

## Trinity Home Teams

Sermon Notes / Nov. 9, 2025

### A Holy Encounter / Joshua 5:13-15

1. Joshua recognizes the figure as having higher authority. He bows to worship or show respect. Do you think he knew the man's identity?
2. How do you believe that God speaks to you today, and when you sense that God is speaking, how do you respond?
3. Consider this imagery; then read **Eph. 6**. What is our job? How are we to fight? Recognize the battle?

We serve a holy God, and he requires that his people walk in holiness – twice in Leviticus and in the NT: *"Be perfect for your Heavenly Father is perfect."* -- Matt. 5:48. Israel was intended to represent God's power and holiness to the world. They were to be a light to the other nations. They failed at that, but the true Israel – Christ – succeeded, thank God! Holiness remains important for God's people today. God calls us to walk as his people in holiness; he justifies us, declares us righteous, and sanctifies us.

#### Interrogation of a strange man

Joshua was alone near Jericho, either praying and meditating or doing reconnaissance for the upcoming battle. A strange man appears from nowhere with sword drawn. Maybe a giant? Joshua interrogates.

#### Identification of Yahweh's commander

Man? Angel? Greater? In most general cases in the OT, the phrase 'commander of the army' refers to one with supreme military authority but who is subordinate to another, such as a king.

In Daniel 8:11, the phrase refers to God himself; it is translated 'the Prince of the host.' This alone does not tell us who this being is, but raises question: divine?

The army this being commands is Yahweh's army. Phrase 'army of the Lord' is used in plural form in Exodus 12:41 for Israelites as they left Egypt.

**Exodus 12:41** -- *"At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt."*

In other places, Israel is referred to as God's army (see **Exodus 7:4** and **1 Samuel 17:15**).

In this case, Moses or Joshua could have theoretically been called 'commander of the army of the Lord.' Yet also common in OT to see God as 'the Lord of hosts.' Stars (**Gen. 2:1; Isaiah 40:26**) or angelic beings (**1 Kings 22:19; Psalm 103:19-21**).

Notice Joshua's deference. Readily acknowledges his superiority by falling on his face and worshiping - paying respect or homage – and seeking direction from the being: "What does my lord say to his servant?"

"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.*

**Exodus 3:1-6** – God speaks to Moses from burning bush: *"Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."*

#### FURTHER STUDY:

- *The Angel of the LORD: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Study* by Douglas Van Dorn and Matt Foreman.
- Two podcasts from Whitehorse Inn I will post to the church's FB page

Personally, I am inclined to view the angel of the Lord as the pre-incarnate Logos; I view the commander of the army of the Lord as the second person of the Trinity, Christ himself.

**Exodus 23:20-24** *'he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.*

**Jude 5** -- "...Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe."

**1 Corinthians 10:9** -- "We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents."

Balaam's donkey recognized the angel first ... **Numbers 22:23-31** -- ... <sup>31</sup> *Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face.*

**1 Chronicles 21:16** *"And David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the Lord standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces."*

#### Implications of the encounter

Joshua's question was the wrong question. He assumed the stranger would have allegiance either to Israel or Israel's enemies. This was an incorrect assumption. True, the commander of the army of the Lord would lead Yahweh's armies to fight for Israel, but his allegiance was to Yahweh. Abraham Lincoln: "My concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."