in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, 17 but you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded, 18 that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the Lord your God.

(Deut. 20: 10-18;

# Some sobering principles

- God does not delight in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:32; 33:11)
- He wants them to repent and live
- Still, the Bible implies a “point of no return” beyond which there is only God’s judgment (e.g., Jeremiah 11:11; 14: 11-12)
- Canaanite civilization went beyond the “point of no return” - e.g., infant sacrifices; consulting mediums; sexual perversion
- Left alone, such evil will infect God’s people

# Some sobering principles

- Joshua 6 shows not only God's judgment but also God's mercy and grace

Then they burned the whole city and everything in it, but they put the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the Lord's house. But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho - and she lives among the Israelites to this day.

(Joshua 6: 24-25)



# The battle is the Lord's

Hear, Israel: You are now about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities that have walls up to the sky. The people are strong and tall—Anakites! You know about them and have heard it said: “Who can stand up against the Anakites?” But be assured today that the Lord your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire. He will destroy them; he will subdue them before you. And you will drive them out and annihilate them quickly, as the Lord has promised you.

(Deut. 9: 1-3)

“I used to ask God to help me. Then I asked if I might help Him. I ended up by asking Him to do His work through me” - J. Hudson Taylor

“I used to ask God to help me fight my battles. Then I asked if I might help Him fight His battles. I ended up by asking Him to do His work through me.”

