**CAPTAIN OF THE LORD’S HOST**

Sunday School Lesson 24

*Wandering in the Wilderness*

Joshua 5-6

6/22/2025

**Lesson Review:** Last week, our lesson was based on the events found in Joshua 3-4. Specifically, we were looking at the crossing of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ River. This was a critical moment for Joshua and Israel because it represented their official \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ into the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The Jordan River was the dividing line between the wilderness and everything that God had \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to them on the other side of it. As a result of this promise, Joshua expected to see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ upon crossing the Jordan River, and he communicated those expectations to the people. Additionally, Joshua expected the people to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ before they crossed the Jordan River. They were to be a holy and separated people. Crossing the Jordan was also an opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the Lord. Joshua commanded for the \_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to go before the people to lead them into the Promised Land. As the priests were taking the ark across the river, the Lord caused it to stay in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Jordan River until all of Israel had passed through. While Joshua was focused on magnifying the Lord, the Lord was intent on magnifying \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ among the people. Lastly, crossing the Jordan was an ongoing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to what the Lord had done. The Lord commanded the people to build a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as a memorial to their children of what God had done in the wilderness. This tribute was to be recognized by every \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Israel. As we move forward, we will be looking at a special appearance that takes place on the other side of the Jordan River. Joshua is blessed by a meeting with the Captain of the Lord’s host!

1. **THE CAPTAIN’S APPEARANCE ALIGNED WITH THE MANNA’S DISAPPEARANCE.**
2. **Notice that when Israel entered into the Promised Land, the manna ceased after their Passover feast.** *Joshua 5:10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. 11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. 12 And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.* After reaching the Promised Land, there was an important transition that needed to take place. There was the circumcision of the young, the implementing of the Passover feast, and the new provision and ceasing of the manna. The manna in the wilderness was never meant to last forever. There was greater provision awaiting them in the Promised Land. Of course, this is a picture of the difference between the temporary provisions of this world and the eternal provisions of Heaven.
3. **Notice that the appearance of the Captain of the Lord’s host represented something much better than the manna they had received*.*** *Joshua 5:13a And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: John 6:31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. 32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.* While the Israelites in the wilderness did not appreciate the manna like they should, the Jews later came to appreciate the miracle of the manna. They spoke to Christ with great regard for that manna that came in the days of Moses. Yet, the Lord told them of a much greater Bread. He is the living Bread that came down from Heaven. Thus, it is no coincidence that Joshua saw the Commander there with him!
4. **THE CAPTAIN’S APPAREL AND ATTITUDE ALIGNED WITH THE JERICHO DILEMMA.**
5. **Notice that the Lord chose to appear to Joshua by Jericho as the Captain of His host.** *Joshua 5:13a And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho,* The timing of the Lord’s visit to Joshua was not accidental. While Joshua had made it into the Promised Land, there was a mighty enemy standing before him. This would be the greatest battle that Joshua and the Israelites had faced to that point. As Joshua looked at the hard battle that he was about to face, the Captain appeared to him. This is a wonderful reminder that the Lord is there for us when we prepare for the battles of this life. He does not stand invisible. He stands as our Captain. The Lord could have appeared in any apparel He chose, but He wanted Joshua to see Him as the military Captain that He is.
6. **Notice that the Captain of the Lord’s host stood with His sword drawn in hand.** *Joshua 5:13b and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?* *Revelation 1:15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.* The Captain did not only stand there by Joshua; He stood there with His sword drawn. This was very symbolic. The Lord was showing that He was ready to fight. Hopefully, we understand that the sword of the Lord is the Word of God. That’s exactly what we find in the next chapter. The Lord proclaims His Word to Joshua. He lets him know that the battle will be won. His Word is sure. His Word is powerful. The attitude or posture of the Lord reminds us that He is not afraid to fight for His children. May we stand with sword in hand as well. May we stand with courage and boldness to fight the spiritual battle against our adversary – the Devil.
7. **THE CAPTAIN’S ANSWER ALIGNED WITH THE LORD BEING THE DELIVERER.**
8. **Notice that Joshua wanted to know if the Captain was for them or against them, but the Captain did not answer the question.** *Joshua 13b and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14a And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. Exodus 32:26 Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD’s side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.* When Joshua first sees the Captain, he does not realize that it is the Lord. Consequently, he asks the Captain if He is for them or for their adversaries. We would think that the Lord would tell Joshua that He was for him, but that’s not what happened. Instead, the Lord did not answer the question either way. Instead, He simply revealed to Joshua who He was. Friends, the question is never about which side the Lord is on. The question is which side we are on. God is always faithful. He never moves or changes directions. We must choose to stand with Him. We can have confidence that He’s there.
9. **Notice that after Joshua received an answer from the Captain, he fell on his face, worshipped Him, and removed his shoes from off the holy ground.** *Joshua 5:14b And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? 15 And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.* Joshua did not hesitate to reveal whose side he was on. He understood what the Captain’s answer meant. He gladly fell to his face to worship the Captain. From there, the Lord called him to remove his shoes because he was standing on holy ground. Joshua had been there in the past alongside Moses. He had been an eyewitness and also likely heard the stories of how God appeared to Moses. I’m sure he was very familiar with the story of Moses and the burning bush. Joshua understood that the Lord was their Deliverer. It wasn’t just that He would fight alongside them. He would bring them the victory. They could not win without the Lord’s help.
10. **THE CAPTAIN’S AUTHORITY ALIGNED WITH THE PATH TO DOMINION.**
11. **Notice that the Captain showed to Joshua that He was going to dominate over Jericho.** *Joshua 6:1 Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. 2 And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.* Once Joshua acknowledges the Lord’s power and authority, the Lord then shows to Joshua the victory that awaited him. He came to Joshua to show him the dominance that they would have over Jericho. The Lord had given the city and the people into their hands. Notice how important it is for us to accept the Lord’s authority. It is only through that acceptance that we can find the path to success and dominance over this sinful world.
12. **Notice that the Captain gave Joshua specific instructions that were essential to follow in order for Israel to find success in battle.** *Joshua 6:3 And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. 4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. 5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye 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.* Part of accepting the Captain’s authority is being willing to obey His commands. The Captain came with quite unusual commands for Joshua and the people to follow. Had Joshua not humbly accepted the Captain’s authority, then he and the people of Israel would have failed in the battle. We say that we recognize the Lord as our Captain, but if we do not obey His commands, can we truly say that we have accepted His authority? May we follow His every instruction in this life.