

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Seven

Complete Victory

In the sixth chapter of the book of Joshua, we are given a types and shadows word picture of both an eternal victory and a timely victory. After the children of Israel had passed over the river Jordan and before they had begun to possess the land of Canaan, they had to first do battle with the inhabitants of the city of Jericho. This city was fortified with a high thick wall that was a great obstacle to gaining entrance to the city and doing battle with the inhabitants of the city.

Before the battle could take place in the city, the wall had to first be thrown down. Truly, it can be said that the Lord's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. In order for the wall to be thrown down, the Lord had the people to march about the city for seven days. The march about the city was very peculiar. Those armed for battle were to go first, followed by seven priests bearing and blowing on seven trumpets of rams' horns, followed by the Ark of the Covenant, and followed by the rest of the people of Israel. They were to compass the city once a day for six days. On the seventh day, they were to compass the city seven times. As they compassed the city, the only sound that was to be heard was the sound of the priests blowing the trumpets. On the seventh day after compassing the city seven times, the seven priests were to sound with the seven trumpets and the people were to make a loud shout. At that time, the wall would fall down flat.

The key to understanding the spiritual significance of the above is to understand the purpose of the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the keeper of the covenant of God. Just as the ark of the covenant had the covenant of the commandments of God on two tables of stone which were place in the ark for safekeeping, so Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets to a jot and a tittle: Matt. 5:18, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Jesus came to fulfill the law perfectly as none before him had ever done or could do.

The Ark of the Covenant also contained the bowl of manna, placed as a memorial of God's feeding the children of Israel in the wilderness for forty years. Jesus came to eat and live specifically and totally by God's heavenly manna:

Matt. 4:4, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Jesus came and lived by every word that proceeded from the mouth of God.

In addition, the Ark of the Covenant contained Aaron's rod that budded. In order to answer the murmurings of the children of Israel against Moses and Aaron, God had the princes of the twelve tribes of Israel to lay up a dry rod with the name of the prince of the tribe on the rod of their tribe. On the rod of the tribe of Levi, God had Aaron's name inscribed. The next morning Aaron's rod had budded and blossomed and brought forth fruit. This truly was life from the dead, showing us that through the atoning work of Jesus Christ, our High Priest, in his death, burial, and resurrection we are given life from the dead in the resurrection.

Similar, but better than the covenant which God made with Israel on Mount Sinai, God made an eternal covenant of redemption before the foundation of the world and placed it in the hands of Jesus Christ to fulfill. This covenant is set forth for us in Rom. 8:29, 30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Jesus keeps and fulfills this covenant and all its terms. Jesus truly is the Ark of the Covenant. In his keeping this covenant, we have eternal victory over death, hell, sin, the devil, and the grave.

The wall of Jericho, which was such a great obstacle to the children of Israel is typical of the wall of the law of sin and death. Until the curse of the law of sin and death was destroyed, we could not do battle with our enemies, much less stand against them. The victory over the law of sin and death had to first be given us before we could do battle against the devil, the flesh, and the world.

Through Jesus atoning sacrifice for our sins and the covenant promise of the resurrection we have the eternal victory: 1 Cor. 15:51 "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The seven priests went before the Ark of the Covenant blowing with the seven trumpets of rams' horns. This is similar to the seven angels in Revelation who had the seven trumpets. The trumpet is used in scripture to call to assembly, to sound an alarm, to prepare for battle, to direct the journeying of the camps of Israel, to sound a memorial, to honor the king, and to announce the jubilee. The gospel preached by God's called gospel ministry has the same effect on God's obedient seeking people in the church today.

The seven priests with the seven trumpets went before the Ark of the Covenant in that day because they in type were declaring what the Lord would do when he came. Today, the gospel ministers declare what the Lord has done for his people.

On the seventh day, on the seventh trip around the city, when the seven priests sounded with the seven trumpets of rams' horns, obviously something was completed. This is typical of God's victory for us over death, hell, sin, the devil, and the grave. We read in 1 Thes. 4:16, 17 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a **shout**, with the voice of the archangel, and with the **trump** of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." The final complete eternal victory is ours.

When the people gave a shout, the walls of Jericho came down. The shout in the scriptures is associated with great rejoicing. When we hear the gospel declared in power and demonstration of Spirit and realize that Jesus has delivered us with an eternal deliverance, we greatly rejoice in his finished work and see that the curse of the law of sin and death has been removed from us by our God. Now we can go forth to the battle against sin in our daily lives, against the wiles of the devil, and the enticements of the world knowing that we have the eternal victory and we have the Lord helping us in our timely battles.