

“Sanctification – the Work at Gilgal”

Joshua chapter 4-5

Scripture Ref: *Deut 30:4-6; John 8:34-36; Gal 4:7; Ex 33:2; Josh 1:9*

1. Last week the Israelites started crossing over the Jordan – **(SLIDE #2)**
2. This week – Sanctification – the Work at Gilgal **(SLIDE #3)**
 - a. The Memorial
 - b. The Circumcision
 - c. The Redemption
 - d. The Meeting with the Commander of the Lords army

#1 The Memorial – 12 Stones (SLIDE #4 – bullet 1)

4:1 And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying: 2 "Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, 3 and command them, saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.'"

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; 5 and Joshua said to them: "Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, 6 that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' 7 Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever."

8 And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the LORD had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. 9 Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there to this day.

10 So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. 11 Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people. 12 And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them. 13 About forty thousand prepared for war crossed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. 14 On that day the

LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, 16 "Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan." 17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan." 18 And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before.

3. **The setting – After the people had crossed, the priests are still standing in the riverbed with the Ark...**
 - a. **We're across – LETS GO GET EM!– RIGHT? Not so fast!**
 - b. **There is more preparation to be done...**
4. **Joshua tells the 12 men to go back into the riverbed and collect 12 stones**
 - a. **Carried the 12 stones to their new campground at Gilgal**
 - b. **Also, took 12 stones and placed them in the riverbed – perhaps when the waters receded they would be visible**
5. **What is the purpose?**

19 Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. 20 And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. 21 Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What are these stones?' 22 then you shall let your children know, saying, 'Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land'; 23 for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, 24 that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever."

6. **These stones were to be visual reminders for the nation – we have them in our lives... (SLIDE #4 – bullet 2)**
 - a. **Speed limit (SLIDE #5)**
 - b. **Cemetery at Normandy (SLIDE #6)**
 - c. **Rainbow (SLIDE #7)**
 - d. **Cross (SLIDE #8)**
7. **They are not to become objects of reverence themselves, but to remind us of something - namely WHO GOD IS. (SLIDE #9)**
 - a. **Sometimes we do not walk in faith and victory because we have forgotten the greatness of God**

- b. We forget the great things He has done... and so we lack faith in what God can and will do in the present.
 - c. Our kids can fail to walk in faith when we fail to tell them WHO God is and WHAT He has done!
8. Not only our kids – *“that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever”*
- a. So that all the world would know that there is a God in heaven who can work miracles, a God they should seek with all their heart!
9. Memorials are not for us to focus BACK to the “good days”...
- a. The memorial is a work that God has them to do to propel them FORWARD into what God is GOING TO DO!

#2 The Circumcision – Obedience (SLIDE #10)

5:1 So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who were on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until we had crossed over, that their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.

2 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." 3 So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. 4 And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. 5 For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised. 6 For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people who were men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD -- to whom the LORD swore that He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us,"a land flowing with milk and honey." 7 Then **Joshua circumcised their sons whom He raised up in their place**; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way. 8 So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that they stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed.

10. CIRCUMCISION – remember this is something that God gave to the Israelites to set them apart from all the other nations

- a. ...a powerful act of consecration to God. (bullet 1)
- b. In it, an Israelite said “I’m not like the other nations. I listen to God and do what He says I should do.” (bullet 2)
- c. It was stepping out in faithful obedience and identifying yourself as one of the LORD’s people.

d. It was renouncing the flesh and the world. (bullet 3)

e. It was dying to self and living to God (bullet 4)

Deut 30:4-6

5 Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. 6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. (bullet 5)

11. “New Generation” – The previous generation – all the males of fighting age – had died off in the desert because of unbelief

a. Now God has raised up a new generation in their place

b. IOW: The work of God is going to go forward – but whether or not WE are a part of that is OUR CHOICE! (bullet 6)

12. Now – the timing of this act of obedience is also interesting – AFTER they had crossed the river, they are sitting right beside Jericho.

a. After they were circumcised – you might say they were very vulnerable!

b. (Gen 34: Simeon & Levi incident – Dinah and Shechem)

c. This put the Israelites into a vulnerable position where they HAD to trust God!

9 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.

(bullet 7)

13. IOW – the shame of being a slave, the shame of being in bondage, shame of being lorded over

a. No longer slaves – but FREE...

John 8:34 "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Gal 4:7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

b. God called Israel to a place where they saw themselves as they were in Him.

c. By faith, they could see themselves as an obedient, trusting people, and to stop seeing themselves as they were in their slavery and bondage

d. this is the same work God wants to do in us, taking away the dishonor and shame of our previous sin and rebellion, and seeing ourselves as who we are in Jesus

14. How was the reproach rolled away?

- a. **By their radical trust and obedience to God, by taking the specific action He told them to!**

#3 The Passover – Redemption (SLIDE #11)

10 Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day.

15. As they came into the new land – once again they kept Passover, eating the produce of the land

16. There is a pattern that begins to emerge in this section...

- a. **Memorial – Awareness of WHO God is**
- b. **Circumcision – obedience to God**
- c. **Passover – Redemption by God**

17. The Israelites were to always live remembering that they were a people delivered, and remembering God's work of deliverance (Point 3 – bullet 1)

12 Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

(Point 3 – bullet 2)

18. Note that God had provided for them in the desert for 40 years –

- a. **But now that they were in the promised land – the source of provision changed**
- b. **We are seeing Gilgal as a place of transition...**
- c. **Just like we first become Christians – we depend on God for everything**
- d. **And then later in our walk – we reach a point where we have to step UP and step OUT**
- e. **The 'easy manna' is no longer there for us – God is still providing, but we enter into a new partnership of OBEDIENCE and even WORK!**

#4 The Meeting - The Commander of the Army of the LORD (Point 4)

13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?" 14 So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" 15 Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.

19. What we are presented with here is a *Christophany* - a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ **(Point 4 - bullet 1)**
- He is standing there – sword drawn – and Joshua asks him the logical question – “who are you for?”
 - The Commander does not answer Joshua’s question, but instead stated His identity – “Commander of the army of the LORD”
 - Should be no surprise... God promised to send Him...

Ex 33:2 And I will send My Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

Josh 1:9 Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

20. Two ways that we can know that this is God –
- Joshua worships Him – angels do not accept worship (Revelation 22:8)
 - He tells Joshua to remove his sandals – the exact words that God told Moses

21. THE BIG QUESTION – What happened at this meeting?

(Point 4 - bullet 2)

- ANSWER:** We don’t know! The next chapter begins with the campaign at Jericho...
- Whatever took place at this meeting between Joshua and Jesus is between Joshua and Jesus...
- But we do know that Joshua submitted himself fully to the Commander – Jesus **(Point 4 - bullet 3)**

22. This is the KEY – SUBMISSION TO GOD – looking at the pattern set by these two chapters... the pattern of our lives...

- The Memorial: Awareness of WHO God is
- The Circumcision: Obedience TO God
- The Redemption: Being set free from the bondage of sin and death
- Yet our lives are NOT COMPLETE until we have been conquered by God – until we have had our “Meeting with the Commander of the Lords army”
- And fell and worshipped at His feet!
- Whatever happens there – the breaking – what is given – what is taken away – its between you and God – Me and God
- But – before Jericho is conquered – it MUST HAPPEN!