



Joshua Fought the Battle: Judgment at Jericho

Saving Faith is childlike in its trust and simplicity; Jesus made that clear. This quote is actually applied to Christian Physicians, but certainly relates to all of us.

“His faith will be full of simplicity, of childlike confidence in the Lord. He will be able to repeat to the repenting soul the gracious promises of God, and thus place the trembling hand of the afflicted ones in the hand of Christ, that they may find repose in God.” PH066 36.

Friends, we as humans delight in complicated things; we love to be able to line up a thousand figures neatly in a row and gaze upon them, this may be alright in its place, but the great danger to us is losing that childlike simplicity that always characterizes the true follower of Christ. We become proud of these complicated arguments and look down on others who are not as enlightened as we are. We do this often without even being aware we are doing it!

“We must die to self and cherish humble, childlike faith. God's people have departed from their simplicity. They have not made God their strength, and they are weak and faint, spiritually.” 5T 75.

“The Lord has sent a message to arouse his people to repent, and do their first works; but how has his message been received? While some have heeded it, others have cast contempt and reproach on the message and the messenger. Spirituality deadened, humility and childlike simplicity gone, a mechanical, formal profession of faith has taken the place of love and devotion. Is this mournful condition of things to continue? Is the lamp of God's love to go out in darkness? The Saviour calls; listen to his voice: "Be zealous and repent." Repent, confess your sins, and you will be forgiven. "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" Why will you try to rekindle a mere fitful fire, and walk in the sparks of your own kindling?" 1888 765.

What man should immediately accept as a simple fact is that his place in relation to God, his Creator, is that of the child. The virtue of the child is childlike trust; childlike dependence; childlike faith, and acceptance of what the Father tells him. God has always left open the possibility of doubt. This is part and parcel of all freedom of choice. Man is at liberty to choose the road of caviling. Doubting is supposed to be a mark of independence; so man loves it, and considers it a sign of higher learning.

“Even in this life it is not for our good to depart from the will of our Father in heaven. When we learn the power of His word, we shall not follow the suggestions of Satan in order to obtain food

Judgment at Jericho

or to save our lives. Our only questions will be, What is God's command? and what His promise? Knowing these, we shall obey the one, and trust the other." DA 121.

The Finger of God

It is most fascinating to see the parallels between our situation today and the time of the Tower of Babel. The later episode of the overthrow of the towered and fenced fortress of Jericho is also replete with counsel for us today. In the taking of Jericho, God laid down minute directions to be followed by the children of Israel. Oh how easy it would have been for Joshua and the people as well to have said; "Oh, this is really silly; I am sure it is not at all important for us to follow these directions just as God gave them. There must be other meanings to what He told us; surely He doesn't expect us to wage war using such a silly and childish battle plan as just marching around a city for seven days and then to march for seven times on the seventh day and shout? It has to be some kind of a joke!"

But they did take God seriously and took his directions literally at face value and they obeyed; including the stipulation that they were not to take anything from that city and it all was to be destroyed. But there was one man there that evidently did not take the Word of God seriously; to him it seemed a terrible waste to destroy, burn, and bury all these assets. I must admit that for many of us with our calculating and practical natures today, it would have seemed a great loss not to make use of all these valuable goods. Jericho was a rich city. We have a hard time indeed today to turn our backs on the advantages and pleasure the world has to offer and just go and obey God by simplifying our lives and moving into more secluded areas.

So Achan decided to do his part in salvaging some of these assets. When you consider it, this showed that he did not fully take God as meaning literally what He had said, or Achan would never have dared to blatantly disobey like he did! He likely would have gathered more, but it was going to be hard to manage to sneak the things past his fellow Israelites and smuggle them home to hide them in his tent. I am sure he would have liked to have gathered more if he had the chance.

Was it possible, you may inquire, that Achan somehow did not hear the instructions and commands of the Lord? Well, we can be sure that he did hear them and know them; why? Because if he had not known these things he would not have sneaked the items, he would have carried them openly and he would have been seen by his fellow Israelites and informed of his error and he would straightway have put them back. If he had not known he was doing wrong, there would have been no need to bury the items in his tent.

Achan did not seem to be very worried once he got his stuff hidden safely away. Again you see a lack of real faith in God's power and Word which seems very strange when you consider what a tremendous display of Divine power had just been enacted at Jericho, when that impregnable fortress crumbled to dust at the touch of God's finger. But then today, how many take seriously what God told us about the Great Buildings of New York City; even after most of the adults among us saw those massive and mighty structures crumble to dust at the touch of God's finger at 9-11? No we lose the truly awesomeness of it amidst our various theories and calculations; failing to see the connection to God's warning that He is now searching Israel ". . . counting one by one, to find out the account:" (Ecclesiastes 7:27)

Tribe by tribe; Family by Family

With the defeat at Ai, Achan had to know that there was something happening in Israel that was serious; did he not consider that it had to do with him and his blatant disobedience? Apparently not; or I am sure he would have been inclined to leave camp and run somewhere, taking his booty with him. How could he stand by saying nothing as God sifted through tribe by tribe; family by family heading right towards

Judgment at Jericho

him! He had plenty of time to have repented and confessed and thus saved his life; but in some way he did not really believe he was going to get caught it seems; his sense of God's omnipotence was very blurred somehow. Maybe he had other theories in his mind that negated what his very eyes were telling him.

You can't Hide

This is a literal judgement that is taking place; we are all involved; God has tried to signal us that He is closing up shop on this world; He is going through His people to see who actually take Him at His Word and are obeying Him, looking to Him in childlike trust. We need to flee spiritually, literally and mentally and emotionally; flee the frivolities and fantasies of this world; flee the entanglement of ourselves in worldly business; flee the congested areas and plead to be helped to get out away from areas we have been told are going to soon be death traps!

Amazing too how the proud and wicked always are attracted to that tower of Babel and want to rebuild it in some way or another; or else build one of their own! By the way, have you ever thought how many big cities now also have some kind of great towers in them to show off their PRIDE? I live near one; and it has its tower and it is now building MASSIVE skyscrapers so fast that it is just like what New York was doing in the 70s; one after the other! I want to get far away from it. I always get the creeps when I have to drive through those tower areas! Those cities with towers are going to get hit sooner or later; I am sure of it!

Let me ask; do we have any towers in our lives? Is our pride or covetousness blinding our eyes to what God is trying to say to us? Let's remember the folly of Achan and listen and heed while we still can!

"It shall come to pass at that time," saith the Lord, "that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees; that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil." [Zephaniah 1:12.] "I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible." [Isaiah 13:11.] "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them;" "their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation." [Zephaniah 1:18, 13.]

"The prophet Jeremiah, looking forward to this fearful time, exclaimed: "I am pained at my very heart." "I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried." [Jeremiah 4:19, 20.]

"That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm." [Zephaniah 1:15, 16.] "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, . . . to lay the land desolate, and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." [Isaiah 13:9.]

"In view of that great day the Word of God, in the most solemn and impressive language, calls upon his people to arouse from their spiritual lethargy, and to seek his face with repentance and humiliation: "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain. Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." "Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children. . . . Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar."

"Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." [Joel 2:1, 15-18, 12, 13.] GC88 309, 310.