



This is ridiculous

January 2, 2017

JOSHUA 6:1-27 - The story of the walls of Jericho falling down, recorded in **Joshua 6:1–27**, is one that vividly demonstrates the miraculous power of God. But more than that, the utter destruction of Jericho teaches us several grand truths regarding God's grace and our salvation.

In ancient warfare such cities were either taken by assault or surrounded and the people starved into submission. Its invaders might try to weaken the stone walls with fire or by tunneling, or they might simply heap up a mountain of earth to serve as a ramp. Each of these methods of assault took weeks or months, and the attacking force usually suffered heavy losses. However, the strategy to conquer the city of Jericho was unique in two ways. First, the strategy was laid out by God Himself. Second, the strategy was a seemingly foolish plan. God simply told Joshua to have the people march silently around Jericho for six days, and then, after seven circuits on the seventh day, to shout.

Though it seemed foolish, Joshua followed God's instructions to the letter. When the people did finally shout, the massive walls collapsed instantly, and Israel won an easy victory. In fact, God had given the city of Jericho to them before they even began to march around its walls (**Joshua 6:2, 16**). It was when the people of God, by faith, followed the commands of God that the walls of Jericho fell down (**Joshua 6:20**).

2 KINGS 5:10 - Naaman and his men are waiting outside of Elisha's house. They are waiting for the prophet to come outside and heal Naaman. Their expectations are high, and they can barely contain their excitement. What will the prophet do? What will he say? Will he be flashy and glittery with a fancy expensive haircut slicked back like the faith healers back home? Will he put on a show to awe them with his power? Would people fall down backwards and be slain in the spirit in a true showman style? Lights! Cameras! Action! Naaman could hardly wait.

But Elisha never came outside. He did not even come to the door. Instead of Elisha the prophet coming to greet them, they were sent a servant. No show, no spectacle, no prophet, no flowing robes, just a servant. Worse yet, it was a servant with a message to go wash seven times in a muddy river. And then the door closes leaving Naaman speechless and his army silent. How rude! How disappointing! Naaman's expectations were crushed. His pride was deeply injured. He had come expecting so much, and received so little. How dare Elisha treat him this way! He was a great man. He was a valiant warrior. He was the Commander of the army. How dare Elisha send a servant out to tell him to wash in a filthy river? What was wrong with the clean rivers back home? He deserved better treatment than that!

EXODUS 4:2-4 – Moses is instructed to lay his staff on the ground and it became a snake. Most of us probably would have said, "This is ridiculous!!!" Nevertheless, Moses obeyed, just as Naaman and Joshua obeyed God. They either felt or said, "This is ridiculous", but acted on their instructions.

What level of faith will you have this year? Have you come to a conclusion that God can, God will and God has already done it according to His will! Reach for maximum faith. Trust in God.

SCRIPTURE READING: NAHUM 1:7

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Reality denied comes back to haunt!