Spiritual Conquest
Joshua 6-8

All of life is infused with spiritual realities - our jobs, families, friendships, major decisions and even the daily annoyances. Too often we lose sight of this fundamental truth and find ourselves just going through the motions. Joshua’s leadership of Israel in conquering the Promised Land reminds us of the critical principles involved in working out spiritual realities in our daily journey.

Joshua’s hardest assignment was at age 80.
Joshua is not Moses. He was a new leader, leading a new generation with a new opportunity.

Theological context – Hebrews 4:4-11
- Real, historical events with timeless spiritual principles
- Rest ≠ salvation; rest = reward for dependent obedience
- Wilderness generation excluded
- Joshua didn’t conquer all enemies and bring in Kingdom

3 Principles of Spiritual Conquest. READ Joshua 6:1-5

I. Spiritual Conquest Requires Complete Dependence

A. Victory was through God’s power

Joshua 6:4. Rams horns not silver trumpets (used for assembly, war); rams horns called people to worship. Spiritual rather than military exercise

Not because of better equipped, more men or machinery; God was fighting

Heb. 11:30 “By faith the walls of Jericho fell”; Not catapults or battering rams

Dt 31:3, 5-6; Ps 44:3-8; 2 Cor 10:3-4

All of life is a spiritual exercise; school, marriage, relationships (not about my body or my clever conversation), job search (not about my resume)

Eventually Israelites would have to pick up sword and spear, but God was beginning their campaign by proving His unaided power.

B. Human effort seemed counterproductive – 6:3-4

1. Foolish to walk around walls
   • Accomplished nothing; walls didn’t gradually crumble

2. God intentionally wore them out

   7 times around the 1 mile circumference; army should rest
Imagine the ridicule after 7 days

Imagine the difficulty keeping silent; a generation whose parents had been such grumblers they forfeited the right to enter the promised land.

Physically exhausted, spiritually broken

The real battle about which we are reading is not with the Canaanites at all. It is with God's own people... All this blowing of trumpets, all of this numerical listings of sevens, were not really necessary to knock down a little wall. God was not frantically collecting His energy so that He could destroy Jericho. He could have just spoken and Jericho would have vaporized. The real battle of Jericho was with the human heart, not with the wall of a city. God was seeking to overcome the Israelites rather than simply to overcome the Canaanites. Paul E. Toms, This Land Is Your Land, p. 170, quoted in Promised Land Living, Sanders, p. 65

ex - Watchman Nee; man drowning; good swimmer watched, waited until man was weak to save him; 2 Cor 12:9,10; Phil 3:7,8

High point in Israel's history; expect that things can only get better - READ 7:1-5

II. Spiritual Conquest Requires Uninterrupted Reliance – Joshua 7:1-5

A. We are weakened through secret sin

• Defeat result of one person taking some of the property – Joshua 7:19-21
• What happened?

1. God is withholding His best
   • Deceitfulness of sin exaggerates what you don’t have, diminishes what you have
   • Tragedy – God was going to give them the spoil at Ai – 8:1-2

B. We are weakened by self-reliance – 7:2-3

Create their own battle plan; “we’re on a roll; weak enemy”

Without dependence upon God the smallest opposition is too much!

Gibeonites – Joshua 9:14-15
   • Stay alert. “Watch and pray”
   • Most vulnerable time is after victory

C. ALL suffered from presumption – 7:5, 11

Achan's greed, but community's self-assurance

III. Spiritual Conquest...Requires vigorous repentance – Joshua 7:6-10

God: get up. Don’t feel sorry for yourself. Seek out the cause of failure, deal with it so you can move on to next battle.

Joshua 7:11-15
“God and Israel seem mean in this story”
  
  o Trust
    - Ex – text message comes up on my wife’s phone. I say, Who texted? She replies, I can’t
tell you right now. I trust her, so I believe the best. She is keeping a confidence; planning
a party for me. If I don’t trust her, I believe the worst.

  o Truth
    - Canaanites judged because of generations of wickedness. Israel kept out of Canaan over
400 years so that Canaanites had time to repent.
      • 2 Peter 3:9.
      • All were welcome to turn to God and join Israel
        - Rahab. Joshua 8:33
      • God is very patient when it comes to judging non-believers
    - God is often quicker to judge sin within His own family because we should know better.
      • Ananias and Saphira – Acts 5;
      • ex – 2 boys mess up at school; I discipline only my own
      • God always hates sin this much because sin is so destructive to us.
      • God’s grace points out our sin

  Joshua discovered and dealt with sin immediately – Joshua 7:16; 7:22

  How do we deal with evil in our lives? Take our time? Half efforts?

  Do you want God to do radical stuff in your life? You must be radical about sin

  Then move on – Josh 8:1

Application

  Repent. Deceived by adversary. In the midst of spiritual warfare and you are giving in or giving up. Wake up
and deal with specific sin.

  Move on. God has convicted you of sin. Sought forgiveness.

  Look up. Middle of spiritual battle, and you need to look up; see the true nature of what is happening
around you. All of life is spiritual. Rely on God’s resources.