

## Overcoming Obstacles -

Joshua 6 tells the story of Jericho. The people of God had to decide whether they would continue the journey to where God wanted them to go to the promise land: Would they move forward in spite of the obstacles, or would they once again retreat into safety?

We too arrive at crossroads in our spiritual walk. God does not place us on the planet without purpose; He has a divine design for each of us. But as we seek to follow His direction, difficulties confront us. Joshua teaches us how to overcome the obstacles that would keep us from following the will of God for our lives.

We overcome obstacles through communication: prayer and meditation.

Joshua 6:1 "Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. Then the Lord said to Joshua, 'See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands along with its king and its fighting men.'"

The major obstacle facing Joshua and the people of Israel was Jericho. If they could not conquer this city, then all hope for the Israelites was gone. How would they reach the city? How would they scale the wall?

Joshua had a God who communicated with him.

Verse 2, "And the Lord said to Joshua."

Such communication from God was common for Joshua. God told Joshua

"See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men" and provided the plan for taking Jericho .

Whatever our obstacle, God is willing to cross it with us. He is committed to communicating with His people and to providing strength, comfort, and hope. If you are up against a wall and want to know how to deal with it, don't try to overcome under your own strength. Commune with God. Let that be your first plan of action, rather than your last resort.

We defeat difficulties through obedience.

Verse 6 "So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, 'Take up the ark of the covenant of the Lord and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it.' And he ordered the people, 'Advance! March around the city, with the armed guard going ahead of the ark of the Lord.'"

In the face of such a great obstacle, Joshua followed the plan of God. Though he may not have completely understood the plan or its significance, he followed God. Joshua moved the people to action.

God could use a man like Joshua because he was a man of faith and a man of obedience. He simply followed as God instructed: despite the odds. And the people followed.

God instructed the people of Israel to carry the trumpets, with the ark of the Lord following for six days, and they were not to speak. Verse 16 On the seventh day they were to follow this routine with one addition: They were to shout in glory to God because the city had been delivered to them.

What an act of faith it was for Joshua and the people to march around the city! I cannot remember an example a battle happened like this. Yet around Jericho they all marched. It was an act of faith and an act of obedience.

Their obedience to God produced wonders. We read of no negative spirit, discouragement, or disbelief. As they marched circle after circle around the city, I'm sure they could see the seeming impossibility of the situation. Yet they walked. Obedience is the key. Compliance is the key to the moving of God's mighty hand in our lives.

Many today pride themselves on living within reason, but God called His people to live by faith. We are to walk in faith and obedience to His direction and leadership in our lives.

Impossibilities become possibilities through confidence (vv. 20-21)

"When the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so every man charged straight in, and they took the city. They devoted the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it - men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys."

It was uncommon common sense to believe that God could make the impossible possible. Yet in the end the walls fell. You see, the walls were not the problem. They never are. We people are the problem. We always are. God has the power to do as He chooses, but He desires that we act in obedient faith. When we do, He takes care of the walls.

Hebrews 11:30 reminds us, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days." Joshua and the people of God demonstrated deep confidence in the power of God. Do we have that kind of confidence to over obstacles?