



December 15, 2013  
Joshua 5:13-15; 6:1-5  
*“Lessons from Jericho”*  
Pastor Gary Hamrick

Up to this point in time, the Israelites have not really settled the Promised Land; they’ve only entered it. They’ve only made it as far as their encampment at Gilgal, because they weren’t supposed to rush in and take over; they were to follow the orderly plan God made for them to occupy the land.

So far, Pastor Gary’s messages have revealed the order God gave them. First, they were to remember what God did when he parted the Jordan River and brought the people into the Promised Land, by setting up 12 memorial stones in the camp and 12 stones in the Jordan River. Second, they were to renew the covenant with God (the covenant they had neglected during their 40 years in the wilderness) by having all the males circumcised as a mark in their flesh that they were a covenant people that belonged to God. Third, they were to receive the city of Jericho<sup>1</sup> that God was giving, and they were to resist taking its possessions.

In order to take Jericho, the Israelites needed the Lord to do a miracle, and what a miracle he performed! They took the city without having to engage in combat or hardly breaking a sweat. When God, in [Joshua 6:2](#), said, *“I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men,”* he meant it. Pastor Gary jokingly said, “If there were an 11th Commandment, for the Israelites and us, it would be: ‘Thou shall not sweat it!’ ”

At the end of Joshua chapter five, Joshua had a personal encounter with the Lord. While some insist the *“man”* he met was an angel, the Scriptural evidence indicates this was none other than Jesus himself who appeared in human form. A pre-incarnate

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<sup>1</sup> Jericho was a well-fortified city. Archaeological digs (in the 1930s, 1950s, and 1997) have shown that the ancient city of Jericho had a double wall with a dirt embankment between each wall, and the majority of the city’s population lived being beyond the second wall.

(before he was born in Bethlehem) appearance of Jesus is called a theophany or a Christophany. This isn't the first time in the Old Testament. Two examples are found in [Genesis 18](#)<sup>2</sup> and [Genesis 32](#).<sup>3</sup>

It was a must for them to know that this was the Lord, because he was about to teach them some very important things. In this study, we will learn that the Lord is always in charge, and that he is a holy God who is specific with his words.

### Evidence Joshua Met With The Lord

1. In [Joshua 5:14](#), the 1984 NIV uses the word “*commander.*”
  - a. The King James Version (KJV) uses the word captain.
  - b. The Hebrew word is sar, which means, ruler or prince.
2. [Isaiah 9:6](#) - *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace [Hebrew - Sar Shalom].”*
3. [Daniel 8:11](#) - *“... Prince of the host... [Sar Ha Tsaba]”*
  - a. The Lord is referred to as the Prince of the heavenly host.
4. [Daniel 8:25b](#) - *“... Prince of princes [Sar Sariym].”*
5. Joshua “*fell facedown to the ground in reverence,*” according to [Joshua 5:14](#), and an angel would not have tolerated a reaction like this from Joshua.
  - a. The Hebrew word for reverence is shachah, which means worship.
  - b. John fell down at Jesus’ feet and the Lord didn’t refuse his worship, according to [Revelation 1:17](#), which says, *“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: ‘Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.’ ”*
  - c. Twice in the book of Revelation when John fell down at the feet of an angel, the angel refused him, saying, *“Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you...”*
    - i. [Revelation 19:10](#) - *“At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you...’ ”*
    - ii. [Revelation 22:9](#) - *“But he said to me, ‘Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you...’ ”*

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<sup>2</sup> Three men appeared to Abraham, two of whom were later identified as angels ([Genesis 19:1](#)), while it was said of the third man, in [Genesis 18:22](#), that *“Abraham remained standing before the Lord.”*

<sup>3</sup> In [Genesis 32](#), Jacob wrestled with a man at a place he called Peniel, saying, *“It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”* ([Genesis 32:30](#))

6. Joshua's words parallel God's words to Moses when he met with him at the burning bush.
  - a. **Exodus 3:5** - " 'Do not come any closer,' God said. 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' "

### God Is Always In Charge

7. The Lord approached Joshua with a drawn sword, and the first thing Joshua said to him was, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" (**Joshua 5:13**)
  - a. Notice he didn't ask, "Who are you?" or "What do you want?"
  - b. Joshua wanted to know whose side he was on, which is typical of our human nature because, we too, want to know if God is on our side.
  - c. People will always want to know the answer to this question!
8. **Joshua 5:13** - "Neither, he replied, 'but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.'"
  - a. The Lord asks the right question when he basically said, "Whose side are you on?" or another way of asking the question would be, "Are you on my side?"
9. **Joshua 5:14-15** - " '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."

### God Is A Holy God

10. Holiness is both position and a practice.
11. We are made positionally holy before God when we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, and this happens at the moment of conversion.
  - a. **Colossians 1:22** - "[God] has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation."
  - b. **Hebrews 10:10** - "... we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."
12. We are called to live holy lives consistent with our holy position.
  - a. **1 Peter 1:15-16** - "But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.' "
  - b. **1 Thessalonians 4:7** - "For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life."

13. What does a life of holiness look like?
- a. The more we grow in the knowledge of God and his Word, the more we will understand behavior that is right and behavior that is wrong.
  - b. There will be many other issues in life that will be a matter of conscience, so it would be best for us to let the Holy Spirit convict, then obey his leading.
  - c. It's important to remember that we should never pass judgment on another person because of his or her conviction(s).<sup>4</sup>

### God Is Specific With His Word

14. **Joshua 6:5** - *"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."*
- a. While we don't need archaeology to validate the Bible, it is interesting when archaeology catches up to the Bible!
    - i. Evidence demonstrates the walls fell outward, rather than inward, which shows that the walls did not fall by the strength of an army pushing in, but a mighty God who pushed the walls down and out!<sup>5</sup>
  - b. When the walls fell down and out, a natural ramp was created that would have been a veritable walkway up and into the city.
15. Prior to the walls collapsing, there was no arguing or questioning of God concerning how many times a day or how many days they were to march around the city, etc.; they just did what God told them to do.
16. Like the Israelites, we are just not smart enough to understand every nuance of God's commands, but if we fundamentally believe that God is good, that he loves us and wants his best for us, then we will do what he says, that it would go well with us.
- a. For some this is a little easier, and for some it's a bit more challenging, because it's true that the world is made up of rule-followers and rule-breakers or what some would call "free spirits."
  - b. No matter which group you're in, you must determine in your heart that you are going to obey God.

### Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.

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<sup>4</sup> See Paul's counsel in **Romans 14**.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/cm/v21/n2/the-walls-of-jericho>

2. Read [Joshua 5:13-15, 6:1-5](#) to provide an overview for this study.
3. How often have you “lost sleep” over things when you should have just obeyed Pastor Gary’s 11<sup>th</sup> Commandment, which says, “Thou shall not sweat it”?
4. What are some examples of situations in which you want to know whose side someone is on?
5. How often do you stop to consider whether or not you are on the Lord’s side?
6. Would you say you follow his lead some of the time, most of the time or all of the time?
7. Do you hold God’s view of things based on the situation/circumstances?
8. How would you describe your world-view?
9. How would you define biblical holiness?
10. Read and discuss [Colossians 1:22](#) and [Hebrews 10:10](#), focusing on positional holiness.
11. Read and discuss [1 Peter 1:15-16](#) and [1 Thessalonians 4:7](#), focusing on the practice of holiness.
12. In what ways have you modeled your life by his standard(s)?
13. Do you have the heart of God?
14. Spend time talking about situations in which you’ve submitted to his orderly plan, his will and his ways.
15. Allow the people in your group to share examples to times when they’ve asked the Lord to bless what they were planning to do or what they were doing.
16. Spend time talking about the outcome in times when the first questions asked were: “God, what are you doing, where are you leading, and what are your plans?”
17. Do you know people or churches that embrace a “Field of Dreams” <sup>6</sup> philosophy of life or ministry?

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<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Field\\_of\\_Dreams](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Field_of_Dreams)

18. How different would your life be if you sought to discern the Lord's way and his will for your life by finding out what he's doing and then getting in on it?
17. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: believe that God is good, that he loves them and wants his best for them; purpose in their hear to what he says, that it would go well for them; find out what the Lord is doing and get it on it, that they would know the joy of using their gift(s) to serve others in Jesus' name!