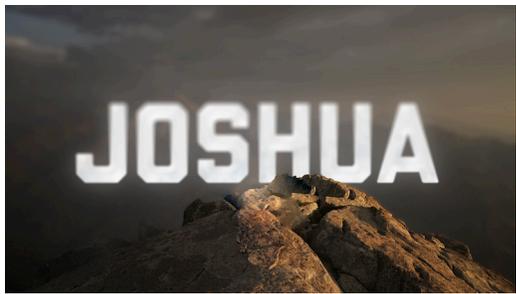


THE LORD BREAKS STRONGHOLDS

8.4.2018

Joshua 5:13–6:27



JOSHUA

EXPOSITION

JOSHUA 6:1-27 (read in own Bible)

1. THIS IS JESUS, AND HE IS TERRIFYINGLY HOLY

- **This is, I believe, what Theologians call a Christophany.** It's when Jesus, before he entered into the world as a man through His mother Mary, shows up in an obvious way.
- **JOSHUA 5:13–15** 13 When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us, or for our adversaries?" 14 And he said, "No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come." **And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him,** "What does my lord (*adonai*) say to his servant?" 15 And the commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "**Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.**" And Joshua did so.
- **When Jesus entered into the world as a true man, which we read about in what we call The Gospel Accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John),** He did so in order to be a perfect substitute for His people. He lived without sin, died for sin, and arose from the dead as the Savior. He was *veiled* in flesh and blood.
- **That's why in the Christmas/Advent season we sing,** "Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity. Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus our Immanuel."
- **But look at Him here!** He has a drawn sword, He makes Joshua remove His shoes (much like He did in the burning bush scene with Moses), and He receives worship as Joshua responds in the same way others respond when they see the glorified Jesus.
- **In Exodus 3,** "Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look." **In Isaiah 6,** Isaiah says, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" **In Ezekiel 1,** the prophet says after a vision of Jesus, "Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face..." **In Job 41,** "the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind" **and Job's response in chapter 42 is** "I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes." **In Mark 9,** Peter James and John see Jesus in His glory and "[Peter] did not know what to say, for they were terrified." **In Revelation 1,** John sees the resurrected and glorified Jesus and tells us, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead." **And here in Joshua 5,** "Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped" before the commander of the LORD's army who had His sword drawn.
- **Jesus is no mere Jewish carpenter.** He is the eternally existing King and Creator of the Universe, who spoke the cosmos into existence, controls the weather, establishes and topples kingdoms, only does what is right, and, as Hebrews 1 says, "Upholds the universe by the word of His power." He is perfect in every characteristic and infinitely glorious in every attribute. He is holy, so much so that where he stands becomes holy ground.
- **Q.** Does this seem like someone you can afford not to deal with? Avoid? Scorn? Belittle? Does this seem like someone you ask to be your life coach? Does this seem like someone safe who you'd be able to manipulate?
- **He is not safe, but He is good.**

2. JESUS IS JUST, THEREFORE HE IS RIGHT TO PUNISH SINNERS

- **When we look at scenes like this in Joshua 6—scenes where created beings are destroyed because they're in open rebellion against their Creator—**when we look at scenes like this and *wince* or *feel* that it is too *brutal* or *unfair* or *unjust*, we are revealing how little we think of God and how little we understand sin.
- **The fault is with us.**

- From the beginning, the LORD has communicated that sin which is rebellion and treason against Him, deserves death. So he told Adam and Eve in Genesis 2, “if you sin, you shall die.” Again in Ezekiel 18:20 the Prophet says, “The soul that sins shall die.” We who have been raised in the Bible Belt know Romans 6:23 “the wages of sin is death.” What about Nahum 1:2-3? “The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty.”
- If Joshua was defiled before the LORD because his sandals still clung to his feet, how much more defiled must we be before the LORD while our sin still clings to us.
- Please don't do what many professing Christians do:
 - 1) Avoid these kind of passages, 2) Explain them away (crusades), 3) God was different back then (but Jesus is nice).
- We need to stare at the passages a long time. And if we do, by God's grace, we will see in it a picture of what WE deserve. This is what YOU deserve. This is the wages of sin against God. “Are you for us or for our enemies?” “No.”

3. HOW COULD JESUS EVER BE FOR US?

- Joshua 5-6 teach us a tremendous amount about the gospel—the good news that says, because of what Jesus has done is his life/death/resurrection, through faith in him, God forgives us and becomes totally for us!
- The One who bears the Sword of divine justice in Joshua 5 WENT UNDER the Sword in Luke 23.
- The One who commands the Army of the LORD and brought destruction on Jericho in Joshua 6—the one who reveals just how grotesque and unjust and nasty sin is—is the one who fell on His Sword on the cross, taking all our vile filth, our detestable rebellion, our trying to manipulate God, our cosmic treason onto Himself so that He could remove our sin and be totally for us. He went to the cross to give us His unpolluted righteousness, His never-ending love, He joy-increasing presence—to reconcile us to Himself.
- On the cross, HE was devoted to destruction—the destruction WE deserved—so that we could be saved.
- At the foot of the cross, through faith we can stare into the eyes of Jesus hanging there, taking the just judgement we have earned and deserved... And as we gaze at Him dying to save us, we can realize, the One who said, “Am I for you? No!” in Joshua 5 now, because of His cross, says, “Yes!” But this is the price of your redemption.
- “If God is for us who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will he not with Him graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32)
- Q. Do you know Jesus is no mere Carpenter? Do you know He is terrifyingly Holy?
- Q. Do you know that because He is holy and we have rebelled, he is right to judge us and will judge us? Do you know the sinfulness of sin?
- Q. But do you also see and trust that though we deserve to be devoted to destruction, Jesus was devoted to destruction in our place so that we could live through Him?
- Look to the cross and you'll see all three: His glorious Holiness, the sinfulness of sin, and the greatest of His love for all who will come to believe and trust Him!
- J.C. RYLE, Bishop of Liverpool: “No proof of the fullness of sin, after all, is so overwhelming and unanswerable as the cross and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and the whole doctrine of His substitution and atonement. Terribly black must that guilt be for which nothing but the blood of the Son of God could make satisfaction. Heavy must that weight of human sin be which made Jesus groan and sweat drops of blood in agony at Gethsemane and cry at Golgotha, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’
- Our sin, as black as night, as vast as the ocean, as heavy as the mountains, yet He did it for us.