

Studies in the Book of Joshua
Lesson 5 - Joshua 5:13-6:27
The Abundant Life
Jericho

Jericho was a walled city. Joshua stood by the city and saw a man there with a drawn sword. Fearlessly, Joshua asked the man to declare himself, and he discovered that the Man was the Lord of Hosts! This is the “battle” title of the Lord; it speaks of His supreme command of the armies of Israel and of heaven. Jesus Christ had come down to direct the battle, and Joshua was quick to acknowledge His leadership. There can be no victory for the Lord in public unless we experience worship of the Lord in private. Joshua fell on his face in worship; he took off his shoes in humility; and he turned all his plans over to his Commander when he said, “*What does my Lord say to His servant?*” “I have given Jericho to you!” Christ promised. But the people had to step out by faith and claim the victory.

The armed men were to lead the procession, with seven priests following with trumpets. The ark was to follow, and then the rest of the people finished the procession. The procession was to march around Jericho once a day for six days in absolute silence except for the trumpets blowing. On the seventh day, they were to march around seven times (making a total of thirteen marches), and on the seventh march they were to blow the trumpets and shout. What a strange plan for fighting a war! But God’s ways are not our ways, and He uses what the world calls “foolish” to confound the mighty.

Joshua was fearless when it came to facing enemies on the battlefield. So when he came upon a stranger outside the city of Jericho, he challenged him; was he friend or foe? Was he going to fight for the Israelites or against them? Neither, the Man replied. He had not come to fight, but to take over; He was the Commander of the army of the Lord.

So it is today. God does not intend to be merely a foot soldier in our personal campaign, whatever it may be. He does not make His resources available to us so that we can accomplish our own agenda. He comes as the Lord, the Sovereign One, and the supreme Commander. We serve Him. We fight in His army. We worship at His feet, for in His presence we stand on holy ground.

Are you prepared to let Jesus give the orders in your life? Will you allow Him to determine the ultimate objectives? To give Him allegiance does not mean giving up all control or personal responsibility, but it does demand a conscious choice to deal with Him in terms of who He is—the Lord God, your Creator, Savior, and Commander.

Read Joshua 5:13-6:27, pray and answer the following questions:

1. Joshua goes near Jericho to take another look before the attack. Who did he meet outside of Jericho? (5:13-14)

2. How did Joshua respond when the man who appeared said he was “commander of the army of the Lord”? What do you think this encounter with the “commander of the Lord’s army” was meant to teach Joshua?

3. What instructions did the Lord give to Joshua about defeating Jericho? (6:2-5)

4. How did the Israelites treat the ark of the Lord?

5. According to Joshua, who gave the city of Jericho over to the Israelites? (6:16)

6. Why did Joshua instruct the Israelites to keep away from the devoted things in Jericho? (6:18)

7. Why was Rahab’s family saved from the curse? What does this reveal about the Grace of God?

8. What did Joshua say would happen to the man who tried to rebuild Jericho?
(6:26)

9. Why do you think God chose the method He did for the Israelites to win the battle against the people of Jericho?

10. What does this story teach us about the attitude God wants us to have whenever we succeed?

11. How do you imagine Joshua felt explaining to the Israelites the battle plans for their war against Jericho?

12. How do you feel when God tells you to do something that you don't think your friends will understand or approve of?

13. What does this story teach us about the type of person God uses to accomplish His plans?

Some Practical Points to Consider as We Face our Own “Jericho’s”

A. The soldier who wants to fight the best must bow the lowest before the battle: We win our battles on our knees and on our faces before the Lord.

B. No one can take a city alone: Joshua had the loyal cooperation of the priests and people, and together they overcame the enemy.

C. When we follow God’s methods, He wins the battle and He gets the glory: This is why He uses such “foolish methods.” When we use our own schemes and systems, we might get the glory but the victory never lasts.

D. Unbelief looks at the walls and giants (Num. 13:28), but faith looks to the Lord: “Obstacles are those nasty little things we see when we take our eyes off the goal.” And, we might add, when we take our eyes off the Lord. God’s commandments are God’s enablement’s.

E. We see the grace of God at work even in judgment, for Rahab and her family were saved by faith.