

FBC Canton Sunday am September 21, 2025

Hearing God's Voice: Joshua 5:13-15, 6:1-5

Introduction: Solitude leverages change in the life of the believer.

Jesus purposely went alone to pray, so should we.

Joshua may have never learned how God wanted the victory of Jericho to be carried out if he did not get alone with the Lord.

You may never know the victory God has for you if you do not learn to get alone with the Lord.

I. **What we hear in the quiet must be lived out in our lives. V. 13-15, James 1:22**

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Joshua had to follow through with the instructions given to him...so must we.

We cannot be jus hearers of the Word, we must be doers.

So before you go to be alone with the Lord, decide that whatever he tells you...you will follow.

a. **Leading can be a very lonely calling: The Garden.**

But, if you are alone with the Lord, he will sustain you.

b. **Joshua had to leave behind Moses in order to go on with the Lord.**

You will have to leave behind those who are no longer with us...if you want to save a nation.

You will have to leave others behind that do not spend time with the Lord.

c. **When you are in the presence of the Lord worship is required. V. 14-15**

Falling down with his face to the earth....

a. **If you want to hear from the Lord, you will have be set aside from this world=Holiness.**

Without shoes is because they are symbol of our ability to walk without God.

II. **God does not need our help to take down our enemies, we are the ones in need: v. 1**

Jericho was shut up, out of fear...all the mighty men of the enemies, their leaders too.

a. **We need to believe God is bigger than the enemy. I Corinthians 15: 51-58**

b. We need to know God requires faith to accomplish his goals. Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
Hebrews 11:6

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c. God goes out of his way with his methods to assure us He alone gets the glory. V. 2-5

**a. What God says may not make sense, but it is always right.
Genesis 22**

Walk around, 1/six days. 7 priests, 7 trumpets, before the ark. All the men of war. Walk around, 7/seventh day. 7 priests blow 7 trumpets, all the people shout.

4. But faith looks not at the difficulties, but to the Lord.

a. Faith believes more in the promises of God to help, than in the power of Satan to hinder.

b. Faith will give comfort in the midst of fears, unbelief will bring fears in the midst of comfort.

c. Faith makes great burdens light, unbelief makes light burdens unbearably heavy.

d. Faith lifts us up when we are down, unbelief casts us down when we are up.

e. Faith brings peace and comfort to our souls, unbelief brings restlessness.

f. Faith brings assurance, unbelief brings fear. Chuck Smith

Conclusion: The cross is the ultimate unusual way to save people. I Corinthians

18-25 ¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."²⁰ Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both

Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

David Guzik Study Guide for Joshua 6

THE FALL OF JERICHO

A. Obedience before the fall of the city of Jericho.

1. (Joshua 6:1-5) Instructions for the battle.

Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in. And the Lord said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."

a. **Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel:** Jericho itself was on full alert; from a human perspective, this would be a hard, if not impossible, battle. Yet from God's perspective, the battle was already over, because He can say to Joshua **I have** (in the past tense) **given Jericho into your hand**.

i. Up to this point everything had been more or less preliminary and preparatory. Now the real task before them must be faced and tackled. The Canaanites must be dispossessed if Israel is to occupy what God has promised them.

ii. Jericho was not an exceptionally large city; but it was an important, formidable fortress city. If Israel could defeat Jericho, they could defeat any other enemy facing them in Canaan. Again, we see the wisdom of God as opposed to human wisdom, in that Israel faces their most difficult opponent first.

b. **You shall march around the city:** The method of warfare was one that made absolutely no sense according to military intelligence. It required total dependence on God.

i. It required great faith from Joshua because he had to explain and lead the nation in this plan.

ii. It required great faith from the elders and the nation because they had to follow Joshua in this plan.

c. **The wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him:** It was a plan for victory whereby it would clearly be the work of the Lord. Yet God gave them something to do so that Israel could work in partnership with God.

i. Obviously, it was something that God could have done without Israel's help at all, but He wanted them to be a part of His work — as He wants us to be a part of His work today.

Chuck Smith

Sermon Notes for Joshua 5:13-15

"THE CAPTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOST."

Intro. The children of Israel have crossed Jordan, and they are now in the land of promise, all that remains now is to conquer the land. But speaking from a human standpoint, that is impossible. Joshua, God's chosen successor to Moses, is out near Jericho. Through his mind he is probably thinking, "What am I doing?" The awesome responsibility of the task ahead is perhaps weighing heavily upon him. He sees a man standing there with a drawn sword, so he approaches him and questions, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" The reply comes back, "As the Captain of the Lord's host have I come."

I. JOSHUA HAD EARLIER RECEIVED THE PROMISE OF THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

JOS 1:5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, [so] I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

JOS 1:9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God [is] with you wherever you go.

A. The dispelling of his fear was to come by the knowledge that the Lord his God was with him wherever he would go.

B. The conquering of the land was a great undertaking.

1. The people of the land all looked like Shaq O'Neal; and in hand- to-hand combat, as in basketball, size is a great advantage.

2. Besides that, they had strong defenses. Their cities had walls that seemed to reach up to heaven.

3. Having been one of the twelve spies, Joshua knew what they were facing.

4. But faith looks not at the difficulties, but to the Lord.

a. Faith believes more in the promises of God to help, than in the power of Satan to hinder.

b. Faith will give comfort in the midst of fears, unbelief will bring fears in the midst of comfort.

c. Faith makes great burdens light, unbelief makes light burdens unbearably heavy.

d. Faith lifts us up when we are down, unbelief casts us down when we are up.

e. Faith brings peace and comfort to our souls, unbelief brings restlessness.

f. Faith brings assurance, unbelief brings fear.

5. Forty years earlier, Joshua and Caleb sought to allay fears of the people who were wanting to find a captain to lead them back to Egypt after they heard the scary report of the ten spies. They said to the people: "The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the LORD

delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; land flows with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they [are] bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD [is] with us: fear them not."

a. Joshua had encouraged the people not to fear, because the Lord was with them.

b. Now as the time had come to actually begin to take the land, Joshua is beginning to feel a little fear, so he takes a walk.

C. Earlier the people wanted a captain to lead them back to Egypt, but now before Joshua stands, the Captain of the Lord's host is to lead them forward into the land.

II. THE CAPTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOST.

A. This would be none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. This is one of the many theophanies in the Old Testament. A manifestation of God.

a. Many times as people read the Old Testament they imagine a contradiction in the Bible, for it speaks of them seeing God.

b. In the New Testament, John said, "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He has manifested Him.

2. Thus, when you read of their seeing God in the Old Testament, it was one of the many manifestations of Jesus Christ.

3. Jesus told the Jews, "Abraham rejoiced to see My day he and saw it."

4. After Jacob had wrestled all night with the angel of the Lord, we read that he called the name of the place Peniel, which means the face of God. He declared I have seen the face of God and lived.

5. When Moses requested to see God, God told him that no man could see His face and live.

6. The writer of Hebrews in describing Jesus said of Him, "God has spoken to us by His Son, who is the brightness of His glory, and His express image of His person. Thus, Jesus could say, "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father."

B. Joshua is not face-to-face with the Captain of the Lord's host, but the Lord's host is not the nation of Israel, but the angels of the Lord. When Jacob left his father-in-law Laban we read:

[GEN 32:1](#) And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

[GEN 32:2](#) And when Jacob saw them, he said, This [is] God's host:

1. Joshua is going to need and receive the divine help of the Lord to accomplish his mission.

2. How awesome is the Lord's host?

a. We read in the Bible of the invasion of Judah by the Assyrians who at that time were a major power in the world. The prophet Isaiah sent a message to King Hezekiah not to worry, that they would not shoot an arrow into the city.

b. The Assyrians had sent a message to Hezekiah in which they told him that his God could be of no help against them, that the gods of the other nations were unable to stand against the mighty Assyrian army.

c. We read that an angel of the Lord went out at night and destroyed the Assyrian army. In the morning there were 185,000 dead soldiers lying outside Jerusalem.

d. One angel destroyed 185,000 in one night. How mighty is the host of the Lord?

3. In the garden of Gethsemene when the soldiers came to arrest Jesus, Peter drew his sword to defend Jesus. Jesus said to him, "Put away your sword. Do you not realize that I could call for a legion of angels if I so desired? The cup that the Father has given Me to drink, shall I not drink it?" Jesus was the Captain of the Lord's host; they were at His disposal. If one angel could destroy 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one evening, think what a legion of angels could do.

4. I think of the statement of Paul when writing to the Romans. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

5. John in his first letter spoke of the spirit of the antichrist that was in the world, but declared that we can overcome it, "for greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world."

6. Jesus is the Captain of the hosts of heaven.

C. This appearance of the Captain of the hosts was a fulfillment of a promise God had made to Moses:

[EXO 23:20](#) Behold, I send My Angel before you, to keep you in the way, and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.

[EXO 23:21](#) Listen to him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name [is] in Him. (The name Jesus is a contraction of Jehovah Shua, which means Jehovah is salvation.)

[EXO 23:22](#) But if you shall indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto your enemies, and an adversary unto your adversaries.

[EXO 23:23](#) For my Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the land.

D. Throughout the Old Testament God is referred to as the Lord of hosts.

1. In [Psalms 24:10](#), David asked: Who is this King of glory? Then he answered the LORD of hosts, He [is] the King of glory.

2. In [Psalms 46:7](#), he said: The LORD of hosts [is] with us; the God of Jacob [is] our refuge.

3. When Isaiah saw his vision of heaven and the Seraphims around the throne, he said: And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, [is] the LORD of hosts: the whole earth [is] full of his glory.

III. WHAT A RELIEF THIS MUST HAVE BEEN TO JOSHUA.

A. There are many indications that Joshua was fearful of the task that had been placed upon him.

1. God had said to him, "Be strong and of good courage."

2. Again God said, "Be strong and very courageous."

3. The third time God said: "Be strong and of good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed:"

a. You only say that to a man who feels weak and timid, a man who is afraid, and is dismayed at the task he is facing.

b. The fact that God repeated it three times only shows just how much he feared the task ahead.

B. As Joshua feels his total inadequacy to handle the job that the Lord had called him to perform, when the man standing before him announced himself as the Captain of the Lord's host, it immediately took the pressure off Joshua. I am sure that it was with great relief that Joshua fell at His feet and worshipped Him.

1. The fact that Joshua worshipped him only proves that it was more than just an angel, but the Lord Himself.

2. In the scriptures we are forbidden to worship angels.

3. The scripture declares that you are to worship the Jehovah your God and Him only.

C. Do you today feel that you are over your head? The tasks that lie before you are greater than you can handle? Are you fearful or apprehensive about the future?

D. The same Captain of the Lord's host that met Joshua there near Jericho wants to meet you today.

1. He is ready to go before you and lead you into the promised land.

2. As Joshua, you need to bow before Him and ask, "What do you say to your servant?"

3. By this declaration he is acknowledging the Captain of the Lord's host as his Lord.

4. You also today need to surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

5. The moment you do, you can rest, for the great task ahead is not your responsibility, but His. "Cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you."

I love verses thirteen through fifteen. Chuck Smith

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and he looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua

went unto him, and said to him, Are you for us, or for our enemies? And he said, Not for your enemies; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and worshiped, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place where you stand is holy. And Joshua did so ([Jos 5:13-15](#)).

Here Joshua met Jesus, Jesus the Captain of the Lord's host. You see, if it were an angel then He would've refused his worship. John several times in the book of Revelation tried to worship the angel, and he said, "Stand up worship the Lord." The Lord said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only." Therefore the Captain of the Lord's host is none other than Jesus who is standing there ready to lead him into the land of promise. "As the Captain of the Lord's host have I come." Joshua fell on his knees, his face, and said, "What do you want me to do Lord?" Much like Paul the apostle. "Lord, what will You have me to do?"

Now here is a true picture of leadership. The finest leader is the man who is led. The finest ruler is a man who is ruled. God chose Joshua for a leader to rule over the people of Israel because Joshua was ruled over by the Lord; the proper chain of command. No man is fit to rule who is not ruled. That's the tragedy of history where we have had despots upon the throne. These autocratic, despotic rulers who did not feel a responsibility to anybody else, but became the final authority within themselves, they became tyrants. The people always suffer under the rule of such people. But those who have a consciousness of the fact that they are ruled, those who have submitted themselves to His throne, are able to reign upon their thrones. But you've got to have that chain of command.

When the centurion came to Jesus and sought that Jesus would heal his daughter who was very sick, Jesus said, "I will come to your house."

He said, "Oh no Lord, that isn't necessary. I'm not worthy that you should come to my house. For you see, I understand authority, I also am a man of authority having under me, men." "I am also a man", he said, "under authority, having under me men." He sees the chain. "I'm a man who is under authority, but I have under me men." He recognized the position of Jesus. Having submitted to the Father, a man under authority, yet having authority himself.

So I can say to one man, "Do this", and he'll do it, to another, "do that", and he does it. I have authority, but I'm under authority. "I know that You have authority, and all You have to do is speak the word, and my servant will be healed." God said, "All right. That's far out. I haven't seen this kind of faith among the Israelites." A man who recognized what true authority is. Oh, that we would realize that we don't have any right to rule unless we ourselves are ruled.

So Joshua, the leader over the people and yet being led. "What do you want me to do Lord?" The real heart of a servant. So the Lord didn't have much for him to do, "Just take your shoes off. The

ground where you're standing is holy." So much as the Lord spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, the command to remove his sandals, so also to Joshua. So as the Captain of the Lord's host, to lead the people of God into the conquest of the land.

Chapter 6

So in chapter six we begin the conquering of the land. The method by which they took Jericho was very fascinating indeed.

The Lord said to Joshua, I have given to you the city of Jericho, and its king, and his mighty men. Now you're to encircle the city, all of your men of war. You're to walk around the city once, and you're to do this for six days. And the seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and on the seventh day ye shall circle the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. It will come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you 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. And so Joshua called the priests, told them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord. And he said to the people, Pass on, and encircle the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord. And so it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of the rams' horns passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. And Joshua commanded the people, You're not to shout or make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day that I bid you to shout; then shout ([Jos 6:2-8,10](#)).

So I could imagine that those that were in the city of Jericho began to get a little quizzical after a few days. Here is his army that is coming to take their city. Here are seven guys going around with these rams' horns and behind it these other fellows are carrying this box between the staves. Then all of the army just walking around, not saying a word then going back home. Every day here these guys are out there pacing around for six days. Then the seventh day back again early in the morning, "Woke us up this morning." After the seventh time around on the seventh day, then the long blast with the trumpets, and the people began to shout, and as they did, the walls of Jericho fell.

Now this is a very unlikely story, but it's true. You should have no problem with it if your God is big enough. So God brought down the walls of Jericho, and the city was taken by Joshua and the children of Israel.

Matthew Henry

Commentary on Joshua 5

Chapter 5

Israel have now got over Jordan, and the waters which had opened before them, to favour their march forward, are closed again behind them, to forbid their retreat backward. They have now got footing in Canaan, and must apply themselves to the conquest of it, in order to which this chapter tells us,

- I. How their enemies were dispirited ([v. 1](#)).
- II. What was done at their first landing to assist and encourage them.
 - 1. The covenant of circumcision was renewed ([v. 2-9](#)).
 - 2. The feast of the passover was celebrated ([v. 10](#)).
 - 3. Their camp was victualled with the corn of the land, whereupon the manna ceased ([v. 11, 12](#)).
 - 4. The captain of the Lord's host himself appeared to Joshua to animate and direct him ([v. 13-15](#)).

3. ([Joshua 5:13-15](#)) Joshua meets with the **Commander of the army of the Lord**.

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?” So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?” Then the Commander of the Lord’s army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.

- a. **Behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand**: Joshua boldly approaches this mysterious Man with a drawn sword. As a shepherd over God’s people, he has a responsibility to see if this man is a friend or a foe.
- b. **Are you for us or for our adversaries?** This was a logical question to this impressive Man. The response of the Man was curious, almost elusive. “**No**” was not a proper answer to Joshua’s question.

i. In a sense, the Man refuses to answer Joshua’s question because it is not the right question, and it is not the most important question to be asked at the time.

ii. The question really wasn’t if the Lord was on Joshua’s side. The proper question was if Joshua was on the Lord’s side.

c. **Commander of the army of the Lord**: This was God Himself pulling rank on Joshua, who himself was a great military leader — but he was not the **Commander** in Chief.

i. We know that this Being, standing before Joshua, was God. Though the title **Commander of the army of the Lord** could perhaps apply to an angel (such as Michael, based on a passage like [Revelation 12:7](#)), Joshua's falling down, and worshipping is inconsistent with angels, who never receive worship ([Revelation 22:8-9](#)).

ii. **Army of the Lord** here is used in a way that implies that the armies commanded are *angelic* armies. This is a Being who commands angels.

iii. As well, Joshua refers to the angel as **my Lord**; but most of all, the command to remove his sandals (a picture of our humanity and contact with a "dirty" world), was to Joshua (who read and knew [Exodus 3:4-6](#) because he was in God's word) clear proof that the Man standing before him was the voice from the burning bush.

iv. The idea of Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, appearing as a man before Bethlehem is provocative, but logical. We know that He *existed* before Bethlehem ([Micah 5:2](#)); why should He *not*, on isolated but important occasions, appear in bodily form? This idea is also evident in passages like [Genesis 18:16-33](#), [32:24-30](#), and [Judges 13:1-23](#).

d. **And Joshua did so**: Joshua's total submission to Jesus Christ shows that he knows who is really in charge. It also is a virtual guarantee of victory for Israel. When we follow after the **Commander of the army of the Lord**, how can we lose?

i. Why did Jesus come to Israel at this strategic time?

- He had come to instruct Joshua in the plan to capture Jericho. Joshua will carry out a plan in the following chapter that is so improbable it could *only* have been initiated at the direct command of God.
- Most of all, He had come to conquer Israel — before Israel could conquer anything else in the Promised Land, they had to be conquered by God — and Joshua's total submission shows that they are conquered by Him. This is the missing element in a life of victory for many Christians; they have not been, and are not continually being, conquered by God.