

DON'T STOP NOW

TEXT: **Joshua 6:3-5:**

³ And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.

⁴ And seven Priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the Priests shall blow with the trumpets.

⁵ And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

INTRODUCTION

Not every wall falls down the first time around. It takes more than hit and miss tactics to win and obtain spiritual victories.

There is a great difference between hurried up prayer and praying through. Most of Israel quit too soon. Two and one-half tribes wanted to stop short of the Promised Land. They said; This is close enough and good enough. Moses said:

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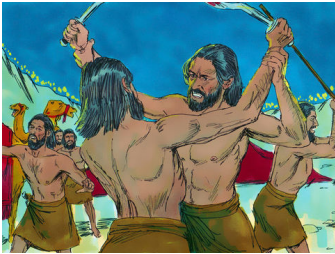
Numbers 32:6-7:

⁶ And Moses said unto the Children of Gad and to the Children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?

⁷ And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the Children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?

The same thing happened to the earlier host who left the land of Egypt forty years before. The united move is necessary, but some are always pulling back, and this brings a great hurt to the cause of Christ. We've got to exhort, reprove, rebuke,

and warn the quitters to not quit before “Pay Day”.



In Israel, there were more quitters than conquerors. Gideon started with 32,000 soldiers but before the battle began, 22,000 had quit because of fear. Then 10,000 remained, and of them 9,700 did not qualify to enter the rank of conquerors. So it is today, we have more quitters than conquerors. Jesus said in:

Matthew 20:16: So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Many seem to evaporate because of fear, and some because of the failure to fully consecrate themselves to Christ; others because they wanted a rocking-chair religion and were not told that:

Acts 14:22: Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the Faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.

Our walled cities, threats from the enemy, and ridicule from the unbelievers need a combination of GENUINE FAITH AND HARD WORK in order to stay in the battle until the victory is won. Jesus said:

Matthew 10:22: And ye shall be hated of all men for My Name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Matthew 24:13: But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Paul records: We are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but believe to the saving of the soul.

Hebrews 10:39: But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Some of you have heard this remark too: Why go to church today, it's too cold, too rainy, and too much snow out there. Furthermore, nothing much will happen around there anyway. You are discouraging the heart of the people of God by your absence. A good many of you have stayed out of meetings and I am sorry to say



that it will go bad and be hard for you at the Judgment, because you stayed home and discouraged the heart of the preacher and the people of God.

You will see what I mean in:

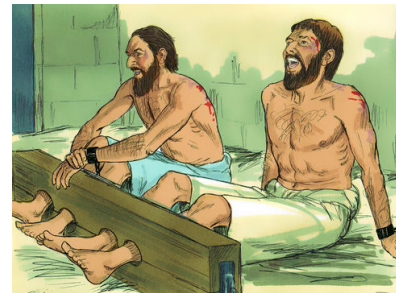
Judges 5:23: Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

The evangelistic party of Paul and Silas (his song leader) did not let jail and merciless beatings from the mob cool off their love for Christ and faith in His Word when they sat in stocks in that cold, dark prison during the midnight hour at Phillipi.

Acts 16:25-27:

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.



Something's got to give if you stay in there long enough. It did for Paul and Silas, and God came on the scene with a mighty revival.

Acts 16:27-34:

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.



28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.



Jesus told of the widow who came to the unjust judge and pressed her claim for justice before this hard-hearted man. She got just what she wanted, for he said “*I will avenge her speedily, lest by her continual coming she weary me.*”

Luke 18:5-8:



5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge His Own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them?

8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?

You won't be able to march around your Jericho 7 days, and then 7 times on the last day, without obedient faith. Faith needs active-abiding in Christ to keep it alive and to strengthen it. You have often heard about the race between the hare and the tortoise, and have learned the morale of the story. It is not the ones who start the best who win, but those who plug along faithfully to the end as we are told in:

Ecclesiastes 9:11: I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

It will take some determined, thoroughly weary plodding along — whether you feel like it or not — before some stubborn walls of opposition or hindrances fall before you. Let me call to your remembrance several incidences in the life of Abraham which might open up to you a fuller meaning of what I am trying to say.

1. When Abraham stopped too soon in trusting God's promises, then Ishmael

came along. From that day to this, his descendants have been a constant thorn in the side of the seed of Abraham as a reminder to us not to quit too soon.

2. When Abraham stopped too soon in his bargaining with God for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, they were destroyed. Abraham did not exhaust the mercy of God at ten. He just stopped too soon to the countdown.

How did Caleb and Joshua make it into the Promised Land? They wholly followed the Lord and kept plugging along. They held onto the promise for forty five years, and their believing for its fulfillment was rewarded.

Numbers 32:11-12:

11 Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed Me:

12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.

It is through faith and patience that we inherit the Promises of God.

Hebrew 6:12: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.

Abraham staggered not at the promises of God, but was rich in faith, giving the Lord the glory for the future possession of it.

Romans 4:20-21:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform.

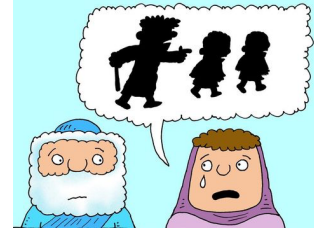
Looking back, it was just as real when God promised the land to him as it was when it was completely fulfilled. Let me ask you: How long have you waited on God?

How Long?

Do not stop short of the GOAL. Be encouraged by the little widow woman whose prophet-husband was deceased, and she was responsible for the care and upbringing of her two sons. He was poor, and the creditor was making plans to foreclose on her. Her creditors had clamored for action, and this little Gospel family was facing eviction and prison for the debts, but they

stuck it out. God sent the Prophet Elisha, and she found the supply was bigger than their capacity.

2 Kings 4:1: *Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.*



2 *And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And*



she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.

3 *Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.*

4 *And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into*

all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

5 *So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out.*

6 *And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.*

7 *Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.*



8 *And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.*

Another example of stopping short appears in **2 Kings** in the following account of Joash, King of Israel.

2 Kings 13:14-19:

14 *Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*

15 *And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.*

16 And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

17 And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.

18 And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.

19 And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

Saints of God, Don't Stop Now!



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