

# Rev. Luke's Weekly Blog

## August 28, 2025



### THE COMMANDER OF THE ARMY OF THE LORD

Joshua 5:13-15

This pericope, often understood as a Christophany – a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ – offers insights into the identity and mission of Jesus Christ. It foreshadows His divine authority, mediatorial role, and ultimate purpose as the Saviour and King.

Joshua, the newly appointed leader of Israel, stands on the verge of conquering Jericho, a crucial moment in God's covenant promise to bring His people into the Promised Land. As he surveys the city, he encounters a man standing with a drawn sword, identified as the **commander of the army of the Lord**.

The identification of the man as the **commander of the army of the Lord** speaks of his role as a divine warrior, a motif that echoes throughout Scripture. In the Old Testament, God is frequently depicted as a warrior who fights for Israel (Exodus 15:3; Psalm 24:8). His drawn sword symbolizes divine authority and readiness for battle, pointing to Christ's role as the victorious King who wages war against the forces of evil. Revelation 19:11-16 portrays Jesus returning as a warrior on a white horse, with a sharp sword proceeding from His mouth, leading the armies of heaven.

Both the commander in Joshua and Christ in Revelation wield divine authority, lead heavenly forces, and execute God's judgment.

The commander responded to Joshua's question, **Are You for us or for our adversaries**, by saying, **No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come**. He asserts his transcendence over human conflicts, emphasizing that God's purposes supersede earthly allegiances. This points to Christ's universal lordship, as He is not merely the champion of one nation but the Savior of all who trust in Him. Here we see God's impartial justice and sovereignty, qualities embodied in Christ, who is both the righteous Judge and the merciful Mediator. Indeed, Jesus' kingdom is not of this world; it is a spiritual kingdom that transcends earthly boundaries.



## **THE COMMANDER OF THE ARMY OF THE LORD** Continued

In Exodus 3:5, God's command to Moses to remove his shoes shows the holiness of His presence, and the repetition here suggests that the commander is no ordinary messenger. This act of reverence confirms the commander's identity as the Lord Himself, appearing in human form. In the New Testament, Jesus is revealed as the one through whom God's presence is fully manifested (Colossians 2:9). His incarnation makes the **HOLY GROUND** of God's presence accessible to humanity, as He tabernacles among us. Additionally, Christ's atoning work sanctifies us, making us holy and fit to stand in God's presence. He is the one who consecrates us, preparing us for communion with God.

Joshua's act of falling on his face and worshiping indicates that the commander is worthy of divine honour, **A RESPONSE INAPPROPRIATE FOR AN ORDINARY ANGEL** (Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9). Jesus is the one to whom all worship is due (Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:6).

As the commander conveys God's will and leads Israel into battle, he prefigures Christ as the Mediator who reveals God's plan of salvation and intercedes for His people. The commander's guidance ensures Israel's success in the conquest, just as Christ's high priestly work guarantees the triumph of His church.

The conquest of Canaan, while a physical event, symbolizes the spiritual warfare and rest that Christ accomplishes. Hebrews 4:8 notes that Joshua did not ultimately provide the rest God promised, pointing to a greater rest fulfilled in Christ. The commander's leadership in Joshua's time anticipates Jesus as the true Joshua, leading His people into the eternal Promised Land (Hebrews 4:9-11).

The commander's encounter with Joshua serves as a reminder of Christ's eternal presence with His people, and his sudden appearance of the commander at a critical moment in Israel's history reflects God's faithfulness to His covenant promises (Deuteronomy 31:6). Jesus promises to be with His disciples (with us) always (Matthew 28:20), empowering us for the mission of advancing His kingdom.

As the commander empowers Joshua to conquer Canaan, Jesus Christ empowers us to overcome spiritual enemies through His victory on the cross. He fights for, sanctifies, and leads us to victory.

### **PRAY THAT GOD MAY:**

1. convict you when your loyalties or desires conflict with His higher purpose.
2. sanctify your heart and life, making you a fit dwelling place for His Spirit.
3. empower you to overcome sin, fear, and spiritual opposition, and lead you into the eternal rest He has secured.



**Soli Deo Gloria – to God alone be the glory!**  
**Rev. Luke Haisa**