

January 1, 2023
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
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Text: *Joshua 5:13 – 6:1*

Joshua's New Year's Challenge

1. Immediate Context
2. Extended Context
3. Important Perspectives
4. Selected Applications

Joshua's New Year's Challenge

Suggested Points for Self Study and Discussion

Joshua was appointed by divine order as successor to Moses to bring Yahweh's newly formed 'nation-son' (Ex. 4:22) into the land as the concluding step in the exodus. Occasions of his commission/ordination appear in the following texts: Num. 27:15-23; Deut. 31:1-8, 23; Deut. 34:9; Josh. 1:1-9.

Speculate as to how these communications of commission might have strengthened Joshua as he was confronted with conquest of fortified cities such as Jericho, set backs from sin in the camp, etc..

Personal Question: Can you recall when the Spirit might have stirred your heart to commit to a ministry responsibility, and you met with challenging situations? Do you ever derive sustaining encouragement through recall of your Spirit-stirred call to a service commitment?

Note that Joshua was included with Caleb as one identified as a 'whole-hearted' follower of Yahweh (Num. 32:10-12). Identify characteristics you believe have correspondence in the life of one who is a 'whole-hearted' follower of Yahweh. Reflecting on Joshua's life, can you identify instances where Joshua proved his being 'whole hearted' as a follower of Yahweh, including in our text passage?

The 'land promise' within the Abrahamic covenant holds enduring relevance in God's kingdom redemption program. Review the strong confirmation of this fact set forth in multiple references: Gen. 12:1; 13:15, 17; 15:7, 13, 16; 17:7-8, 35:9-12; I Chron. 16:15-18; Ps. 105:8-11; ... ; (note use of the word "everlasting")..

The night visitor who encountered Joshua in the night scene of our text introduced Himself as "Captain of the host of the LORD (Yahweh)". This personal name, used prominently in multiple OT texts, is Yahweh Sabaoth, a compound name which defines peculiar senses of Yahweh's attitude and action in a class of contexts. This name is usually translated as "LORD of hosts" in our English versions.

To ascertain some intended senses communicated when this name is used, review the following selected Scriptures: I Sam. 17:14; I Kings 19:10, 14; Isa. 1:9; Isa. 5:16; Isa. 6:1-5; Zeph. 2:8-10; Zech. 2:8-9; Mal. 1:6, 11, 14; and the only NT text, James 5:4.

Consider the phrase "the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete ['full' in Geneva & KJV]" appearing in Yahweh's word to Abraham (Gen. 15:16).

Question: What do you believe are implicit elements or senses in that statement?

Comment: The phrase certainly implies that a delay will occur in fulfillment of the 'land promise' in relation to Abraham's seed/descendants. However, further revelatory statements made over 400 years later provide deeper insight into what is an intended implication (refer particularly to Lev. 18:24-25; Deut. 18:9-14). Discuss the righteous balance between God's patience and judgment.

Question: Might these texts have formed a weighty challenge for Joshua as he was faced with the duty of invading and destroying Jericho? In what ways might being suddenly encountered by One with the name "Captain of the host of Yahweh" have been a most strengthening encouragement to Joshua?

Considering the phrase "the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full", and God's sentence of judgment to be accomplished through Joshua's military leadership, note the underlying bases for each of the expressions "God gave them over" used by the Apostle Paul in Rom. 1:16-32.

- Seek to discern the intended distinction between the two terms "ungodliness" and "unrighteousness", terms which the apostle refers to as causal actions soliciting revelation of God's wrath.
- Discuss the progression noted by the Apostle Paul in defining the stages of descent into ever more grievous iniquity and, by consequence, ever more devastating expressions of God's revealed wrath. Consider the following progression as a possible framework.

(impiety → idolatry → immorality → perverse immorality → whole-cultural debasement)

Consider historical instances of this progression: Pre-Flood world; Sodom and Gomorrah; collapse of the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel;

Note the singular offer of cultural remedy: God's gospel (vs.1), the "power of God for salvation" (vs. 16).