

March 14, 2021

“Prophet of Deliverance”  
Lesson 2 of Unit

Joshua 5:13-6:27

### **Intro**

Joshua is usually thought of more as a warrior than a prophet. However, he was Moses' successor, and Moses said in Deut. 18:15 that God would “raise up a prophet like me from among you.” Moses is definitely considered a prophet, and Joshua is his successor. God speaks to Moses the directions to give to Israel before the battle at Jericho. Speaking God's words to His people is also a definite job of a prophet.

Chapters 3 and 4 of Joshua tell how the Israelites crossed the Jordan River on dry ground, just like they did when they crossed the Red Sea under Moses. The people are spiritually prepared through circumcision (which had not happened during the wilderness years), and through the observance of the Passover. They are now ready to be told how to conquer the promised land.

### **Read Joshua 5:13-15: Joshua and His Caution**

#### 1. vs. 13: Joshua was near Jericho

He was likely looking over the city, thinking about a strategy for overtaking it

Jericho had all three qualities that were important in where to locate a city

Access to water: there were springs nearby, almost an oasis in the desert

Access to trade routes: Jericho was close to several trade routes

Defensibility: Jericho's wall were famous for their height / impossibility of  
Overcoming

Joshua sees a man

The man is standing basically in front of him

The man has a sword

Joshua approaches the man and confronts him with a question:

“for us or for our enemies?”

This shows Joshua's confidence in what he's doing, and protective stance toward Israel

#### 2. vs. 14: The Man's Reply and His Significance

He says “Neither”

He is God's representative, not that of Israel or Jericho

He identifies Himself as the “Commander of the Army of the Lord”

This is someone with power and authority

Joshua falls at his feet in “reverence” or “worship” depending on translation

Joshua realizes he's not the one in charge anymore; this guy is

“What message does my Lord have for his servant?”

#### 3. vs. 15: The Man tells Joshua to take off his sandals

“For the place where you are standing is holy”

Exactly the same events and words with God and Moses in Ex. 3:4-5

This phrase plus the reference in 6:2 suggest this is Jesus pre-incarnation  
(More about this in 6:2)  
The Man doesn't tell Joshua why he's there  
He places Holiness first over action

### Read Joshua 6:1-5: God's Battle Plans

#### 4. vs. 1: Jericho described

Gates securely barred  
Speaks to the threat they feel over Israel's presence  
No one went in or out  
Also speaks to the war-like atmosphere  
Shows how secure Jericho is in their ability to control their situation

#### 5. vs. 2: The Lord speaks to Joshua

No change is shown in who is speaking to Joshua from 5:13 to this verse  
The word "Lord" in in all capital letters, indicating the name "Yahweh"  
This is God talking to Joshua, and appears to have been there the whole time  
This is a strong reason for seeing the Man as Jesus pre-incarnate  
The Lord gives Joshua a promise of victory  
"I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men"  
Note the phrasing: Not "I *will* deliver", but "I *have* delivered"  
Past tense—it's already happened as far as God is concerned

#### 6. vs. 3: God's first instruction for battle

March around the city with all the soldiers once a day for 6 days  
Doesn't appear to be a great battle strategy by itself  
Loses the element of surprise when the enemy can see you daily  
Maybe this is God's purpose  
The victory would be by God's might, not their own  
Does likely heighten the fear the people inside are already feeling

One estimate of Jericho's circumference is about 2000 feet (1/3 of a mile)  
The likely didn't walk right next to the wall—could get shot by enemy arrows!  
Safe distance from wall increases the distance the people walked  
Between ½ mile and a mile is more likely the total  
It would take one person about 20-30 minutes to make this walk  
According to Num. 26:1-2, 51, there were about 600,000 soldiers in Israel  
Total time for all the soldiers to walk around the city would be hours

#### 7. vs. 4: Next part of God's battle plan

7 priests carry ram's horn trumpets in front of the ark  
Doesn't say for them to blow the horns here  
Likely they don't, given how the story ends  
On 7<sup>th</sup> day, march around city 7 times, with priests blowing horns  
Israel doesn't win battles with greater numbers, skill, or technology

They win battles because of God's presence, symbolized by the ark

8. vs. 5: Final battle instructions

Priests are to sound a loud blast on the trumpets

When all hear, the whole army will shout as loud as they can

Whoever heard of another army not being told to fire their weapons?

The walls will fall down at this point, says God

Then the army will go into the city

### **Read Joshua 6:15-16, 20: The People's Obedience**

9. vs. 15-16: The people do exactly as God said, as their leader Joshua had relayed to them

How many hours did it take for them to circle the city **7 times**??

Joshua speaks the same way God spoke to him

"For the Lord has given you the city!"

It's already done if you obey

10. vs. 20: This verse indicates that the army did *exactly* what God instructed them through Joshua

**Application:** This story speaks strongly of faith in God despite circumstances which appear to be against you. If you're a soldier who's told to march around a city, then shout at the walls, what would you think? *What kind of a strategy is that? Who conquers a city this way?* And the obvious answer is, God does.

God constantly does things in ways that humans find backwards, upside down, and just plain inconceivable. But God does that to show His way is not man's way, and His way accomplishes things in a way that man's ways won't. So obedience to the command of God, is crucial to achieving the will of God.

**Prayer:** Father God, thank you for leading us according to Your will. Help us to follow in obedience, even when we don't understand, and especially when we think we know better than You. Strength our desire to be obedient to You in all things. In Jesus' name, Amen.