

Joshua 6:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

Analysis

The seventh day marks the climax—they rose early, about the dawning of the day. The Hebrew sha'ar hashachar (שַׁעַר הַשָּׁחַר) means the gates of dawn, emphasizing the earliest light. This special timing sets the seventh day apart. Rising earlier than previous days shows heightened anticipation and obedience. They compass the city seven times on this day—a complete, divine number. Seven circuits on the seventh day equals forty-nine (7×7), approaching the Jubilee pattern of fullness and liberation (Leviticus 25). The sevenfold circling intensifies the proclamation and prophetically enacts Jericho's complete doom. What required one circuit for six days requires seven circuits on the culminating day. This isn't arbitrary but reflects divine design. The pattern teaches that God's final acts of judgment or deliverance often intensify before completion. The church's witness may intensify before Christ's return; spiritual battles often crescendo before breakthrough. Perseverance is crucial in the final stages.

Historical Context

The seventh day's significance was deeply rooted in Israel's theology. The Sabbath, seventh day of creation, represented God's rest and completed work (Genesis 2:2-3). The seventh year was Sabbath for the land (Leviticus 25:4). Seven connected to covenant completeness throughout Scripture. For Jericho's

defenders, the seventh day brought something different—seven circuits instead of one. By the fourth or fifth circuit, panic likely set in. The relentless repetition, the increasing intensity, the ominous trumpet blasts—all signaled that climax approached. Archaeological evidence suggests Jericho's walls indeed fell suddenly, consistent with the biblical account. Whether through earthquake, supernatural intervention, or both, God acted decisively to fulfill His word. The early morning timing meant Israel began in darkness and completed as full daylight arrived—symbolically, from darkness to light, from siege to victory.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does rising early on the climactic day teach about preparation and anticipation for God's appointed times?
2. How does the intensification (seven circuits) before breakthrough speak to your current spiritual battles?
3. In what ways does the sevenfold pattern on the seventh day reveal God's complete and perfect work?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּהּ יוֹ	בֵּי יוֹם	הַשְּׁבִיעִי י	וַשָּׁכּוּ מוֹ
H1961	day	And it came to pass on the seventh	that they rose early
	H3117	H7637	H7925
כָּעֵל וְ	הַיּוֹם	סָבַב וְ	אֶת הָעִיר
about the dawning	of the day	and compassed	H853 the city
H5927	H7837	H5437	H5892

כַּמִּשְׁפָּט	הַיּוֹם	שֶׁבַע	פְּעָמִים:	כִּי	בֵּי יוֹם	הָיָה
after the same manner	H2088	seven	times	H7535	day	H1931
H4941		H7651	H6471		H3117	

סָבַב וְ	אֶת הָעִיר	שֶׁבַע	פְּעָמִים:
and compassed	H853 the city	seven	times
H5437	H5892	H7651	H6471

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:147 (Parallel theme): I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

2 Peter 1:19 (Parallel theme): We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Matthew 28:1 (Parallel theme): In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.