

SONG: Victory in Jesus (I heard and old, old story); Our Great Saviour (Jesus what a Friend for sinners)

CLOSE: Give Me Thy Heart

## The New Beginning

Joshua Series: 7 of 18

**Text: Joshua 5:1-9**

**Aim: To show that a new start in life can be experienced in Jesus Christ and the benefits of that life is realised when we obey God's word – living it by faith.**

### INTRODUCTION:

#### A. *The 5th Chapter of Joshua focus on the events at a place called Gilgal.*

This is the place of the monuments. If you will recall, that after Israel marched across the Jordan in Chapter 3 on dry ground they were commanded by God in Chapter 4 to build a monument of 12 stones *in* the river – 4:9 symbolizing our ordinance of baptism. Another monument of 12 stones was to be erected at the rallying point *on* the bank of the Jordan at Gilgal –4:20 symbolizing our ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

**These 2 pillars of 12 stones that came from the riverbed were to be MEMORIAL STONES!**

#### B. *They were erected in order to visually jog Israel's memory. They were to...*

- **REMINDE** Israel NOT to forget how Jehovah brought them into the Promised Land – *They crossed over Jordan on dry ground!* (5:1)
- They were to be a **REMINDE**R of God's delivering power from their enemies and circumstances! This was very evident to their enemies. >> **READ 5:1**
- It was also to **REMINDE** them that the Lord is mighty and they were to "*fear the Lord your God for ever!*" >> **READ 4:24**

#### C. *These 2 pillars of stones as applied to the N.T. believer TYPIFY Baptism and the Lord's Supper.*

1. **Spiritually** they represented the believer's Spiritual Union with Christ! This is the day of **salvation**—that like the position of the hidden rocks in Jordan—can only be seen by God.
2. **Visually** they are to identify the believer's union with God's Agent for this age—the Local Church & it's mission.
3. **Practically** they identify the believer with the faith once delivered to the saints, which is to be enshrined in doctrine of the Bible-believing local church.
4. **FIGURATIVELY** these stones are to consecrate the day the believer decides to be a living **sacrifice** to the testimony of God's saving grace. This is the day he/she decides to live his/her life unselfishly for Him!

**>>This is a NEW BEGINNING! <<**

The **name Gilgal**, according to *verse 9*, means, "the rolling." God rolled away the reproach of Israel's bondage to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Israel endured hardships and slavery, existing in a downtrodden miserable condition as God's *Chosen People* in Egypt.

It is very likely the Egyptians taunted the Israelites—jeering them for their dependency on Egypt, Israel's failure to gain the Promised Land and God's supposed failure for not providing for them in their Promised Land.

**Their reproach**, as an oppressed nation, was rolled away by the fact that they now stood as freemen on soil that had been promised to their fathers. At this time, all those in Israel who deserved punishment were dead, all the uncircumcised were circumcised, the reproach and

misery of Egypt were put aside—Israel, as the community of God, was now to embark on a **New Life!**

Gilgal was to be an important place for Israel, a base of operations for their conquest of the land of Canaan. Often they would return to Gilgal after doing battle with the Canaanites to find physical and spiritual refreshment. It was to be Joshua's command post.

**Chapter 5 is a *NEW BEGINNING* for the nation!**

**They get another chance to live for Jehovah.**

**They get another chance to prove to the pagan nations that He is God!  
THAT JEHOVAH GOD IS THE GOD THIS WORLD SHOULD WORSHIP!**

Before Israel could go into battle there were some things that had to be set in order.

There were **TWO very important things** that Israel had to reinitialise, to re-establish what they had stopped observing while they were in the wilderness:

**\*\*One was *CIRCUMCISION* – \*\*The other was *the PASSOVER***

Both symbolised Israel's covenant relationship with their Creator God.

#### **D. PLEASE MAKE NOTE:**

**The “rolling away” of the “reproach,”  
and the restoration of the nation, and the success of taking the land  
was totally dependent upon Israel's **OBEDIENCE** and **COMMUNION** with God!**

Likewise, before you and I can enter into the battle for spiritual victory for our lives, we must make sure of our relationship with God AND that it is what it ought to be.

There are three things in this chapter that have real significance for us:

- 1<sup>st</sup> **Circumcision** – pictures for us of the crucifixion of our flesh —this is a must, if there is to be victorious Christian living in our life.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> **The Passover Feast** – pictures the Lord's Table—communing with the Lord Jesus Christ. Spiritual communion with our Lord requires the flesh to be put to death.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> **The Commander is Acknowledged** – There is a commander to be acknowledged – allegiance and loyalty is to be given – BEFORE the battle can begin, BEFORE conquest can begin. It is He and He alone, who will not only lead us, but who will also give us victory!

**Let's view these three things in their spiritual relationship to the believer.**

#### **I. CIRCUMCISION – PICTURES THE CRUCIFIXION OF THE FLESH.**

Not only was Gilgal a “*New Beginning*” for the Nation as a whole, but the Nation as a whole was a “*New Generation.*” Evidently, circumcision was not practised for 40 years because Israel broke their covenant with God by refusing to enter the promise land of Canaan—a promise that God gave them way back in Gen. 17:8.

>>TURN Rom. 2:25 cp. 1 Cor. 7:19.

#### **TAKE NOTE:**

The disobedient Israelites who had been **circumcised perished** in the wilderness, while the **uncircumcised children were miraculously preserved** and brought over Jordan.

**IF** this “new generation” were to be victorious in the Promised Land then **two things** were necessary: 1<sup>st</sup> – They had to restore their covenant relationship with God and

2<sup>nd</sup> – To do this, it was absolutely necessary for them to be circumcised.

- By circumcision, they were to BEAR the *visible token* of belonging to the Lord.

- By circumcision, they were RENEWING and REAFFIRMING their covenant relationship with Jehovah God!
- For the Jew circumcision SYMBOLISED he was in communion with his God and submitted to Him.

### A. *Let's look at circumcision as a Sign of A Covenant*

1. TURN >> **Romans 4:11** where circumcision was a sign given to Abraham as the covenant of promise.
  - a. Circumcision is the *distinctive mark* of the Abrahamic Covenant  
SEE >> **Gen. 17:7-11.**
  - b. At the time of the Exodus, circumcision was an *absolute requirement* for all males to who would keep the Passover TURN >> **Ex. 12:43, 44, 48.**
  - c. The *penalty* for breaking the Covenant was death! SEE >> **Gen. 17:14.**  
If a Jew wouldn't cut off his foreskin signifying he was one of God's chosen people, he would be cut off from the covenant relationship with God and face the same hopeless future of the Gentiles.
2. TURN >> **Josh. 5:3-5** Where it explains the last time the circumcision of the male populace occurred was when Israel came out of the Land of Egypt [*Ex. 12:43-50*].
  - a. For 40 years it was not observed. —It was not observed because of Israel's rebellion in disobedience to God – **Josh. 5:6-7.**
  - b. 40 years – it was a long time to waste, a long time of rebellion, and a long time of being out of fellowship with God.
3. **Vs. 2 – “Second time” — New Beginning!**
  - a. 40 yrs. there had been no circumcision. Now, a *new generation* had arisen and they had to undergo this ceremony as a sign of the restoration to the full enjoyment of their covenant blessing.
  - b. As long as the nation wandered in the desert, their enemies would ridicule them for not gaining the Promised Land. But now that they were in the land, *“the reproach”* was *“rolled away”* as signified with a renewing of the covenant.

### B. *Circumcision Signifies a Spiritual Identification with the Crucifixion of Christ – TURN >> Rom. 4:8-13*

1. TURN >> **Rom. 2:28-29** – True Jew is a **spiritual Jew**—one is NOT to forget that the true essence of being a spiritual Jew is submission to God, NOT just a symbol of national identity.
2. In speaking of Christ, Colossians 2 explains that this spiritual *“circumcision”* was done by the bloody crucifixion of Christ on Calvary – *again not by a man performing a religious ritual!* TURN >> – **Col. 2:11-14**
  - a. **NOTE – vs. 11** – the sinful reproach of the body of flesh is circumcised FROM the heart, which is made “New” in salvation.
  - b. The *“putting off the body of the sins of the flesh”* for the believer was decisively cut off by the knife of Christ's death and resurrection.
  - c. The words *“putting off”* (vs. 11) mean “a total breaking away from.”
    - 1) The break away from the old life of living according to the flesh occurs at the moment of salvation.
    - 2) This act of faith is symbolised when the believer is *“buried with Christ in baptism”* – **Vs.12.**

- d. **NOTE** also in vs. 12 that it is **by faith** we believe we are saved and **by faith** we believe we shall be resurrected.
- 1) It is *“through the FAITH of the OPERATION of God”* we are raised to a NEW LIFE! Our faith is not in *our work*, but in *our belief* in the finished work of God!
  - 2) This co-burial & co-resurrection of these verses is pictured in full water baptism. Only immersion can portray the believer’s burial with Christ, while his coming out of the water depicts the resurrection by the POWER OF GOD to live a New Life! **TURN >> Rom. 6:3-6**
3. Christ destroyed what people were at one time in Adam – sinful, fallen, and corrupt!
- a. Now *“in Christ,”* a believer is a *“New Creature”* a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17) who has a *New HEART* and a *New HEAD*.
  - b. **Christ** is that *New Head* and establishes for the believer a *New Authority* for his life —Not religious ritual, but the person of Christ—who is the *“Captain of the host of the Lord”* of **Joshua 5:14**.
  - c. Apostle Paul said, in **Gal. 2:20** – *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*
    - 1) The circumcision of the heart made without hands speaks of the execution of the sentence of death upon the flesh—Christ’s death became the spiritual circumcision for His people.
    - 2) When we trust in spiritual Egypt—the **house of bondage**—we fail to live by faith and resort to the old life with it’s reliance upon the flesh, therefore, once again, become slaves to sin and corruption.
      - a) Jesus in **John 8:32** – *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free!”*
      - b) **Romans 6:18** – *“Being then made free from sin, ye become the servant of righteousness.”*
      - c) **Gal. 5:1** – *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith that Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”*

**A sharp knife MUST be applied to the flesh and it’s lust if we expect to remain free!**

### **C. Circumcision Signifies the Crucifying of the Flesh**

**Gal. 5:24** – *“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”*

- **Fact** – Believers have a **death-to-sin POSITION** by the circumcision of Christ!
- **Another Fact** – The believer is to have a **death-to-sin EXPERIENCE**.
- For this is to be a reality in the life of every believer it must be appropriated by faith >> **Rom. 6:11-13**.
  1. In Ex. 6:12 Moses said to the Lord that the child of Israel haven’t listened to him so how was he going to get Pharaoh to listen to him since his **LIPS** were *“uncircumcised”* meaning – morally unclean.
  2. We all are instructed to cut away from the **HEART** that which would deter us in our consecration to live for God. **LOOK >> Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4, 9:26.**

3. Our **WHOLE LIFE** is to be cleaned-up. **Col. 3:5** – *“mortify”*—i.e. put to death the *“members”* of our flesh allowing the *“word of Christ”* to dwell in us (vs. 16).
4. The Jew was to *“put off”* a small portion of the flesh literally, but the believer is challenged to *“put off”* the body of the sins of the flesh.
  - a. There is **no experience of victory** in Christ *until* there is a literal putting off of sin.
  - b. **Before** Israel could begin to conquer the land of Canaan GOD wanted them to be pure in His sight.
  - c. There is **no conquering, no victory** in our lives, until we have dedicated our hearts to Christ and have determined to live holy, separated and godly lives for Him.

*The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing that has significance for us in our spiritual relationship is the...*

## II. **PASSOVER FEAST—IT IS A PICTURE OF LORD’S TABLE—OUR COMMUNING WITH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST – JOSHUA 5:10**

### A. **Passover was 1<sup>st</sup> observance was in Ex.12 while Israel was still in Egypt.**

1. Its observance has now been neglected for 40 years.
  - a. **Exodus 12:14** – *“And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.”*
  - b. The Passover was to be observed yearly, but the nation, for whatever reason, evidently failed to practice it!
2. The wilderness wandering is a picture of backsliding – backslidden 40-yrs!!
  - a. Backsliding is the result of disobedience.
  - b. If there is no crucifixion of the flesh in obedience to God’s commands there is no communing—**no victory!**

### B. **Communion was not possible if the nation was not going to be obedient in observing the Passover**

1. Likewise, baptism is to follow salvation for the N.T. believer—BUT if you can’t obey Him in baptism how can you commune with Him and the other obedient believers at the Lord’s Table?
2. Passover was a prophecy of Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary. **1 Cor. 5:7** we read, *“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”*
  - a. Purity was essential BEFORE the *Passover* could be eaten and it is also essential for one to partake of the Lord’s Supper >> **cp. 1 Cor. 5:6-8.**
    - 1) **Vs. 7 – Positionally** we are *“unleavened”!*
    - 2) **Experientially** we are to *“purge out ...the old leaven”!*
    - 3) **Vs. 8 – Practically** *“Let us keep the feast”*
      - a) The FEAST is **not** = Passover, but refers to the Lord’s Supper or the “love meal” that often preceded the Lord’s Supper.
      - b) One of the sins revealed by Paul to the Corinthian Church was a problem concerning the Lord’s Supper. The Corinthian believers, being *“unleavened”* contaminated the Supper with their old sinful leaven concerning their relationships with one another (1 Cor. 11:17-22).

- b. Passover for the Jew spoke of fellowship & communion with God picturing a spiritual relationship in worship. For Israel this was **re-instituted** at Gilgal.

**Before you and I can conquer our Canaans there MUST be a return to a faithful and systematic worship of Jesus Christ. This MUST be done three ways:**

- In the purity of our PERSON • In the purity of our DOCTRINE
- In the purity of our RELATIONSHIPS

### C. Application

**NOTICE** that in **Josh. 5:11-12**, after a massive 40 yrs. of faithful provision—not one day being missed that was promised by God—the **manna stopped!** << **READ** For the first year they were to eat off the bounty of the land that existed, but from then on, Israel would survive only by eating the produce they grew off the land.

1. When we are placed in situations beyond our control we are kept alive by the manifestations of God's mercy, being cared for like the birds of the air.
2. It is our *ordinary* duty to labour, to sow, to reap and to gather the fruit of our efforts into the barns. We are not to expect a heavenly supply when God has provided earthly means by which to sustain ourselves.
3. **Nevertheless**, God's grace is sufficient in all circumstances! He gives *special grace* when necessary, **BUT He expects US to avail of His ordinary provision of grace** obtained:
  - From the treasure's of Holy Scripture,
  - From the answer of faith in prayer,
  - From the coming to church to be taught, exhorted and admonished in righteousness.
  - From the uplifting of the heart in praise and the encouragement that comes from fellowshiping with God's people in worship.
4. Likewise, we are not to expect God to supernaturally win our battles, if we aren't willing to be in the fight—doing our part in putting forth the effort to realise the victory!

***The last thing that has significance in this portion of Scripture for us in our spiritual relationship is to see that...***

### III. THE COMMANDER NEEDED TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED – JOSH. 5:13-15

- At this point, it would seem obvious that the next step for the nation would be to start taking the land, beginning with Jericho.
- **BUT** before doing so, we see Joshua, evidently going out to reconnoitre the situation by himself. Very probably he was seeking for a proper place where to make his first attack; maybe he was hoping find out some avenue to the city, whereby he could enter more easily. It was very likely he was pondering how his army equipped with nothing more than slings, arrows, and spears were to overcome the seemingly invincible walls and fortifications of Jericho. It is very likely he was praying to God that he would direct him, and succeed him.
- Joshua knew the foe was inside Jericho and the battle had to be taken to them. This city had to fall; this battle **must be won**, if conquest of all the Land was to take place.
- Since Israel had crossed the Jordan, Israel's troops had no place to which they could retreat! They had only one choice but to go forward!

While reflecting on his situation, out of the corner of his eye he spies a Soldier brandishing a drawn sword! Instinctively, he challenges the Stranger, saying in effect, “Who are you are you friend or foe?”

Immediately the Reply came back “*Nay*” = Neither! “I’m not under your command nor anybody else’s, I’m come as Captain of the Host—I run the show!”

### A. Application

There is a commander to be acknowledged allegiance and loyalty to be given, BEFORE the battle can begin, BEFORE conquest can begin. It is He and He alone, who will not only lead us, but also give us victory!

The real question to be answered is who’s side are you fighting for?

The battle is the Lord’s are you in it with Him or against Him?

### B. The Captain of the Host is no other than God Himself in the person of the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Now this person is not a created angel, but the Son of God, who went along with the Israelites in this expedition, as their chief and captain.
2. The Angel of the Lord normally identifies a *theophany* – i.e. the appearance of God as a man. Also know as a *Christophany*, referring to the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. How do we know this is Angel is God?

**1<sup>st</sup>** Joshua *WORSHIPPED* the Captain of the host in 5:14. If the Angel were not God, Joshua would be breaking the Second Commandment. *“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God”* (Ex. 20:4-5).

**2<sup>nd</sup>** The Angel accepted Joshua’s adoration, which a created angel would dare not accept. **Rev. 22:8-9** – *“I John...fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things...he unto me, ‘See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.’”*

**3<sup>rd</sup>** The place was made holy by the Angel’s presence – **Josh. 5:15**. This is like a similar experience of Moses at the burning bush in Ex. 3:1-5. Both he and Joshua were directed to remove their shoes.

- 1) Joshua acknowledged the **Sanctity** of the place where he stood was made holy because of the holiness of the One in whose presence he stood.
- 2) The **Significance** of the act is that Israel’s human leader placed himself in a position of subordination to the Great Captain of the Lord’s Host.
- 3) By so doing, this **Supernaturally** undergirded the leadership of the Lord armies. Joshua was relieved to understand that he did not have to fight the battles alone!
- 4) The **Submission** of Joshua placed Israel under God’s rule and enabled them to become God’s instrument by which He would execute His judgement upon the inhabitants of the land.
- 5) **Similarly** – a victorious Christian life cannot be ours until we submit to the *“Captain of our Salvation”* [Heb. 2:10] letting Him take full charge.

**4<sup>th</sup>** The last reason we know the Angel is God, because the Captain of the host in 5:15 is identified as a Jehovah God Himself in 6:2. AMEN!

We see in **Josh. 5:14** when the Lord made his identity known, *“Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?”* By so doing he acknowledged the Angel as his Lord and Captain and in effect said, “I await Thy commands – and those commands I am ready to obey.”

## LET US BOW OUR HEADS

### A. *What Lessons Does this have For Us?*

- **God has given us an inheritance.**
  - a. This inheritance involves a victorious life over sin and over self—a blessed life in Jesus Christ.
  - b. We can experience victory over habits, victory over problems, victory over obstacles, if we only allow Jesus to be in charge.
  - c. He says, “The struggle is at hand; the conflict is about to begin; I have come to take charge, I have the power, I can give the victory. I will muster the supernatural forces of heaven to fight on your side. Will you endeavour to obey Me!”
- Our problem, like Israel is we fail to trust Him for the victory—we want to do things our own way.
  - a. Some maybe from the outset probably didn’t believe God was going to give the victory and never tried.
  - b. Some may start out shouting victory, until the battle actually starts and when they realise the enemy isn’t going to immediately fall down in surrender, they give up.
  - c. Others, don’t want to make the effort at all, they are like the people who are content in their sin. One really wonders about whose side they are really on.
- We often revert to human solutions in fighting our battles. We want to form a committee or have a discussion etc.
- All we have to do is to realise our victory is in submitting to God, obeying His Word, and like Joshua, start walking around Jericho.

### B. *To obtain our inheritance:*

1. God requires us to obey Him.
2. God requires us be in communion with Him.
3. God requires us crucify the flesh.

**The QUESTION is “Are you trusting your God—the Lord of Hosts—for the victory**

12 May `91 - Lifegate BC - Dublin

Sept. 22, `91 - Galway Bay BF - Galway

29 Mar. 29 `09, Eve - River Valley BC - Leixlip, Co. Kildare

Sept. 15, `91 - Calvary BF - Cork

6 Oct. `02 - River Valley BC - Leixlip, Co. Kildare

18 May `14 - RVBC - Leixlip, Co. Kildare