05/29/2011 “Remembering the Good”

Please find Joshua chapter five.

Freedom isn’t Free by Kelly Strong

[Kelly wrote this in honor of his father, a United States Marine who served two tours in Vietnam].

I watched the flag pass by one day,
It fluttered in the breeze;
A young Marine saluted it,
And then he stood at ease.

I looked at him in uniform,
So young, so tall, so proud;
With hair cut square and eyes alert,
He'd stand out in any crowd.

I thought... how many men like him
Had fallen through the years?
How many died on foreign soil?
How many mothers' tears?

How many pilots' planes shot down
How many died at sea
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves
No, Freedom is not Free.

I heard the sound of Taps one night,
When everything was still;
I listened to the bugler play,
And felt a sudden chill;

I wondered just how many times
That Taps had meant "Amen"
When a flag had draped a coffin
Of a brother or a friend;

I thought of all the children,
Of the mothers and the wives,
Of fathers, sons and husbands.
With interrupted lives.

I thought about a graveyard
At the bottom of the sea,
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
No. Freedom is not Free!

Freedom isn’t Free by Kelly Strong

[Kelly wrote this in honor of his father, a United States Marine who served two tours in Vietnam].

I’d like to begin my words today with some reminders of Memorial Day. So I’ve got a few pictures and a few quotations to share with you before we go to the Bible.

“They gave everything and asked for little.” Anonymous

“Honor the warrior who has fought in the war”

“Honor the warrior, not the war” a quote by Robert L. Hanafin [Found on [www.veteranstoday.com](http://www.veteranstoday.com)].

“Freedom is not free. It must be defended.” Anonymous

Every Memorial Day we set aside a time to honor the noble men and women of the United States of America who gave their lives while serving in one of the branches of our military. So, today, I’d like to say a few words about the holiday we celebrate on the last Monday of May here in the United States. I’d like to remind you of what it means.

Now, the origin of our US Memorial Day is as follows: some believe it began in Columbus, Mississippi in April 1863 when a mother was seen in the local cemetery decorating the graves of her two sons who had died in the Civil War. After she had deposited her bouquet of flowers she walked over to the corner of the cemetery where there were two mounds of dirt and placed a third bouquet of flowers on them. Someone shouted to her. “What are you doing? Those graves are two Union soldiers.” Quietly, yet firmly, the mother responded “I know. I also know that somewhere in the North a mother or young wife mourns for them as we do ours.” [Found on [www.sermonnotebook.org](http://www.sermonnotebook.org) “I Tim. 3:16 “Every Day Is Memorial Day by Alan Carr”]

Every Memorial Day you’ll see people attending a parade. Some people place a wreath or a bouquet of flowers on a grave. And in Washington, D.C. every grave in Arlington National Cemetery is adorned with a small American Flag. In some places there are lists of names of those who gave their lives in the various wars we fought.

Folks, we owe every veteran a debt of gratitude for their sacrifice and service. So, it’s always in order to thank someone who has served or is serving our country.

Does anyone here remember what Abraham Lincoln said at Gettysburg, PA in 1863? Here’s what he said in his Gettysburg Address *“That from these honored dead, we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”*

Folks, if you’ve had a loved one who served in our US Military or if you’ve had a family member who has given his or her life in service for our country, isn’t it simply the right thing to do that you honor their service today?

Charles M. Province puts it this way.

“IT IS THE SOLDIER” by Charles M. Prince

It is the Soldier, not the minister
Who has given us freedom of religion.

It is the Soldier, not the reporter
Who has given us freedom of the press.

It is the Soldier, not the poet
Who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the Soldier, not the campus organizer
Who has given us freedom to protest.

It is the Soldier, not the lawyer
Who has given us the right to a fair trial.

It is the Soldier, not the politician
Who has given us the right to vote.

It is the Soldier who salutes the flag,
Who serves beneath the flag,

And whose coffin is draped by the flag,
Who allows us to fly and salute the flag.” (C. Prince)

On Memorial Day we remember those who died in all the wars Americans fought in; such as in the Two World Wars, those who died at Iwo Jima and Normandy and, of course, those who lost their lives at Pearl Harbor.

Can you imagine having a day to remember those who have died? That’s what Memorial Day is. It’s the day in the year when we remember the fallen.

American Soldiers who have died in our wars

Revolutionary War 25,324

Civil War 498,332

World War I 116,710

World War II 407,316

 -Normandy [D-day] 6,603

Korean War 54,546

Vietnam War 58,098

First Gulf War 293

Iraq War 4,424

Afghanistan 1,461

War with ISIS 553

[Found on [www.antiwar.com](http://www.antiwar.com) and [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com) and [www.glabalsecurity.org](http://www.glabalsecurity.org) and www.washingtonpost.com]

And tomorrow at 3:00 p.m. America calls for a moment of silence to remember and honor those who gave their lives for our nation. .

 Memorial Day calls us to remember those have given the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our country so that those of us who remain can live in freedom and prosperity. On Memorial Day we honor their sacrifice and their selflessness. They died on *our* behalf.

 Today we also recognize those dedicated Soldiers and Marines who are right now fighting in the Middle East and other places in order to keep the battle away from the shores of the United States of America. Some are still fighting pirates on the high seas for the same reason. And so far in 2018 there have been 11 ships hijacked by pirates.

And right now we have Sailors and our Coast Guard protecting our seas and airmen prepared and guarding our airspace. As well right now we also have soldiers on the Korean Peninsula as well as the men and women of the 1200 National Guard troops protecting our southern border.

Thornton Wilder wrote these words. *“The highest tribute to the dead is not grief but gratitude.”* Yes, it includes grief as we remember. But to show them honor we must be grateful for what they have done.

Today I’d like to say something about a soldier. And, of course I’d like to go back to the Bible to see what the LORD has to say about him.

A soldier is defined as one who leaves home and family; goes to a foreign land; stands against a very strong enemy; sacrifices his life for others so they can enjoy theirs. On Memorial Day he is remembered for his dedication and personal sacrifice.

Now, for a fair and honest question. Have you ever thought of Jesus as a soldier? Is that possible? He left His home in Heaven to go to a foreign land [earth] to stand against a very strong enemy and then He sacrificed His life for our deliverance and freedom. So, today, don’t we also remember His sacrifice?

There are many aspects of the Son of God that make Him Who He is. But can we say that Jesus is a man of war; that, in a word, He’s a Soldier?

Please open your Bible with me for the answer. Please find with me Joshua 5:13.

Joshua 5:13 *“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: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?*

*(14) And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. 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 met Jesus here at Jericho long before Jesus was ever born. Notice verse thirteen again; “a man … with his sword drawn in his hand…”

Notice again verse fourteen *“as captain of the host of the LORD am I come…”* Now, just who are the LORD’s hosts? Well, they are not the Israeli army, for sure. Instead they are the armies of Heaven. They are angels and this Person Joshua meets is the Captain of that army of angels. [I Kings 22:19; Ps. 148:1; 103:21].

And notice how Joshua, the General of the Army of Israel responds to this man. Joshua 5:14 *“And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, what saith my lord unto his servant?”*

And notice what the captain of the LORD’s host tells Joshua “the place whereon thou standest is holy.”

And just for one more word on who this is, look with me at Joshua chapter six and verse one.

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.”*

“The LORD” = Jesus Christ (Pre-incarnate)

Folks, it’s always best to see just what the Bible teaches on any subject. And throughout the entire Bible we see Jesus as more than a mere man and a mere teacher of Israel and Rabbi. He’s even more than a Soldier. He’s the Captain of the LORD’s armies; Captain over the entire multi-millions of angels.

So, is Jesus a soldier? Is the LORD a man of war? Yes, He is.

And here’s what we read in the words of Moses in the Book of Exodus. Exodus 15:3 *“The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.”*

You see, the LORD is never Who we think or want Him to be; but simply what the Bible tells us He is.

In Joshua we see Him as the Captain of the LORD’s host. Here in Exodus we see Him as quote *“a man of war.”*

Now, please turn with me to the last Book of the Bible. Here’s what we read at Revelation chapter nineteen.

Revelation 19:11 *“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. (12) His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*

*(13) And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. (14) And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

*(15) And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. (16) And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”*

Who is this One on the white horse in Heaven?

Rev. 19:11 – He’s Faithful and True.

Rev. 19:13 – He’s the Word of God.

Rev. 19:16 – He’s the King of Kings and LORD of LORDs.

Folks, your Savior and Master is also a Captain of the entire army of Heaven.

So, when I asked you earlier if it was possible that Jesus could be a soldier, would you have answered *“Yes.”*

But, He is much more than a soldier. He’s the Captain of the entire angelic realm. So, the answer is Yes, and much, much more. That’s Who Jesus is.

So, what does it mean that Jesus is both King and LORD?

First, it means that Jesus is sovereign.

And sovereignty means He is in control. Do you remember the question Pilate asked Jesus when He was tried before Him? Luke 23:1 *“And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. (2) And they began to accuse him, saying, we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. (3) And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.”*

Jesus, the Sovereign, permits Pilate, the human Governor, to make a decision about Him. Pilate decides to send Jesus back to Herod to let him deal with Him. So, whether it’s Pilate or Herod or you or me, the question is the same, “Is He LORD over my heart?”

Pilate, and so many like him, will say that Jesus is king; but it’s not from the heart. You see, our first calling is to love the LORD with our entire being, whole-heartedly, and gladly. Today, Memorial Day 2018, is He LORD over your heart?

First, He’s sovereign.

Second, it means that you and I can willingly surrender ourselves to Him. He’s the LORD. But He wants you to see Him as He is. If you’ve trusted Jesus for salvation, then He’s both your Savior and your King. Surrender is what matters now and surrender is what will matter when He returns.

As King of kings, all the kings of the earth will bow before Him. Philippians 2:9 *“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; (11) And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

Let me close today’s Memorial Day sermon with a response to a letter to the editor. This article was found in the Arizona Republic newspaper back in June 2005.

Luke AFB is west of Phoenix and is rapidly being surrounded by civilization that complains about the noise from the base and its planes, forgetting that it was there long before they were. A certain lieutenant colonel at Luke AFB deserves a big pat on the back. Apparently, an individual who lives somewhere near Luke AFB wrote the local paper com-plaining about a group of F-16s that disturbed his/her day at the mall. When that individual read the response from a Luke AFB officer, it must have stung quite a bit.

The complaint: “*Question of the day for Luke Air Force Base: Whom do we thank for the morning air show? Last Wednesday, at precisely 9:11 A.M, a tight formation of four F-16 jets made a low pass over Arrowhead Mall, contin-uing west over Bell Road at approximately 500 feet. Imagine our good fortune! Do the Tom Cruise-wannabes feel we need this wake-up call, or were they trying to impress the cashiers at Mervyn’s early bird special? Any response would be appreciated.”*

The response was this in the Arizona Republic newspaper. Regarding ‘A wake-up call from Luke’s jets’ On June 15, at precisely 9:12 a.m., a perfectly timed four-ship flyby of F-16s from the 63rd Fighter Squadron at Luke Air Force Base flew over the grave of Capt. Jeremy Fresques (pronounced Fresk). Capt. Fresques was an Air Force officer who was previously stationed at Luke Air Force Base and was killed in Iraq on May 30, Memorial Day (2005).

At 9 a. m. on June 15, his family and friends gathered at Sunland Memorial Park in Sun City to mourn the loss of a husband, son and friend. Based on the letter writer’s recount of the flyby, and because of the jet noise, I’m sure you didn’t hear the 21-gun salute, the playing of taps, or my words to the widow and parents of Capt. Fresques as I gave them their son’s flag on behalf of the President of the United States and all those veterans and servicemen and women who under-stand the sacrifices they have endured.

A four-ship flyby is a display of respect the Air Force gives to those who give their lives in defense of freedom. They fly straight and level over the gravesite and then, directly over the service, the No. 3 plane pulls away while the others fly straight ahead. Symbolically he’s headed for heaven. It’s the highest form of respect we can pay to a fallen airman. We are professional aviators and take our jobs seriously, and on June 15 what the letter writer witnessed was four officers lining up to pay their ultimate respects.

The letter writer asks, “*Whom do we thank for the morning air show? Because, you see, the 56th Fighter Wing will make the call for you, and forward your thanks to the widow and parents of Capt. Fresques, and thank them for you, for it was in their honor that my pilots flew the most honorable formation of their lives.”*

Signed, Lt. Col. Scott Pleus

And this tag line was added. *“Only two defining forces have ever offered to die for you….Jesus Christ and the American Soldier. One died for your soul, the other for your freedom.”*

 [Found on [www.thegunline.com](http://www.thegunline.com) on Sept. 18, 2009 and mostly verified on [www.snopescom](http://www.snopescom)].

The writer of that original letter complaining to the editor about the flyover wrote an apology to the Arizona Republic newspaper. And just for some further enlighten-ment, Capt. Jeremy Fresque was 26 years old when he died in Iraq and was subsequently buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

So, as a reminder of those who have given their lives on behalf of free Americans, we should show our utmost respect. And, because the LORD Jesus is King of Kings and LORD of Lords, we should humbly submit to His leadership every day He gives us to live in this world.

Prayer of Surrender.

“Father, In the name of Jesus, I am now willing to place my body, my soul, my spirit, and my entire life into Your hands. I now ask that You place me into Your perfect will and plan for my life.

Father, from this moment on, I choose to stay fully surrendered to You all the days of my life, and will allow You to lead and direct my life in the direction that You will want it to go in.

Thank you, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Shall we pray?

Hymn # 674 “Who Is On The LORD’s Side?”