

## THE CONQUEST OF JERICHO

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Lessons: *Joshua 6*

Standing silent near the Jordan River were the great walls of the city of Jericho. Behind those walls was a secret—a secret very valuable to know. The brave leader, Joshua, who had taken command when Moses died, had led the children of Israel across the Jordan River. As he considered those strong walls, he was not dismayed or afraid, because he knew the secret. How did he know? Well, he had sent two messengers (or spies) over the river to go into the city to learn what there was to learn. There they were helped by a woman named Rahab, who told them the secret.

The secret was this: everyone in that great city was trembling with fear. They were afraid of the children of Israel. Here is what the woman had told the two spies of Joshua:

I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath (*Joshua 2:9-11*).

The spies hurried back and told that secret to Joshua; and what a difference it made to know it.

Imagine yourself standing in the woods and seeing a big animal. How would you feel? Perhaps afraid. But how would you feel if you knew that if you just shouted out loud, that animal would run away as fast as he could. You would feel very different.

And did the children of Israel shout in this story? Not at first. They were told to keep quiet until the right time and then to shout. For six days they did this: they marched one time completely around the city, the only noise being the noise of their ram's horns, which they blew as trumpets. They carried the ark with the Ten Commandments inside. On the seventh day they went around the city, not only once but seven times, and on the seventh time they were to shout with a great shout.

If the people inside the city were already afraid, we can imagine they got more and more afraid as each day they looked out from the walls to see this procession of people carrying the ark of the Lord.

And with the noise of their shout, those walls that had seemed so strong just fell down flat; and the city of Jericho, which seemed hard to take, was taken with ease.

You may have heard of the story of *The Golden Heart*. In this story a boy is not afraid, because if evil spirits scare him he shows a special golden heart he has, and the bad spirits to whom he shows it become very much afraid of him. This story comes from the true story of people in the other world being protected from evil spirits. They were given breastplates in the form of a heart made of gold. And if evil spirits came near, they would draw aside their garments and show the golden heart, and the evil spirits would be afraid and would do no harm (*Spiritual Diary* 4732).

The answer to the following question you know, and it is like a great secret that should be made known. Which is stronger—one angel or a thousand evil spirits? It doesn't matter how many evil spirits there are, for an angel has the Lord for protection (*Heaven and Hell* 229). A thousand evil spirits "cannot stand against a single ray of light from heaven" (*Heaven and Hell* 137).

Knowing this truth gives each of us courage strong enough to shout for joy and makes us sure enough to say, "I will fear no evil."

The *Golden Heart* by Amena Pendleton is available from  
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