

“Real-Faith Reveals Wonderous-Power”

Hebrews 11:30-31

March 3, 2019

- INTRO:** Let me ask you a question as we begin...
- ***Has YOUR faith ever brought you into the very presence of GOD’s wonderous works?***
 - Have you **built & sailed** in a personal “ark?”
 - Have you **seen** a burning bush/10 plagues?
 - Have you **walked thru a Red Sea?**
 - If you answered “No” – then... **Why not???**
 - If you answered “Yes” – when... **the last time?**

T/S: I hope today’s Gospel lesson blesses you...

BIG IDEA: ***Real faith reveals God’s wonderous power... & God’s wonderous power refines real faith!***

CONTEXT:

- The Bible – Old & New Testaments...
- Hebrews
 - Exhortation...
 - 5 Warnings
 - Chapters 10 & 11
 - We left off after the Red Sea...
 - We pick up in the Promised Land...
 - There’s a lot missing in between...

T/S: Let me remind you where we are in the text...

- Last week... which of the 3 groups were you in?
 - Divinely drowned, open enemies of God?
 - Divinely dying as desert-dwellers?
 - Divinely delivered disciples?

VIDEO: *Exodus 19-40*

- ***See the pattern?***
- Do you remember what comes next? **LEVITICUS**
 - God makes a way to unite sinners/Savior!
 - Love letter vs. legal letter...
 - The Gospel's roots are revealed...
 - Sacrificial Atonement
- Next came **Numbers & Deuteronomy**...
 - ***Watch the pattern continue!***
 - Let us learn the lesson of faith!

VIDEO: *Numbers & Deuteronomy*

T/S: Ok... now that brings us to our text for today...

Hebrews 11:30-31 (ESV)

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

T/S: Let's go to the broader text and see what we can take away...

(remember)

BIG IDEA: *Real faith reveals God's wonderful power... & God's wonderful power refines real faith!*

TEXT:

Joshua 1:1-18 (ESV)

¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant,

² "Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.

³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses.

⁵ *No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.*

⁶ *Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.*

⁷ *Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.*

⁸ *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

⁹ *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.*"

¹⁰ And Joshua commanded the officers of the people,

¹¹ "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'"

¹⁶ And they answered Joshua, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses!

¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous."

Joshua 2:1-24 (ESV)

¹ And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there.

² And it was told to the king of Jericho, “Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.”

³ Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.”

⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.

⁵ And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.”

⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof.

⁷ So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.

⁸ Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof

⁹ and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you.

¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction.

¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.

¹² Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father’s house, and give me a sure sign

¹³ that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.”

¹⁴ And the men said to her, “Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the LORD gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.”

¹⁵ Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall.

¹⁶ And she said to them, “Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way.”

¹⁷ The men said to her, “We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear.

¹⁸ Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your

father's household.

¹⁹ Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head.

²¹ And she said, "According to your words, so be it." Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²³ Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them.

²⁴ And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us."

RAHAB:

- Brought: **SIN**
- Sought: **SAVIOR**
- Got: **SALVATION**

***** ALL by grace thru faith! *****

Joshua 3:

⁵Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

¹⁵ and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest),

¹⁶ the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. *And the people passed over opposite Jericho.*

¹⁷ Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan,

and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

Joshua 4:1-24 (ESV)

‘Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests’ feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.’”

⁶ that this may be a sign among you. ⁷...So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.”

⁸ And the people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded

¹⁸ And when the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up on dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

²³ For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over,

²⁴ *so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”*

Joshua 5:1-15 (ESV)

¹ As soon as all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel.

⁶ *For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD; the LORD swore to them that he would not let them see the land that the LORD had sworn to their fathers to give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

⁹ *And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.”*

¹⁰ *While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the plains of*

Jericho.

¹¹ *And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land,* ¹² *And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.*

¹³ *When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?”*

¹⁴ *And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, “What does my lord say to his servant?”*

¹⁵ *And the commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.*

Joshua 6:1-27 (ESV)

¹ Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in.

² And the LORD said to Joshua, “See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor.”

³ You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days.

⁴ Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets.

⁵ And when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him.”

⁶ So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the LORD.”

⁷ And he said to the people, “Go forward. March around the city

¹⁰ But Joshua commanded the people, “You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout.”

¹⁵ On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times.

¹⁶ And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city.

¹⁷ And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the

messengers whom we sent.

¹⁸ But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it.

¹⁹ But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.”

²⁰ So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city.

²⁴ And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

²⁵ But Rahab the prostitute and her father’s household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

²⁷ *So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.*

CLOSE:

1. Real faith **LOVES**
2. Real faith **LEADS**
3. Real faith **LIVES**
4. Real faith **LASTS**
5. Real faith **LEARNS**
 - a. God is God!
 - b. Gold is NOT...
 - c. Grace is amazing...

- d. Gospel has conditional consequences...
- e. Glory is for God alone!

Joshua 7:1 (ESV)

¹ But the people of Israel broke faith.... And the anger of the LORD burned against the people of Israel.

¹⁰ The LORD said to Joshua, “Get up! Why have you fallen on your face?”

¹¹ Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings.

¹² Therefore the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become devoted for destruction. I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you.

¹³ Get up! Consecrate the people and say, ‘Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow; for **thus says the LORD, God of Israel,** “There are devoted things in your midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you.”’

¹⁵ And **he who is taken with the devoted things shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he has done an outrageous thing in Israel.’”**

... Joshua 7:19-21 (ESV)

¹⁹ Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and give praise to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me.”

²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua, “Truly I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, **...they are hidden in the earth inside my tent...**”

Joshua 24:1-28 (ESV)

13 I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.'

14 "Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

15 And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

16 Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods,

17 for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed.

18 And the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

19 But Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. ²⁰ If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good."

21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD."

22 Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.”

23 He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel.”

24 And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.”

27 And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God.”

28 So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

JUDGES: *Judges is named after an interesting collection of individuals who led Israel after Joshua’s death until the rise of the monarchy under Samuel (up to about 1050 BC). In this time of decline, despite their promises to keep the covenant (**Joshua 24:16-18**), the people turned from the Lord and began to worship other gods. “Everyone did what was right in their own eyes” (**Judges 17:6 & 21:25**). A pattern repeats throughout the book of Judges: 1). The people abandoned the Lord; 2). God punished them by raising up a foreign power to oppress them; 3). the people cried out to God for deliverance; and 4). God raised up a deliverer or judge for them.*

- ESV Study Bible

BIG IDEA: *Real faith reveals God’s wonderful power... & God’s wonderful power refines real faith!*

Let’ Pray!

Hebrews 11:29-31 (ESV)

²⁹ By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

Hebrews 11 thus far:

v.1	Saving faith	= DEFINED... God's WARANTEE is our Guarantee!
v.2	Saving faith	= God's WITNESS (commendation)
v.3	Saving faith	= Biblical WORLDVIEW
v.4	Saving faith	= Sacrificial WORSHIP & Witness (2X) - Abel
v.5	Saving faith	= Supernatural WALK-with-God - Enoch
v.6	Saving faith	= Impossible to please God WITHOUT it!
v.7	Saving faith	= Persevering WORK of God/Condemns! – Noah
vv.8-9	Saving faith	= Abraham's faith was for WITNESSING
vv.10-22	Saving faith	= God's faith-family of WITNESSES – God's children
vv.23-28	Saving faith	= WANTS-TO Witness – Moses
v.29	Saving faith	= WINS & WARNS – God's faithful remnant
vv.30-31	Saving faith	= WONDEROUS-Power will witness to the world!

Joshua 1:1-18 (ESV)

¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant,

² "Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.

³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses.

⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory.

⁵ *No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.*

⁶ *Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.*

⁷ *Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.*

⁸ *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

⁹ *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.*

¹⁰ And Joshua commanded the officers of the people,

¹¹ “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.’”

¹² And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said,

¹³ “Remember the word that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.’

¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them,

¹⁵ until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

¹⁶ And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses!

¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”

Joshua 2:1-24 (ESV)

¹ And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there.

² And it was told to the king of Jericho, “Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.”

³ Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.”

⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.”

⁵ And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.”

⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof.

⁷ So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.

⁸ Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof

⁹ and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you.

¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction.

¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.

¹² Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father’s house, and give me a sure sign

¹³ that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.”

¹⁴ And the men said to her, “Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the LORD gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.”

¹⁵ Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall.

¹⁶ And she said to them, “Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way.”

¹⁷ The men said to her, “We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear.

¹⁸ Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father’s household.

¹⁹ Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head.

²⁰ But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear.”

²¹ And she said, “According to your words, so be it.” Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet

cord in the window.

²² They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and found nothing.

²³ Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them.

²⁴ And they said to Joshua, “Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us.”

Joshua 3:1-17 (ESV)

¹ Then Joshua rose early in the morning and they set out from Shittim. And they came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

² At the end of three days the officers went through the camp

³ and commanded the people, “As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place and follow it.

⁴ Yet there shall be a distance between you and it, about 2,000 cubits in length. Do not come near it, in order that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before.”

⁵ Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.”

⁶ And Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on before the people.” So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

⁷ The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

⁸ And as for you, command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, ‘When you come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.’”

⁹ And Joshua said to the people of Israel, “Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God.”

¹⁰ And Joshua said, “Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

¹¹ Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan.

¹² Now therefore take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man.

¹³ And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap.”

¹⁴ So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people,

¹⁵ and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest),

¹⁶ the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. ***And the people passed over opposite Jericho.***

¹⁷ Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

Joshua 4:1-24 (ESV)

¹ When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua,

² “Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man,

³ and command them, saying, ***‘Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests’ feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.’***”

⁴ Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe.

⁵ And Joshua said to them, “Pass on before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel,

⁶ that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’

⁷ then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. ***So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.***”

⁸ And the people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded and took up twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, just as the LORD told Joshua. And they carried them over with them to the place where they lodged and laid them down there.

⁹ And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day.

¹⁰ For the priests bearing the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people passed over in haste.

¹¹ And when all the people had finished passing over, the ark of the LORD and the priests passed over before the people.

¹² The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh passed over armed

before the people of Israel, as Moses had told them.

¹³ About 40,000 ready for war passed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho.

¹⁴ On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life.

¹⁵ And the LORD said to Joshua,

¹⁶ “Command the priests bearing the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan.”

¹⁷ So Joshua commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan.”

¹⁸ And when the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up on dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

¹⁹ The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.

²⁰ And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal.

²¹ And he said to the people of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in times to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’

²² then you shall let your children know, ‘Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.’

²³ For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over,

²⁴ *so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.*”

Joshua 5:1-15 (ESV)

¹ As soon as all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel.

² At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time.”

³ So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.

⁴ And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people who came out of Egypt, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way after they had come out of Egypt.

⁵ Though all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people who were born on the way in the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

⁶ *For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD; the LORD swore to them that he would not let them see the land that the LORD had sworn to their fathers to give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

⁷ So it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised. For they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.

⁸ When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the

camp until they were healed.

⁹ *And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.”*

And so the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰ *While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho.*

¹¹ *And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain.*

¹² *And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.*

¹³ *When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?”*

¹⁴ *And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, “What does my lord say to his servant?”*

¹⁵ *And the commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.*

Joshua 6:1-27 (ESV)

¹ *Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in.*

² *And the LORD said to Joshua, “See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor.*

³ *You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days.*

⁴ *Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets.*

⁵ *And when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him.”*

⁶ *So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the LORD.”*

⁷ *And he said to the people, “Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD.”*

⁸ *And just as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the LORD went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the LORD following them.*

⁹ *The armed men were walking before the priests who were blowing the trumpets, and the rear guard was walking after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually.*

¹⁰ *But Joshua commanded the people, “You shall not shout or*

make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout.”

¹¹ So he caused the ark of the LORD to circle the city, going about it once. And they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.

¹² Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

¹³ And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD walked on, and they blew the trumpets continually. And the armed men were walking before them, and the rear guard was walking after the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets blew continually.

¹⁴ And the second day they marched around the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did for six days.

¹⁵ On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times.

¹⁶ And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city.

¹⁷ And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent.

¹⁸ But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it.

¹⁹ But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.”

²⁰ So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city.

²¹ Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

²² But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, “Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her.”

²³ So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel.

²⁴ And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the

vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

25 But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

²⁶ Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, "Cursed before the LORD be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho. "At the cost of his firstborn shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates."

²⁷ *So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.*

Joshua 7:1 (ESV)

¹ *But the people of Israel broke faith* in regard to the devoted things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things. *And the anger of the LORD burned against the people of Israel.*

² Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." And the men went up and spied out Ai.

³ And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are few."

⁴ So about three thousand men went up there from the people. And they fled before the men of Ai,

⁵ and the men of Ai killed about thirty-six of their men and chased them before the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them at the descent. And the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

⁶ Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until the evening, he and the elders of Israel. And they put dust on their heads.

⁷ And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord GOD, why have you brought this people over the Jordan at all, to give us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan!

⁸ O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs before their enemies!

⁹ For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it and will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will you do for your great name?"

¹⁰ The LORD said to Joshua, "Get up! Why have you fallen on your face?"

¹¹ Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings.

¹² Therefore the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become devoted for destruction. I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you.

¹³ Get up! Consecrate the people and say, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow; for **thus says the LORD, God of Israel, "There are devoted things in your midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you."**

¹⁴ In the morning therefore you shall be brought near by your tribes. And the tribe that the

LORD takes by lot shall come near by clans. And the clan that the LORD takes shall come near by households. And the household that the LORD takes shall come near man by man.

¹⁵ And he who is taken with the devoted things shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he has done an outrageous thing in Israel."

... Joshua 7:19-21 (ESV)

¹⁹ Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and give praise to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me."

²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua, "Truly I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I did:

²¹ when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

Joshua 24:1-28 (ESV)

¹ Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God.

² And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.

³ Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac.

⁴ And to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

⁵ And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it, and afterward I brought you out.

⁶ "Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea.

⁷ And when they cried to the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness a long time.

⁸ Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you.

⁹ Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you,

¹⁰ but I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I delivered you out of his hand.

¹¹ And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And I gave them into your hand.

¹² And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow.

13 I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.’

14 “Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

15 And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

16 Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods,

17 for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed.

18 And the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

19 But Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. ²⁰ If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.”

21 And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the LORD.”

22 Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And

they said, “We are witnesses.”

²³ He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel.”

²⁴ And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.”

²⁵ So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem.

²⁶ And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.

²⁷ And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God.”

²⁸ So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

JUDGES: *Judges is named after an interesting collection of individuals who led Israel after Joshua’s death until the rise of the monarchy under Samuel (up to about 1050 BC). In this time of decline, despite their promises to keep the covenant (**Joshua 24:16-18**), the people turned from the Lord and began to worship other gods. “Everyone did what was right in their own eyes” (**Judges 17:6 & 21:25**). A pattern repeats throughout the book of Judges: 1). The people abandoned the Lord; 2). God punished them by raising up a foreign power to oppress them; 3). the people cried out to God for deliverance; and 4). God raised up a deliverer or judge for them.*

Verse 30. *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, etc. [Joshua 6:12-20](#).* That is, **it was not by any natural causes, or by any means that were in themselves adapted to secure such a result.** It was not because they fell of themselves; nor because they were assailed by the hosts of the Israelites; nor was it because there was any natural tendency in the blowing of horns to cause them to fall. None of these things were true; and it was only by confidence in God that means so little adapted to such a purpose could have been employed at all; and it was only by continued faith in him that they could have been persevered in day by day, when no impression whatever was made. The *strength* of the faith evinced on this occasion appears from such circumstances as these: that there was no natural tendency in the means used to produce the effect; that there was great apparent improbability that the effect would follow that they might be exposed to much ridicule from those within the city for attempting to demolish their strong walls in this manner, and from the fact that the city was encircled day after day without producing any result. **This may teach us the propriety and necessity of faith in similar circumstances. Ministers of the gospel often preach where there seems to be as little prospect of beating down the opposition in the human heart by the message which they deliver, as there was of demolishing the walls of Jericho by the blowing of rams' horns, They blow the gospel trumpet from week to week and month to month, and there seems to be no tendency in the strong citadel of the heart to yield. Perhaps the only apparent result is to excite ridicule and scorn. Yet let them not despair. Let them blow on. Let them still lift up their voice with faith in God, and in due time the walls of the citadel will totter and fall.**

God has power over the human heart, as he had over Jericho; and in our darkest day of discouragement, let us remember that we are never in circumstances indicating *less* probability of success, from any apparent tendency in the means used to accomplish the result, than those were who encompassed this heathen city. With similar confidence in God we may hope for similar success.

Barnes' Notes on the New Testament.

The Faith of Israel
([Hebrews 11:30](#))

In the preceding verse we had the faith of the believing remnant of Israel under the command and example of

Moses, in our present text we have an exhibition and triumph of their faith under the leadership of Joshua. There we beheld what faith accomplished under their exodus from Egypt, here we see what it achieved upon their entering the promised land.

As the yoke of bondage was by faith broken asunder, so by the same faith the people of God were to obtain possession of Canaan. Thereby we are taught that the true life of the saint is, from beginning to end, one of faith.

Without faith no progress can be made, no victories be obtained, no fruit be brought forth unto God's glory.

It is solemn to note that an interval of forty years' duration comes in between [Hebrews 11:29](#) and [30](#). Those years were occupied in the wilderness. They were a judgment from God because of unbelief ([Heb. 3](#)).

Reader, how many years of your life record no actings of faith to the praise of Divine grace?

The remarkable incident referred to in our text is related at length in the 6th chapter of Joshua, which opens by telling us, "Now Jericho was straitly shut up, because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in." Israel had reached the borders of Canaan. They had safely crossed the Jordan, but could not enter the land because of Jericho, which was a powerful fortress barring their ingress. *This was one of the cities which had affrighted the spies, causing them to say, "The people is greater and taller than we: the cities are great and walled up to heaven" ([Deut. 1:28](#)): to their eyes the cities appeared impregnable, and far too secure for them to take.*

Jericho was a frontier town. It was the key-city at the entrance to Canaan. Its capture was absolutely necessary before any progress could be made by Israel in their conquering and occupying of their promised inheritance.

Failure to capture it would not only discourage the children of Israel, but would greatly strengthen the morale of the Canaanites. It was the enemy's leading stronghold, which doubtless,

they considered to be quite invulnerable. Yet it fell to a people who possessed no artillery, and without them fighting any battle. All they did, in response to Jehovah's order, was to march by faith around the city once each day for six days, and then seven times on the seventh day, when they gave a great shout, and the walls fell down flat before them. **Many important lessons are taught us therein**, a few of which we will briefly mention, before dwelling at greater length upon the outstanding one.

First, God's ways are often entirely different from ours.

Who ever heard of a powerful fortress being completely demolished in response to a company of people walking around it? *Ah, God delights in staining the pride of man.* The leader and lawgiver of Israel was preserved in an ark of bulrushes. The mighty giant of the Philistines was overcome by a sling and a stone. The prophet Elijah was sustained by a widow's handful of meal. The forerunner of Christ dwelt in a wilderness and fed upon locusts and wild honey. **The Savior Himself was born in a stable and laid in a manger. His selected ambassadors were, for the most part, unlettered fishermen.** Striking illustrations are these of the sentence beginning this paragraph. **The things which are highly esteemed among men are abomination in the sight of God. It is well for us to remember this.**

Second, God is independent of all natural means and superior to all the "laws of nature."

It is true that, as a general rule, God is pleased to bless the use of natural means, and that He frequently accomplishes His ends by the operations of those laws of nature which He has set in motion; but it is a great mistake to imagine that He is tied down either by the one or the other. What natural "means" were employed in Israel's crossing of the Jordan or their capturing of Jericho? What natural "means" were used in the preserving of Daniel in the lion's den or Jonah in the whale's belly? And what "laws of nature" were observed in connection with the birth of Isaac, the feeding of Elijah by the ravens, or the preserving whole the three Hebrews in Babylon's fiery furnace? Yes, **God is superior to all means and laws. It is well for us to remember this** too.

Third, formidable difficulties and powerful oppositions are encountered in the Warfare of Faith.

One will not follow the path of faith very far before he comes face to face with that which challenges all his courage and defies all his natural resources and powers.

Jordan rivers and Jericho fortresses still exist.

But though the one may be unaffordable and the other appear impregnable, yet they are the veriest trifles to the Almighty. The dimensions which they assume unto our vision, are largely determined by the measure in which our hearts are engaged with the omnipotent One. **Those formidable difficulties and powerful obstacles are placed in our path by God, for the purpose of testing us, for the training of faith, as opportunities to trust in and glorify the Lord.**

Fourth, Satan's strongholds cannot stand before a people who are obedient to and who rely fully upon the living

God. This fact is surely written in large letters across [Joshua 6](#). The Canaanites were completely under the dominion of the Evil one, yet here we see one of their principal fortresses tumbling down like a frail booth when a powerful wind strikes it. To unbelief these cities might appear "walled up to heaven" and seem impregnable, but faith laughs at such things, knowing that God has only to breathe upon them and they will collapse at once. Thus it was in the early days of Christianity, when the imposing citadels of Paganism crumbled away before the faithful ministry of the apostles. Thus it was at the time of the great Reformation in the sixteenth century, when the kingdom of the Papacy was shaken to its very foundations by the courageous preaching of Luther and his contemporaries. Thus it was, in many parts, some fifty years ago, when the high places of heathendom fell down before onslaughts of the missionaries.

And **why is it we are not witnessing the same Gospel triumphs in our generation?** Why is it that Romanism has now regained so much of its lost ground, and is forging ahead in so many directions? Why is it that on the "foreign field" the forces of Satan are advancing instead of retreating? And why is it that in the so-called Christian lands a growing number of Jerichos defy the prayers and efforts of the saints? Is it because God's arm is now waxed short? Perish the thought. Is it because the Scriptures are obsolete and unfitted to the needs of this twentieth century? Far from it. What, then, is the matter? This: **there is a grieved Spirit in our midst, and in consequence His power is withheld.**

The Holy Spirit of God has been "quenched" (1 Thess. 5:19), and therefore the feverish and frenzied efforts of present-day Christendom avail not.

And *why* is the Spirit of God "grieved"? **What is it that has "quenched" His power in our midst? This, we have departed from God's way, we have ignored His orders, we have substituted human devices, we have put our confidence in carnal weapons.**

Instead of encompassing the walls of Jericho after the Divine order, we have resorted to worldly allurements, seeking to win over the Canaanites by fleshly attractions. My brethren, we cannot hope to have Israel's victories until we emulate Israel's example.

We will never again witness a return to apostolic progress until we get back to apostolic methods.

There can be no improvement until we truly recognize that it is *"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts"* ([Zech. 4:6](#)).

And the power of the Spirit will not be manifested in our midst until we once more enter the path of obedience, *doing God's work in God's prescribed way*, and confidently counting upon Him to honor and bless such efforts.

Fifth, but the outstanding lesson to be learned from this incident is that which is stated in our text, where **the fall of Jericho is attributed to the faith of the believing Israelites.**

"Do we think enough of faith, chosen by Divine omnipotent love, to be its channel? God alone doeth great marvels, but it is through the faith of His saints.

All the victories of Israel were wrought by faith. Divine power and grace redeemed them on that memorable night; but it was the faith of Moses which

kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood. It was God who divided the Red Sea, but in answer to the silent prayer of faith which ascended from the heart of His servant. All miracles of healing recorded in the Gospels were wrought by faith. Jesus prayed to His Father, and then fed the multitude with five loaves and two fishes. Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven, and then said 'Ephphatha, Be thou loosed.' Jesus by faith thanked God that He heard Him always, and then uttered His mighty 'Lazarus, come forth.'

"And faith was wrought also in the recipient of Divine favor: 'Thy faith hath healed thee'; 'Be it unto thee as thou hast believed.' Such were frequently Christ's words. The people who perished in the wilderness entered not into God's rest because of unbelief; and because of their unbelief, Jesus could not show many miracles in some places: 'Believe only, and thou shalt see the glory of God.'

"Israel's history is the history of God's omnipotent saving grace and of man's faith.

*From heaven descend miracles;
from earth ascends faith.*

From the election of Abraham to the birth of Moses, from the passover and the Red Sea to the dividing of the river Jordan, all is miracle, and all has to go through the faith of some chosen saint. Israel is before Jericho, a walled and fenced city; it is not by power and might, but by faith, that they are to take it" (Adolph Saphir).

Let us consider the *various aspects of faith* which were manifested by the believing Israelites on this memorable occasion.

1. The *daring of their faith.* When Israel crossed the Jordan, they, as it were, burned all their bridges and boats behind them. They were cut off from flight; they had no houses to which they could retire, and no fortress to which they could retreat. They were now in the enemy's territory, and victory or death were the only alternatives. To march peacefully and quietly around those walls of Jericho seemed a perilous undertaking: what was to hinder the Canaanites from shooting at or casting down rocks upon them. It was truly an adventure of faith, and **it is venturesome faith which God delights to honor.** Unbelief

is hesitant and timorous, but **bold faith is confident and courageous**. O to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."

There are three degrees of faith.

- A. **There is a faith which receives**, when as empty-handed beggars we come to Christ and accept Him as our Lord and Savior: [John 1:12](#).
- B. **There is also a faith which reckons**, which counts upon God to fulfill His promises and undertake for us: [2 Timothy 1:12](#).
- C. **There is also a faith which risks**, which dares something for the Lord. This aspect of faith was exemplified by Moses when he ventured to confront the king of Egypt and make known Jehovah's demands. This daring of faith was manifested by David when he went forth to engage the mighty Goliath. We see it again in Elijah, when, single-handed, he encountered the host of Jezebel's false prophets on Carmel. We see it again when Daniel dared to be cast into the lion's den rather than comply with the idolatrous edict of Babylon's king. We see it again and again in the journeys and ministry of the apostle Paul, who flinched not before dangers of every imaginable order, that he might make known the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And in each of the instances mentioned above we behold in the sequel how God honored those trusting and daring hearts.

It is venturesome faith which He ever delights to reward. He Himself bids us come to the throne of grace with holy "boldness," that we may find grace to help in time of need. **O how this rebukes *our* timidity and reserve. How few today are prepared to *risk anything* in the service of our Lord. How little of the courage and daring of our fathers is now in evidence.** What a lot of trembling and fearful soldiers are found today in the army of Christ.

O how urgent is the need for some Spirit-filled man of faith to go forth and cry in the language of Carey, "Ask great things of God; expect great things from God; undertake great things for God." It is well to look before

we leap, but many look so long that they never leap at all!

2. The obedience of their faith. This appears from a reading of [Joshua 6:3, 4](#) and [6-8](#): all concerned carried out the Lord's instructions to the letter. To do nothing more than walk and walk and walk around the walls of Jericho must have appeared a childish and ridiculous thing; yet the believing remnant complied with the Lord's command.

*God promised to deliver Jericho into their hands:
Joshua and his believing fellows rested on His word
and carried out His orders.*

The Lord requires us to use whatever means He prescribes, no matter how unlikely and inadequate they may seem to us. It is true that Divine power overthrew Jericho's walls, yet it was also by faith's obedience they fell.

God had made it known that the manifestation of His power should be via a particular way; it was inseparably connected with certain actions which were to be performed by His people.

How was Israel to capture that mighty fortress of the Canaanites? Consider their condition! For centuries they had been a nation of slaves. For the last forty years they had been weary wanderers in the wilderness. And now their great leader, Moses, was dead! They were without any military experience, devoid of artillery, and had no trained army. All true; but they were not left to themselves: the

living God was for them; and so long as they responded to His revealed will, all went well with them.

In like manner God has not left us to our own devisings, but has given us plain and full directions, and He requires us to do the work which He has appointed us in the way He has commanded. Implicit obedience to His orders is absolutely essential if we are to have His blessing.

Implicit obedience unto the known will of God marked all Israel's arrangements for the siege of Jericho.

Minute instructions were given them for their strange campaign. They were to march in a certain order, each being required to take the place assigned him. They were to march at a specified hour, and encompass the city a given number of times. At the command of the Lord they were to be silent, and at the command of the Lord they were to shout. There was no room for human scheming, no place for carnal planning, no need for human reasoning as to what should be done. Everything was prescribed for them, and faith's obedience was all that was required from them. The orders which God gave to Joshua might have seemed unreasonable and absurd to his men, yet they *must* be faithfully executed if victory was to be theirs. And as it was then, so it is still. But O how slow we are to learn this lesson.

Reader, *the commands and precepts of God often appear strange unto carnal wisdom.* How absurd did God's orders appear to the great Naaman, when he was bidden to bathe his leprous body in the Jordan. How contrary to all human ideas was it for God to send the prophet Elijah to be fed for many months by a widow who had naught but a handful of meal and a little oil. How unreasonable it must

have seemed to the twelve apostles when Christ bade them tell the great multitude to sit down, and only five small loaves and two little fishes were in sight.

And how unreasonable does it appear unto multitudes of professing Christians today when they are told to cast away all the worldly devices which have been brought into the "churches" and substitute fasting and prayer. How slow we are to recognize that it is the obedience of faith which God requires.

3. The discipline of their faith. "And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout" ([Josh. 6:10](#)).

Their silence at the beginning was as necessary as their shouting at the finish. Why? These men were the immediate descendants of the greatest grumblers who ever lived.
Their fathers complained and murmured until God swore in His

wrath they should not enter into His rest.

How much mischief had been caused if every man had been left free to express *his* "opinion"! How many would have been ready to advise Joshua what method of strategy to employ.

One would have reasoned that the only way to capture Jericho was by starving out its inhabitants through a protracted siege. Another would have suggested the use of ladders to scale its walls. Another would have advocated heavy battering-rams to force a way in. Another would have suggested tunneling under the walls. **One and all would have ridiculed the plan which Joshua adopted.**

Ah, my readers...

...if the Jerichos which now confront the people of God are to be captured, then not only must the mouths of murmurers be stopped, but all leaning unto our own understanding must be abandoned.

O how often are the sinews of faith cut by the injudicious and unfriendly criticisms of those who pose as our Christian friends. How often is the man of God hindered by the Christ-dishonoring doubts and carnal suggestion of his fellows.

A brother in the Lord, who had been without employment, recently wrote us that he had been rebuked for not making known his needs to his friends. Ah, **let us not forget that**

the very first line which the Holy Spirit gives us in His picture of the "blessed" man is, that he "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly" (Ps. 1:1).

How much mischief is wrought by people perpetually talking of the *difficulties* in the task confronting us.

All real Christian work is beset with difficulties—Satan sees to that!

The soldiers of Christ must be trained: faith must be disciplined: each one in the ranks of the Lord's hosts must learn there is "a time to keep silence and a time to speak" ([Ecclesiastes 3:7](#)).

The children of Israel were not ordered to go forth in battle array and make any sally upon this garrison of the Canaanites. Instead, in solemn silence, in sacred procession, they were to encompass the city. This was a great trial of faith for such a procedure seemed very unlikely to accomplish the desired end.

Not only so, but it would expose them to the contempt of their enemies, who must have sneered at their harmless procession. *Yet this was the way which God had ordered: He loves to do great things by contemptible means, that the glory may be His.*

4. The *patience of their faith*: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, *after they were compassed about seven days.*" They did not fall the first day that Israel marched around them, nor the second, nor the third. No, it was not until they

had journeyed about them thirteen times, that the power of God was displayed. And why? To test their patience, as well as their faith and obedience; to prove whether they really believed the Lord's promise or no, when He enjoined the use of such weak and unlikely means; and to give them a more distinct apprehension that the conquest of Canaan was the Lord's, and not theirs. When nothing happened the first twelve times Israel encompassed Jericho, it became the more evident that their enemies would not be overcome by the power of man, but by God.

Not only the mercy, but the *timing* of it, is in the hands of God, and therefore are we bidden, "*Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him*" ([Ps. 37:7](#)).

Alas, how sadly do we fail at this point. How easily we become discouraged if our Jericho does not fall the first or second time we encompass it: "*the vision is yet for an appointed time... though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come*" ([Hab. 2:3](#)).

But O how impatient is the flesh. It was at this point that Abraham failed: when Sarah bore not the promised son, he determined to have one by Hagar. It was at this point Moses first failed—taking things into his own hands ([Ex. 2:11, 12](#)), instead of waiting God's time. "*Tarry ye at Jerusalem*" was the last word which the Redeemer gave unto the apostles before He ascended.

"Men ought always to pray, *and not to faint*" ([Luke 18:1](#)). How much we need to take this word to heart: how often we have "fainted" when victory was almost in sight! Ah, we thought that the walls of our Jericho would never fall; but they *did*, at the appointed time. God is in no hurry, and it is required of us that "he that believeth shall not make haste" ([Isa. 28:16](#)).

But ***we find it much harder to wait than we do to believe: that is, probably, the weakest spot in our***

armor, and the point at which we fail most frequently.

Then let us be more definite and earnest in begging the Holy Spirit to work in us the spiritual grace of patience. Let us seek grace to lay hold of that word, "*Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*" ([Gal. 6:9](#)).

5. The anticipation of their faith: "So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city" ([Josh. 6:20](#)). Our space is nearly exhausted, so we must condense. What we would now particularly observe is that **the people shouted before the walls fell down—it was faith expecting the victory.** "What things so-ever ye desire, when ye pray, *believe that ye receive*, and ye shall have" ([Mark 11:24](#)). It reminds us of the missionary Moffatt, who labored for years among the Bechuanas and saw not a single seal to his ministry. Some of his far-distant friends in England wrote him saying they wished to make a present, and asked him to specify what it should be. He answered "a communion set." Months after, when it arrived, more than a dozen converted natives sat down with him to remember the Lord's death!

How the whole of [Joshua 6](#) has been recorded for our learning. "The walls of unbelief, superstition, and ungodliness, yield to no earthly armor and power. It is not by compulsion, nor by reasoning; it is not by weapons which this world supplies, that these walls can be destroyed. It is by the Word of God, and by the Word declared in faith. Ministers and people, they who blow the trumpet, and also the people who are with them, are to be united together in the power of God" (Adolph Saphir). Each of us is confronted with a Jericho: whether it be the preacher in the field of service where God calls him to labor, the Sunday-school teacher in the call before her, or the individual Christian who is seeking to overcome some habit or disposition. Remember Joshua, and ***take courage! If there be the daring, the discipline, the obedience, the patience, and the expectation of faith, the victory is sure in God's appointed time.***

Once more we have been shown *the wondrous power of real faith* to bring to pass that which is beyond mere nature: compare [Matthew 17:20](#), [1 John 5:4](#);

persevering trust and obedience enabled Israel to accomplish what had otherwise been impossible.

Again...

we have seen that faith in God's promise of protection and the use of His appointed means, far surpasses all worldly methods of defense: compare [2 Chronicles 20:20](#).

Contrariwise, we **behold what a worthless thing it is to trust in outward and material things**: the walls of Jericho were both strong and high, yet they afforded no security against God's power—"vain is the help of man."

Though God required Israel to use the utmost of their courage, submission, and patience, yet He took it upon Himself to bless their efforts and effect the work of power.

***Barriers more difficult than the walls of Jericho stand between the Christian and holiness: how are they to be removed?
By faith's obedience;***

(compare [2 Corinthians 10:4, 5](#).)

An Exposition of Hebrews.

***“Beware those who use high drama
to hide bad theology.”*** – JDP

***Many of our battles are
NOT satanic, they’re sinful!***

(cf. Achin & 2 Corinthians 13:5) - JDP

Verse 31. *By faith the harlot Rahab.*

She resided in Jericho, [Joshua 2:1](#). When Joshua crossed the Jordan, he sent two men as spies to her house, and she saved them by concealment from the enemies that would have destroyed their lives. For this act of hospitality and kindness, they assured her of safety when the city should be destroyed, and directed her to give an indication of her place of abode to the invading Israelites, that her house might be spared, [Joshua 2:18,19](#). In the destruction of the city, she was accordingly preserved, [Joshua 6](#).

The apostle seems to have *selected this case as illustrating the nature of faith, partly because it occurred at Jericho, of which he had just made mention, and partly to show that strong faith had been exercised not only by the patriarchs, and by those who were confessed to be great and good, but by those in humble life, and whose earlier conduct had been far from the ways of virtue.* - Calvin.

Much perplexity has been felt in reference to this case, and many attempts have been made to remove the difficulty. The main **difficulty has been that a woman of this character should be enumerated among those who were eminent for piety; and many expositors have endeavoured to show that the word rendered *harlot* does not necessarily denote a woman of abandoned character, but may be used to denote a *hostess*.**

This definition is given by Schleusner, who says that the word may mean one who prepares and sells food, and who receives strangers to entertain them. **Others have supposed that the word means an idolatress, because those devoted to idolatry were frequently of abandoned character.** But there are no clear instances in which the Greek word and the corresponding Hebrew word—**זונה**—is used in this sense. **The usual and the fair meaning of the word is that which is given in our translation, and there is no good reason why that signification should not be retained here.** It is not implied by the use of the word here, however, that Rahab was an harlot at the time to which the apostle refers; but the meaning is, that this *had been* her character, so that it was proper to designate her by this appellation.

In regard to this case, therefore, and in explanation of the difficulties which have been felt in reference to it, we may remark,

(1.) that the obvious meaning of this word here and of the corresponding place in [Joshua 2:4](#) is, that she had been a woman of abandoned character, and that she was known as such. That she might have been also a hostess, or one who kept a house of entertainment for strangers, is at the same time by no means improbable, since it not unfrequently happened, in ancient as well as modern times, that females of this character kept such houses. It might have been the fact that her house was known merely as a house of entertainment that led the spies who went to Jericho to seek a lodging there. It would be natural that strangers coming into a place should act in this respect as all other travellers did, and should apply for entertainment at what was known as a public house.

(2.) There is no improbability in supposing that her course of life had been changed either before their arrival, or in consequence of it. They were doubtless wise and holy men. Men would not be selected for an enterprise like this in whom the leader of the Hebrew army could not put entire confidence. It is not unfair, then, to suppose that they were men of eminent piety as well as sagacity. Nor is there any improbability in supposing that they would acquaint this female with the history of their people, with their remarkable deliverance from Egypt, and with the design for which they were about to invade the land of Canaan. There is evidence that some such representations made a deep impression on her mind, and led to a change in her views and feelings, for she not only received them with the usual proofs of hospitality, but jeoparded her own life in their defence, when she might easily have betrayed them. This fact showed that **she had a firm belief that they were what they professed to be—the people of God—and that she was willing to identify her interests with theirs.**

(3.) This case-supposing that she had been a woman of bad character, but now was truly converted-does not stand alone. **Other females of a similar character have been converted, and have subsequently led lives of piety; and though the number is not comparatively great, yet the truth of God has shown its power in renewing and sanctifying some at least of this, the most abandoned and degraded class of human beings. "Publicans and harlots," said the Saviour, "go into the kingdom of God," Matthew 21:31.**

Rahab seems to have been one of them; and her case **shows that such instances of depravity are not hopeless.** *This record, therefore, is one of encouragement for the most abandoned sinners;* and one too which shows that strangers, even in a public house, may do good to those who have wandered far from God and virtue, and that we should never despair of saving the most abandoned of our race.

(4.) There is no need of supposing that the apostle in commending this woman approved of all that she did. That she was not perfect is true. That she did some things which cannot be vindicated is true also-and who does not? But admitting all that may be said about any imperfection in her character, (comp. [Joshua 2:4](#);) it was still true that she had *strong faith*-and that is all that the apostle commends.

We are under no more necessity of vindicating all that she did, than we are all that David or Peter did-or all that is now done by those who have the highest claims to virtue.

(5.) **She had strong faith. It was only a strong belief that Jehovah was the true God, and that the children of Israel were his people, which would have led her to screen these strangers at the peril of her own life;** and when the city was encompassed, and the wails fell and the tumult of battle raged, she showed her steady confidence in their fidelity, and in God, by using the simple means on which she was told the safety of herself and her family depended, [Joshua 6:22,23](#).

With them that believed not. **The inhabitants of the idolatrous city of Jericho. The margin is, "were disobedient."**

The more correct rendering, however, is, as in the text, *believed not*. They evinced no such faith as Rahab had, and they were therefore destroyed.

Received the spies with peace. With **friendliness and kindness**, [Joshua 2:1](#), seq.

(*) "Rahab" [Joshua 6:23](#)

Barnes' Notes on the New Testament.

The Faith of Rahab
([Hebrews 11:31](#))

The inestimable value of spiritual faith is strikingly demonstrated in the case we are about to consider.

The apostle had cited the faith of such illustrious characters as Enoch and Noah, Abraham and Moses; he had mentioned that of a believing company as they had passed through the Red Sea and had marched around Jericho; now he gives an instance of one who had been a notorious sinner, as though to shame us if our faith falls short of her's who had formerly been an harlot.

Having shown that the patriarchs, who were so highly venerated by the Jews, were honored by God solely on account of their faith and its fruits, we **next behold how an alien woman, belonging to an accursed race, was, because of her faith, adopted into the O. T. Church.**

"It hence follows that, those who are most exalted are of no account before God, unless they have faith; and that, on the other hand, those who are hardly allowed a place among the profane and the reprobate, are by faith introduced into the company of angels" (John Calvin).

Rahab was a Canaanite, and therefore by nature "an alien from the commonwealth of Israel" and "a stranger from the covenants of promise." In her conversion and admission into the O. T. Church, she was, in a peculiar manner, both a type and a pledge of the calling of *the Gentiles* and their reception into the Church of Christ in N.T. times.

Thus did coming events cast their shadows before them. In such cases as **Rahab and Ruth God gave early intimations that His redemptive purpose was not confined to a single people, but that it would reach out unto individuals among all nations. Their incorporation among the Hebrews was a plain foreshadowment of the "wild olive tree" being grafted in and being made a partaker of "the root and fatness of the (good) olive tree" (Rom. 11:17).**

The salvation of Rahab was a signal instance of the sovereignty of God. "She was not only a Gentile, but an Amorite, of that race and seed which in general was devoted unto utter destruction. She was therefore an instance of God's sovereignty in dispensing with His positive laws, as it seemed good unto Him; for of His own mere pleasure He exempted her from the doom announced against all those of her origin and tradition" (John Owen). Being the supreme Potentate, God is not bound by any law or consideration other than His own imperial will; and therefore does **He have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardens (Rom. 9:18).**

Most blessedly do we also behold here the amazing grace of God. Not only did Rahab belong to a heathen race, but she was an abandoned profligate, a "harlot."

In singling her out to be the recipient of His saving favors, God indeed made it evident that He is no respecter of persons.

By her own choice she was given up to the vilest of sins, but by the Divine choice she was predestinated to be delivered from that lust which is the most effective in detaining persons under its power, washing her whiter than snow by the precious blood of Christ, and giving her a place in His own family.

It is in just such cases that the unmerited favor of God shines forth the more illustriously.

There was nothing whatever in this poor fallen woman to commend her unto the favor of God, but where sin abounded grace did much more abound.

Not only may we behold in Rahab's case the exercise of Divine sovereignty and the manifestation of Divine grace, but we may also pause and admire the wondrous working of God's power. This is best perceived as we take into careful consideration the almost unparalleled element which enters into her case.

Here the Holy Spirit wrought entirely apart from the ordinary means of grace. There were no Sabbaths observed in Jericho, there were no Scriptures available for reading, there were no prophets sounding forth messages from Heaven; nevertheless, Rahab was quickened into newness of life and brought into a saving knowledge of the true God.

Let it be duly noted that this woman, who had previously wallowed in open sin, was regenerated and converted *before the spies* came to her house: their visit simply afforded an opportunity for the avowal and public manifestation of her faith.

Let us also contemplate the marvelous workings of Divine providence on this occasion. As the two spies, sent forth by Joshua to reconnoiter Jericho, drew near that heathen stronghold, they had no idea that one of God's elect sojourned there; and had they been aware of the fact, they had no means of knowing how to locate her in a city of such size.

Admire and adore, then, the secret hand of God which directed them to the very house in which His child abode. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and in the cloudy and dark day He searches them out. The same God who sent Annanias to the street called "Straight"

to deliver Saul from blindness, guided the two spies unto the house of Rahab to deliver her from death. In like manner, wherever there is one or more of His elect amid the darkness of heathendom, He sends His Word or His servants to enlighten and edify the same.

But **it is with the faith of Rahab we must be chiefly engaged on this occasion**. It will be observed that she is mentioned in [Hebrews 11](#) *after* the destruction of Jericho, though she "received the spies in peace" before that city was destroyed. The reason for this is because her preservation—which was the fruit of her faith—was after the hosts of Israel had encompassed that city seven days. **In seeking to ponder what is recorded in Scripture concerning the faith of Rahab we propose to look separately at the ground, the effect, the nature, the confession, the breadth, the imperfection, and the reward of the same.**

1. The ground of her faith. *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"* ([Rom. 10:17](#)). This does not mean that faith is *originated* by hearing the Word of God, any more than the shining of the sun imparts light unto the eye; no, faith is imparted by a sovereign act of the Spirit, and then it is instructed and nourished by the Word. In the prophetic song of Moses at the Red Sea it was declared, "The people shall *hear and be afraid*: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which Thou hast purchased" ([Ex. 15:14-16](#)).

A striking fulfillment of the above prediction is found in the words of Rahab to the two spies: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have *heard* how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the

Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had *heard* these things, our hearts *did melt*, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you; ***for the Lord your God, He is***

God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" ([Josh. 2:9-11](#)).

This it is which explains the reference in Hebrews

11:31 unto **the other inhabitants of Jericho**, who **perished**

because they "believed not." The knowledge which they had of God and His wondrous works, through the reports which had reached their ears, rendered them without excuse.

What has just been before us affords an example of a most solemn fact which is oft repeated: how souls are affected by the Truth, and how quickly the impressions made wear off. The inhabitants of Jericho were deeply stirred by the reports of God's judgments upon the wicked; they feared it was their turn next, and their hearts melted within them. How, then, are we to explain the fact that they did not all of them immediately and earnestly cry unto God for mercy?

We believe the answer is found in **Ecclesiastes 8:11**, ***"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."***

As the hosts of Israel encompassed Jericho each day and then returned quietly to their camp, space for repentance was granted its inhabitants; but when six days had passed, and the walls of the city remained as strong as ever, they felt quite secure, and hardened their hearts.

How, then, are we to account for the difference in Rahab? In this way: with them it was simply the stirrings of conscience and the workings of their natural fears, which soon subsided; but in

her case the power of **the Holy Spirit had wrought within her: God had "opened her heart," and**

consequently she "attended unto the things which were spoken" (Acts 16:14). In other words, Rahab had been sovereignly quickened into newness of life, by which she was capacitated unto a saving knowledge of God Himself and the receiving His word with meekness.

Thus it was with the Thessalonian saints, whom the apostle reminded, *"For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 1:5)*. It is only in *such* cases that a radical and lasting effect is produced.

We must learn, then, to distinguish between three things: the Divine gift of faith, the foundation provided for its support, and the assurance that issues for its resting upon that foundation. The gift of faith is imparted at regeneration, being one of the attributes of the new nature:

"all men have not faith" (2 Thess. 3:2) because all are not born again.

The firm foundation which is provided for faith to rest upon is the sure Word of God: by it alone is faith supported—instructed and fed. The assurance which issues from faith's resting upon this foundation is that confidence and certainty which fills the heart when God's Word is received implicitly into it.

Thus it was with Rahab. Quickened by the Spirit, faith was planted within her soul, hence when the report reached her of God's wondrous works, she received it "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13), and therefore did she say, "I know that the Lord hath given you the land."

2. The effect of her faith. The faith of God's elect is a living, energetic principle, which "worketh by love" ([Gal. 5:6](#)) and produces fruit to the glory of God. Herein it differs radically from that notional and inoperative faith of frothy professors, which goes no deeper than an intellectual assenting to certain doctrinal propositions, and ends in fair but empty words. **That faith which is unaccompanied by an obedient walk and abounds not in good works, is "dead, being alone"** ([James 2:17](#)). Different far was the faith of Rahab. Of her we read, *"Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?"* ([James 2:25](#)).

This does not mean that her good works were the meritorious ground of her acceptance with God, but that they were the evidence before men that a spiritual principle had been communicated to her, the fruits of which justified or vindicated her profession, demonstrating that she was a member of "the Household of Faith."

In "receiving the spies with peace" she made it manifest that she had a heart for the people of God, and was ready to do all in her power to help them. That clause of our text which we are now considering summarizes all that is recorded of her kindly conduct unto those two men in [Joshua 2](#). She welcomed them into her home, engaged them in spiritual conversation, made provision for their safety, hid them from danger, and refused to betray them. We believe there is a latent reference to her kindness (as well as to Abraham's) in [Hebrews 13:1-3](#), for the word translated "messengers" in [James 2:25](#) is the same as is rendered "angels" in [Hebrews 13:2](#): "Let brotherly love continue, Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body." Alas, that so many professing Christians today, instead of heeding this exhortation, are almost ready to rend each other to pieces over every difference of opinion.

3. The nature of her faith. It was a singular faith. "The city of Jericho was about to be attacked: within its walls there were hosts of people of all classes and characters, and they knew right well that if their city should be set upon and stormed they would all be put to death. But yet strange to say, there was not one of them who repented of sin or who even asked for mercy, except this woman who had been a harlot. **She and she alone was delivered, a solitary one amongst a multitude.** Now, have you ever felt that it is a very hard thing to have a singular faith? It is the easiest thing in the world to believe as everybody else believes, but the difficulty is to believe a thing alone, when no one else thinks as you think; to be the solitary champion of a righteous cause, when the enemy mustereth his thousands to the battle. Now this was the faith of Rahab. She had not one who felt as she did, who could enter into her feelings and realize the value of her faith.

She stood alone.

*O it is a noble thing to be the lonely
follower of despised Truth.*

"Rahab's faith was a sanctifying one. Did Rahab continue a harlot after she had faith? No, she did not. I do not believe she was a harlot at the time the men went to her house, though the name still stuck to her, as such ill names will; but I am sure she was not afterwards, for Salmon the prince of Judah married her... You cannot have faith, and yet live in sin. To believe is to be holy. The two things must go together. That faith is a dead faith, a corrupt faith, a rotten faith, which lives in sin that grace may abound. Rahab was a sanctified woman. O that God might sanctify some that are here" - (C.H. Spurgeon).

Her's was a self-denying faith. This is seen in her preferring the will of God before the safety of her country, and sheltering these men who were strangers before the pleasing of her fellow-citizens. But it appeared most conspicuously in the venturing of her own life rather than to betray the messengers of Joshua, who were worshippers of the true God. **Her action was fraught with the most dangerous consequences to her; but her fidelity to God made her scorn the threatenings of her citizens, the promiscuous events of war, and the burning of her city.**

Thus, by faith she, in effect, renounced all for God.

When He calls us to do so, we must part with all that we hold near and dear in this world.

Spiritual faith is best evidenced by acts of self-denying obedience - (T. Manton).

4. The confession of her faith. This is recorded in [Joshua 2:9-11](#), which shows it was made at the first opening she had. It was quite a comprehensive one: she owned the wondrous works of the Lord, was assured He had given Canaan unto His people, and acknowledged Him as the God of heaven and earth. Thereby **she renounced all the idols of the heathen, glorified God with her lips, and illustrated the rule we have in [Romans 10:10](#), "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Moreover, by placing the scarlet cord in her window, she, as it were, publicly displayed her colors and made it known under whose banner she had enlisted.**

How her conduct puts to shame those who after a long profession of the truth are ready to tremble at the first approach of danger, and deem it prudence to keep at a safe distance from those who are exposed to persecution.

"It is in the nature of true, real, saving faith, immediately, or at its first opportunity, to declare and protest itself in confession before men. Our confession is absolutely inseparable from faith.

Where men, on some light and convictions, do suppose themselves to have faith, yet, through fear or shame, do not come up to the ways of expressing it in confession prescribed in the scripture, their religion is in vain. And therefore our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Gospel, doth constantly lay the same weight on confession as on believing itself: [Matthew 10:33](#), [Luke 9:26](#). And the fearful, that is, those who fly from public profession in times of danger and persecution, shall be no less assuredly excluded from the heavenly Jerusalem, than unbelievers themselves: [Revelation 21:8](#)." (John Owen).

5. The breadth of her faith. Very blessed is it to note her further word to the spies: "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death" ([Josh. 2:12, 13](#)). Some contracted hearts, in which the very milk of human kindness seems to have congealed, would deem Rahab's request highly presumptuous. Personally, we believe that her soul was so overflowing with gratitude unto the Lord for His saving such an abandoned wretch, that her faith now perceived something of the infinitude of the Divine mercy, and believed that such a God would be willing to show grace unto the whole of her family. Nor was she disappointed.

O that the breadth of Rahab's faith may speak unto our hearts. **O that the blessed Holy Spirit may fill us with compassion for our unsaved relatives and friends, and stir us up to wrestle with God in prayer on their behalf.** It is right that we *should* desire God to show mercy unto those who are near and dear to us: not to do so, would show we were lacking in natural affection; it only becomes wrong when we ignore God's sovereignty and dictate instead of supplicate. It is blessed to observe that He who hath said "according unto your faith be it unto you" and "all things are possible unto him that believeth," *responded* to Rahab's faith, and saved her entire household: though they, of course, only found deliverance by sheltering in the same house with her in which hung the scarlet cord—only under the blood is there safety.

6. The imperfection of her faith. This appears in the reply which she returned to the king of Jericho (recorded in [Joshua 2:3-5](#)) when he sent unto Rahab requesting her to deliver up the two spies. Fearful of their lives, **she told lies,** pretending she knew not whence men had come, and affirming they were no longer in her house. Such a procedure on her part can by no means be justified, for her answer was contrary unto the known truth. The course she followed resembled the direction which Rebekah gave to her son Jacob: in the general her intent was the fruit of great faith, for it had respect unto the promise of God ([Gen. 25:33](#)), but in various details ([Gen. 27:6, 7](#), etc.) it can in no wise be approved. The Lord, in His tender mercy, is pleased to pass by many of the infirmities of His children, when He sees an upright heart and a desire to accomplish His promises. "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" ([Ps. 130:3](#)) **God bears with much weakness, especially in the lambs of His flock.**

"I observe there was a mixture of infirmity in this act, an officious lie, which cannot be excused, though God in mercy pardoned it. This is not for our imitation, yet it is for our instruction; and **it shows us this, that faith in the beginning hath many weaknesses.** Those that have faith do not altogether act out of faith, but there is somewhat of the flesh mingled with that of the spirit. But this is passed by out of God's indulgence;

He accepteth us notwithstanding our sins before faith, and notwithstanding our weaknesses in believing.

Before faith she was a harlot; in believing she makes a lie. God doth reward the good of our actions and pardon the evil of them, not to encourage us in sinning, but to raise our love to Him who forgives us so great a debt, receives us graciously, and pardons our manifold weaknesses" (T. Manton).

It is blessed to see that neither in our text nor in [James 2:25](#) does the Holy Spirit make any reference unto Rahab's failure; instead, in both places, He mentions that which was praiseworthy, and to her credit. It is the very opposite with the malevolent world, which is ever ready to overlook the good and reflect only upon the evil of an action performed by a child of God. It is a gracious spirit which throws the mantle of charity over the deformities and defects in a brother or sister in Christ, as it is honoring to God to dwell upon that which His Holy Spirit has wrought in them. If we were quicker to judge ourselves for *our own* sad failures, we would not be so ready to blaze abroad the faults of our fellows. Let each of us seek grace to heed that exhortation, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think* on these things" ([Phil. 4:8](#)).

7. The reward of her faith. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not." The historical account of this is found in [Joshua 6:22, 23](#), "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."

But not only was Rahab, and the whole of her family, preserved from the burning of Jericho which immediately followed, but as [Joshua 6:25](#) tells us, *she "dwelt in Israel."*

Thus, from being the slave of Satan she was adopted into the family of God; from being a citizen of heathen Jericho she was given a place in the congregation of the Lord.

Nor was that all; **later, she became the honored wife of a prince in Judah, the mother of Boaz, and one of the grandmothers of David.**

Her name is inscribed upon the imperishable scroll of sacred history; it is recorded in Matthew 1 among the ancestresses of the Savior—she was one of the mothers of Jesus!

From what depths of sin and shame did sovereign grace deliver this poor woman; to what a height of honor and dignity did sovereign grace elevate her. Truly, the rewards of faith are most excellent and glorious.

An Exposition of Hebrews.

The Courage of Faith (Hebrews 11:30-40)

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

Faith is trusting completely in God's Word. It is unconditional confidence in what He says, strictly on the basis that He has said it.

The fact is that we either trust what God says or we are left to trust our own intellect, instincts, and attitudes. These are our only two options. Our own way is the way of unbelief; God's way is the way of faith.

The faith illustrated in [Hebrews 11](#) is that which takes the bare word of God and acts on it, risking all. It is faith that does not question or ask for signs or miraculous direction. Looking for signs and wonders and explanations that we can understand or glory in is not faith. It is doubt looking around for proofs. Anything that demands more than God's Word is doubt, not faith. God sometimes gives explanations and reasons for His Word, but He is not obligated to give them, and faith does not require them. As Jesus said to Thomas, "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed" ([John 20:29](#)). Faith is therefore opposite from human nature, opposite from the world system. It often requires accepting from God that for which we can see no logic or reason.

For a Jew to become a Christian in the first century was nearly always costly. It often cost him his friends, family, synagogue privileges, job, social status, and community respect. It also cost the ceremonies, rituals, and traditions which Jews held so dear—including some that had been instituted by God for a certain time. **The Jews receiving this epistle were tempted to try to keep a foot in both worlds, to accept Christianity while holding onto as much of Judaism as possible.**

Some were trying to take the voyage of the New Covenant while keeping their boats securely tied to the dock of the Old.

Such reluctant Jews are being shown in this chapter that God's faithful followers in the Old Testament were not like them. When those Old Testament faithful decided for God, it was everything for Him, because they had the right view of who God is.

Right faith is based on right theology.

Faith believes and obeys God because faith knows that God cannot lie, cannot make a mistake, cannot do wrong, cannot be defeated, cannot be surpassed. A God like this can be trusted. In fact, with a God like this, it does not make sense to do anything else but trust and obey Him.

Unbelief, of course, is blind to this sort of God and therefore sees trust and obedience as foolish.
It walks by sight.

Faith, then, is based on a person's attitude toward God. As J.B. Phillips observes in his book, *Your God is Too Small*, if we have a tiny god, we should *not* trust him. Only the true God, the great sovereign, loving, faithful, omniscient, omnipotent, and holy God of Scripture, deserves trust. It is because the heroes of [Hebrews 11](#) knew *this* God that they trusted Him so completely.

Perhaps the supreme mark of true faith is courage.

It is not so hard to believe and follow God when things are going well, when most of the people around us are believers, and when our faith costs little.

Faith is proved when it faces disaster, trial, persecution, and ridicule—and still stands unwavering.

Faith is the source of courage.
*We do not have great faith by having great
courage, we have great courage when we have
great faith.*

Certainly Moses demonstrated this courage in facing Pharaoh. But the writer chooses other models of the courage of faith.

[Hebrews 11:30-40](#) shows us three ways in which courage demonstrates faith: it conquers in struggle, continues in suffering, and counts on salvation.

Conquering in Struggle

Life is always a struggle for the believer. God's way is not the world's way, and as long as the believer is in the world he will have to struggle in that conflict. The only effective weapon he has in this struggle is faith.

*It is because of faith that many of our struggles come,
and it is only by faith that our struggles can be faced and
conquered.*

Joshua and the Israelites at Jericho

*By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for
seven days. ([11:30](#))*

The **walls of Jericho** were massive structures. Some city walls of this period were wide enough at the top to drive two chariots on side-by-side. **Jericho was a frontier fortress city, located strategically near the mouth of the Jordan River, and its walls were designed to protect it from the strongest enemy attack. By the standards of that day, it was virtually impregnable.**

Forty years had passed since Israel had crossed the Red Sea by faith ([v. 29](#)), and that was the last faithful act of any consequence that they had collectively exhibited. The trip through the wilderness of Sinai that should have required much less than forty weeks took forty years, because God judged the sin of the older generation by forcing them to die out. Their gross

unbelief, manifested in their grumbling discontent and idolatry, made them unworthy of entering the Promised Land. Nothing in that forty years was worth mentioning in a chapter on faith.

Only as Israel came to Jericho did she show faith again.

Jericho was the first obstacle in Canaan, and from the human perspective seemed an impossible obstacle to the ragtag multitude of ex-slaves who had been wandering in circles in the wilderness for so many years. **Its location was strategic, its walls were high and thick, and its soldiers were well-trained and well-armed.**

The negative report of the ten spies who had helped scout out the land was not inaccurate. It was somewhat exaggerated, but was basically correct: "The people are bigger and taller than we; the cities are large and fortified to heaven" ([Deut. 1:28](#)). Moses rebuked them not because the report was erroneous but because of the unbelieving and fearful way in which it was given and received. "Do not be shocked, nor fear them. The LORD your God who goes before you will Himself fight on your behalf, just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes" ([vv. 29-30](#)).

The real obstacle was not Canaan but unbelief. The only difficulty for God was getting His own people to go with Him.

God would later use the army of Israel to conquer the land, but His plan for Jericho was for the people to do nothing more than a few symbolic acts—to show them, as well as the Canaanites, how powerful He is All the Israelites had to do was march around the city once a day for six days, with seven priests in front carrying rams' horns before the ark. The seventh day they were to march around seven times, with the priests blowing their horns. When the priests finally made one loud blast, all the people were to shout, and then "the wall of the city will fall down flat" ([Josh. 6:3-5](#)). **The people obeyed in faith, and the walls fell as predicted.**

Militarily, the seven days of marching demanded nothing. But psychologically they demanded a great amount of courage. The scheme must have been embarrassing to Israel. This is not the way cities are conquered. The entire effort appeared utterly preposterous to the inhabitants of Jericho, and probably even to many of the Israelites. ***It is often easier to fight than to have faith.*** If we fight, we will at least have a certain respect from the world, even if we lose. But faith always looks foolish in the eyes of the world.

One of the most amazing things about [Joshua 6](#) is that not a single word of doubt or complaint is recorded.

The Israelites believed Joshua's report from the Lord, and they immediately began to prepare for the marching (v. 8). **For a full week they carefully and faithfully marched. It was a milestone of faith in the life of Israel.**

God delights in slaying men's pride. He slew the pride of the city of Jericho by making its city walls collapse in the most foolish possible way, just as some years later He would send a little boy to kill the giant Goliath and send the Philistines running.

In the defeat of Jericho, He also demolished any pride the Israelites might have had. It was obvious that their part was purely symbolic. They could take absolutely no credit for themselves. All God wanted from them was faith, and this they gave, *for by faith the walls of Jericho fell down.*

Someone has said there are four types of faith. There is faith that receives, as when we come empty-handed to Christ for salvation. There is faith that reckons, that counts on God to undertake for us. There is faith that risks, that moves out in God's power, daring to do the impossible. And there is

faith that rests—the kind that, in the middle of pain and suffering and rejection, sits back in confidence that God will deliver.

In the fall of Jericho we see the faith that risks.

The people of Israel were willing to do everything and to risk everything, because they believed God. In exact compliance with God's instruction, they marched, blew the horns, and shouted. They did not add anything or leave anything out. They simply obeyed.

The great missionary Robert Moffatt worked for years in Bechuanaland in South Africa without seeing a single convert. When some friends in England wrote asking what they might send him as a present, he requested a communion set. Since there were no other believers there, they were surprised, but complied with his wishes. When the set arrived several months later, more than a dozen natives had been won to Christ and were served their first Lord's Supper. Such is the beauty and courage of faith.

Whether the obstacle is direct opposition, apathy, ridicule, or whatever, every Christian runs into his Jerichos and his Bechuanalands. If we trust the Lord, and demonstrate our trust by courageously continuing to do what the Lord has called us to do, in God's time the obstacle will fall.

Rahab

By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace. ([11:31](#))

Rahab was an unlikely candidate for the faithfuls' hall of fame. For one thing, she was a prostitute. For another, she was a Gentile, and a Canaanite at that. She was, in fact, an Amorite, a race that God had long before marked for destruction ([Gen. 15:16](#)). Yet...

This how God's grace works. His mercy is open to all who will receive it, and His grace has always been wider than Israel, even in Old Testament times.

Rahab had no more light than any other inhabitant of Jericho; yet she believed, while the others disbelieved. They were more than simply unbelieving, they **were disobedient**. The implication is that they not only knew that the true God was with Israel but that He had also called them (that is, the Jerichoites) in some way. Yet they rejected God's word. They had wanted to kill the Israelite spies, but Rahab had **welcomed the spies in peace**. They were prepared to fight Israel when she attacked the city, but Rahab again welcomed God's people.

For her (Rahab's) faith, she and her family were spared. For their disbelief, all the others in the city were destroyed.

The destruction of the Canaanites was as great a social as it was a spiritual gain to the welfare of humanity. They were a debauched, idolatrous, and wicked people. They were noted for their grossly immoral and perverted sexual practices as well as for their general cruelty. Among other things, they frequently put live babies in jars and built them into their city walls as foundation sacrifices. They were begging for judgment.

In the midst of this pagan unbelief, Rahab believed, and confessed, "The LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath" ([Josh. 2:11](#)). And in the midst of barbaric cruelty, she was kind and **welcomed the spies in peace**. *She staked her life on the fact that God had said He would save and protect His people, Israel, and she wanted to be on His side. She had faith's courage.*

She became the mother of Boaz, who married Ruth, the great-great-grandmother of David, and she thereby came to be an ancestor of Jesus ([Matt. 1:5](#)).

Exegetical Thought Progression:

1. What is the Bible teaching?
2. What is the Book of Hebrews teaching?
3. What is Hebrews 11 teaching?
4. What is Joshua 1-6 teaching?
5. How do all these teachings link together?

Faith is the trigger on God's gun of grace....

Faith is the string on God's bow of blessing

God wants you to see what you don't normally see/look at.... and... He wants you to look past that which you normally/typically focus on.

Note: Hebrews 11 has shifted from micro to macro focus... it will shift again, from macro to micro & micro to macro... The point is... the lessons/promises of faith are for ALL!

Rahab: (Joshua 2)

A. Brought

1. Sin
2. Faith

B. Sought

1. Favor

C. Got

1. Promise
2. Pledge (scarlet cord)

In the wall

Jesus in the grave

God put His pledge in the very thing
that is designed to come in between
Him & what He wants... His people!

D. SEE the Gospel According to Rahab :-)

Note: Rahab's "guilty" & rebellious relatives received the blessing of being with one who biblically believed... It's like the 10 lepers... Rahab is the 10th leper & her family is the other 9... All 10 were cleansed, but only #10 was healed! Likewise, all the unfaithful, unbelieving Israelites... AND all those who walk into the Church BUT don't walk WITH or IN Christ.