

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 7

THE FALL OF JERICHO.

LESSON TEXT—Josh. 1: 6-11, 14-20. GOLDEN TEXT—"All things are possible to him that believeth."—Mark 9:23.

There is a wonderful teaching in the story of the two memorials (Ch. 4) that Joshua erected after Israel had passed over the Jordan. One is left to be overwhelmed by the river, the other is erected in Gilgal. They mark the distinction between Christ's death under judgment in the believer's place, and the believer's perfect deliverance from judgment. See Ps. 42:7 and 88:7; Josh. 12:31-33. The stones in the Jordan stand typically for Ps. 22:1-18.

In chapter five is the record of the reproach of unbelief, "rolled away" (v. 9) the cessation of the manna (v. 12) and the appearance of the "captain of the Lord's host" (v. 13-15) unto Joshua as he was making a reconnaissance before Jericho.

I. God's Orders, vv. 1-5. The fame of the Israelites had preceded them (ch. 2:9) and that this was added to by the miraculous deliverance at the Jordan is suggested in verse one. Verse two suggests that again they must proceed upon the bare word of Jehovah, and humanly speaking, how utterly absurd appear the divine orders.

Jehovah's Word Followed. II. Joshua's Instructions, vv. 6-8. A reading of this section reveals the fact that Joshua diligently followed out the word of Jehovah. Preceding the people was the ark, and we need to remember what it contained and that it is a type of Christ. Following the armed men and the priests came the silent host (v. 10). No other sound than that of the trumpet (v. 13).

The walls of Jericho are not to fall by the use of the ordinary implements of war, see 2 Cor. 10:4, and the resultant victory was in no way to give opportunity for human boasting, Eph. 2:9; 1 Cor. 1:26-29. Joshua did not set forth a "more reasonable method;" he did not alter God's orders; that he had no right to do, nor have we, Rev. 22:18, 19; John 3:2; Matt. 15:6. The implements and the methods were foolish to those in Jericho and to all unbelievers, see 1 Cor. 1:21-25. It was the priests who led with the "jubilee trumpets," typical of the gospel which Paul tells is the "power of God," Rom. 1:16.

III. The Obedient People, vv. 9-16. One great act of distrust and disobedience led to those years of aimless wandering accompanied by discomfort and resulting in death to all (save two, Caleb and Joshua) who crossed the Red Sea with Moses. Here we have the contrast. Seven days of patient, obedient marching, according to specific orders, is followed by victory and possession. What a strange sight this cavalcade must have made. The trumpet blowing priests; the ark, symbolic of Jehovah's presence and typical of Christ; the silent multitude. Verily this new generation is being tested ere they enter into their promised inheritance. On the seventh day they arose earlier and were subjected to a seven-fold test. Our fiercest testing is generally just before the moment of our greatest victory.

Saved by Faith. Faith used means ordered of God, foolish to man, and wrought a great victory. Faithful obedience is here wonderfully contrasted with former unfaithfulness. Joshua directs the spies to search out Rahab and she and her household are saved according to promise, vv. 22-25. She also was saved by faith, Heb. 11:31, and became one of the line from which Christ came, Matt. 1:5. The only part of the wall that remained standing was that where Rahab's house stood, vv. 22, see chapter 2:15.

The teaching is very plain. As the Israelites depended wholly upon God, were obedient to his orders, accepted his discipline, held back all passion and covetousness, they entered into the fruits of a victory that made easy many subsequent ones. Their acts of faith were a more severe test than those more visible and carnal means of fighting battles.

As these people of God had crossed the Jordan, submitted to the rite of circumcision, took their first march in this land of promise and captured this walled city which stood in the way of their progress, the unbeliever of forty years was rebuked. This was a day of vindication for Caleb and Joshua, a day of proving that God was able to give victory to the people in whom he delighted.

The Golden Text illustrates what it is to believe, when we recall the story from which it is taken—obedient faith in spite of appearances. No one can deny the absurdity of a people walking around the walls of a city blowing rams' horns and expecting to possess it. Faith in both of these incidents depended upon the word of God and did the apparently foolish thing, thereby demonstrating its wisdom, and his power.

Faith is revealed also as the power to wait and to persist. Faith is co-operation with God in the accomplishment of his purposes.

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Probably Not.

Mrs. Hoyle—"How did your husband get along running the ranch while you were away?" Mrs. Doyle—"Well, I don't think he will advertise for a position as housekeeper on the strength of the record he made."—Judge.

To Revive Ferns.

Nitrate of soda dissolved in water should be given to ferns that are small or weak, one-quarter of an ounce of nitrate to a gallon of water. One-half an ounce of nitrate to a gallon of water should be used on plants that are large and vigorous. Soot and salt are also good to use occasionally.

Convincing. Many people complain that they are not appreciated at their true worth; and the numerous empty prison cells seem to bear them out.

Easy Answer. Instructor (at night school)—"Give a sentence with the word 'metaphysical' in it." Shaggy-haired Pupil—"On his way home, Mr. Jones metaphysician."—Chicago Tribune.

Daily Thought. There is no life so humble that it is true and genuinely human and obedient to God, it may not hope to shed some of his light.—Phillips Brooks.

Financial Acumen. Milligan—"If I be after having security aqull ter what I take away, will yez thrust me till nixt wake?" Sands (the grocer)—"Certainly." Milligan—"Will, thin, sell me two av thim hams, an' kape wan av thim till I come agin."—Puck.

How They Get Them. Miss Gotrox was wearing a diamond spangle around her neck. "What is that?" asked the young man. "That!" she replied; "oh, that's only a doo dad." "A doo dad? Why do you call it that?" The cynic spoke up. "That's how they get 'em," he explained.

Penny Gone! No Warts. Maurice, age six, was weeping bitterly and mother inquired as to the cause of the deluge. "I bought two warts from Vincent for a penny," he wailed, "and Vincent hasn't given me the warts and won't give my penny back."

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amount of feed than the horse. The mule is of greater longevity than the horse and is less subject to disease. His hides are thicker and flies hardly bother them. He can stand heat and cold better than the horse. Altogether, the mule is a patient beast of burden and of great utility on the farm or in the heavy traffic of cities, and the demand for them is constantly becoming broader as their merits are more generally known. Many farmers in the southern states are at the present time using this animal as the principal beast of burden.

Anomalous. Queer thing, wedlock! You find yourself attached to a woman, and go and get tied to her. When you find you're tied to her, the attachment disappears.—Judge.

Smoked When Making Laws. In the seventeenth century smoking was allowed in the British house of commons.

Philosophical. The philosophical proprietor of a seaside hotel ended his rules bulletin for men thus: "Remember, Time and tide wait for no man." For ladies' rules, see other bulletin.—Judge.

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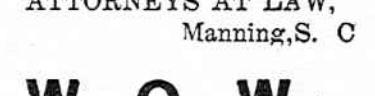
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