

Into the Promised Land - Joshua's Story
Lesson #50 - "Before the Fall of Jericho"- Joshua 5:13-15 • 6:1-7
• H A N D O U T •

► This lesson begins after some undisclosed amount of time passed. The scripture opens with Joshua walking by Jericho. We are not told why Joshua was there, but we do know that he was about eight miles from his base camp, so he wasn't just strolling by. As a good commander, Joshua was probably surveying the area surrounding the city and inspecting the fortifications, comparing what he saw with the report the two spies had given him.

Suddenly a man appeared, standing in front of him, holding a sword.

► **Joshua 5:13-15** • Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand.

Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"

"Neither," he replied, "but as Commander of the Army of the LORD I have now come."

Then Joshua fell face-down to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?"

The Commander of the LORD's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

Q: What strikes you the most about Joshua's encounter with the Commander of the Lord's Army?

Q: What does Joshua's response to the Commander tell us about this military man?

Q: What was the stranger's exact response to Joshua's question?

Q: How does Joshua respond to that surprising answer?

Q: How does the Commander answer Joshua's question?

Q: What can we conclude about this “Commander of the Lord's army?”

Q: Could this be a Christophany?

Q: What about the command for Joshua to take off his sandals because he was standing on Holy Ground? Doesn't that speak of the Divine?

Q: If not a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ, who was it?

THE FOCUS SWITCHES FROM ISRAEL'S PREPARATION TO THE CITY OF JERICO ITSELF ...

► **Joshua 6:1** • Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

Q: Since Jericho is on high alert because of Israel, It is understandable why no one was allowed to enter Jericho, but why was no one allowed to go out?

Some scholars believe the following is the message from the Commander of the Lord's Army

► **Joshua 6:2-5** • Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men.

March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the people will go up, every man straight in."

Q: What is significant about the LORD's statement to Joshua: *See I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men?*

Q: This is Israel's first encounter and it is with a walled city. In that day and culture, what were the customary five ways to go about capturing a walled city?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Q: The city of Jericho was strategically located as an imposing fortress guarding the fords across the Jordan and the passes into the hill country. So, contrary to the cultural military norm, what were God's instructions to Joshua as to how he was to capture this important city?

Q: What did this plan of the Lord require of the people?

Q: What was significant about the Lord's use of the number "seven" – which He referenced fourteen times in this chapter alone.

Q: So, how would we expect the people of Jericho to process Israel's unusual war-fare behavior?

Q: What was to be different about the 7th day?

Q: What did the Lord say to Joshua regarding the fall of Jericho?

Joshua has now been told exactly what to expect and he orders his people accordingly ...

► **Joshua 6:6-7** • So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the Ark of the covenant of the LORD and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it."

And he ordered the people, "Advance! March around the city, with the armed guard going ahead of the Ark of the LORD."

Q: What is the subtle difference between the way Joshua commands the priests and the way he speaks to the people?

**► The time has come!
The people are assembled and ready.
Joshua summarizes, one more time, what is expected of Israel.
This is where we will pick up the story next time.**



Next Time • Lesson #51
"Jericho"

