

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 (שער הַשָּׁחָר) 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

בַּיּוֹם יְלִיּוֹת

H1961

day

And it came to pass on the seventh

that they rose early

H3117

H7637

וַיָּשַׁבֵּעַ מִזְרָחָם

H7925

בְּעֵת יְרֵאָה וְתַּחַלְתָּה

about the dawning

H5927

בְּיַמְּה וְסַבְבָּה וְחַשְׁבָּרָה

of the day

H7837

סַבְבָּה וְחַשְׁבָּרָה

and compassed

H5437

בְּעֵת יְרֵאָה וְתַּחַלְתָּה

H853

the city

H5892

כְּמַשְׁפֵּט

after the same manner

H4941

בְּזַהֲרֵב וְבְעֵת

H2088

seven

H7651

בְּזַהֲרֵב וְבְעֵת

H7535

day

H1931

H3117

פְּעֻמִּים: שֶׁבַע בְּעֵת יְרֵאָה וְסַבְבָּה וְ

and compassed

H853

the city

H5892

seven

H7651

פְּעֻמִּים: שֶׁבַע בְּעֵת

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.