

Joshua

The LORD is Salvation

Chapter 5:1-12 *The Circumcision at Gilgal*

5:1 As prophesied ^{Exodus 15:15}, the kings of the Amorites and the Canaanites became afraid, because they had heard how God stopped the flow of the Jordan so Israel could cross over. This verse was not meant to indicate the Amorite and Canaanite kings would not put up a fight; its purpose was to show the LORD already working to prepare the land for the Israelite victories.

The Jordan River crossing was even a greater miracle because it was at flood stage ^{Joshua 3:15}.

From a military perspective (human wisdom), these circumstances indicated this was prime time to begin the land takeover, but in spiritual warfare, appropriate preparation is critical.

5:2-3 With the crossing completed, the LORD commanded Joshua to circumcise the Israelites at a place called *Gilbeath Haaraloth* (appropriately named: the Hill of Foreskins). Even though the people were at risk, because of the weakened state of the men, they were not in danger: Why?

Circumcision was set up as a sign of the covenant between YHWH and His people ^{Genesis 17:9-14}.

Circumcisions are a sign of both the Old Covenant ^{Acts 7:8} & the New Covenant ^{Colossians 2:11-12}.

Salvation ("righteousness") must predate circumcision ^{Romans 4:11}, similar to preceding baptism, because these actions are outward signs of what has already occurred inwardly in a person.

The sons of Jacob had previously used the weakened state of the Shechemites following their circumcisions to gain their revenge for the defiling of their sister, Dinah. ^{Genesis 34:24-29}

Christian warriors are also called to step out in faith and risk their lives in the LORD's service. For example, Paul and Barnabas ^{Acts 15:25-26} and Epaphroditus ^{Philippians 2:25-30}.

5:4-8 Circumcisions were required, because none were done in the 40 years since leaving Egypt, and the new generation needed this sign of the covenant of God with Abraham ^{Genesis 17:9-14}

before starting the campaign to complete the plan for the LORD to give the Israelites the land.

The entire nation remained encamped at Gilgal until all the men had healed completely.

This must have taken a long time, because Joshua had to be sure all males were circumcised (600,000+ men 20 years old and older ^{Numbers 26:51}, as well as all those younger than 20).

When Moses headed from Midian to Egypt, the LORD was going to kill Moses until Zipporah circumcised him ^{Exodus 4:24-26}, which prepared him to perform God's plan for Israel ^{Exodus 3:8}.

5:9 The LORD's deliverance of Israel from Egypt and into the Promised Land, and the people's reconnection with Him through the circumcisions resulted in the "rolling away" of the ridicule ("reproach"/disgrace ⇒ slavery/oppression) inflicted onto Israel by the Egyptians ^{Exodus 1:8-14}.

Joshua F: 5

The word Gilgal (where the Israelites were encamped) sounds like the Hebrew word for "roll".

Gilgal became the basecamp for Joshua during their military campaign ^{Joshua 9:6, 10:6,15,43, 14:6} but later, Hosea condemned people for worshiping at Gilgal (not Jerusalem) ^{Hosea 4:15, 9:15, 12:11}.

There are Christian parallels with these circumstances: through salvation ^{Galatians 5:5-6}, Christians are no longer world citizens (aliens ^{Ephesians 2:19}), but heavenly citizens ^{Philippians 3:20}.

5:10 On the fourteenth day of Nisan (or Abib ^{Exodus 13:4}), the lambs that were picked out 4 days earlier ^{Joshua 4:19} were slaughtered and eaten in celebration of the Passover ^{Exodus 12:5-11}.

Even though it had been forty years since they left Egypt, it was only the second observance of Passover, the first being at the foot of Mt. Sinai ^{Numbers 9:1-5}, one year after the actual Passover.

Joshua performed the circumcisions & celebrated Passover in order for the Israelites to be prepared for war. In the same way, Christians are to prepare ^{2 Corinthians 10:3-6, Ephesians 6:10-18} for the spiritual warfare that will occur when they are obedient to trust in & serve the LORD.

5:11-12 The LORD's supernatural provision of manna lasted for forty years ^{Exodus 16:35}, but it ended just as miraculously as it had started ^{Exodus 16:4-5}, because, beginning the following day, the nation of Israel enjoyed the bounty of the food from the Promised Land ^{v.6, Deuteronomy 28:1-12}.

When God stopped the manna, He did not abandon the Israelites, but change how He would provide for them. The same is true for Christians: God will always meet needs ^{Philippians 4:19}

The LORD told Moses when Israel eats in the PL, they must offer some to Him. ^{Numbers 15:17-18}

Chapter 5:13-15 *The Commander of the Army of the LORD (Central Campaign)*

5:13 While Joshua was scouting near Jericho, he spotted a "man" with a drawn sword (indicating battle readiness). Being a good warrior leader, Joshua asked the man whose side he was on. Joshua's question was similar to the U.S. Military's inquiry: "Who goes there: Friend or Foe."

5:14-15 Curiously, the man said "neither". The "man" also said He was the commander of the LORD's army, and Joshua immediately "fell facedown" in worship. Finally, the commander quoted the voice from the burning bush who spoke to Moses some forty years prior:

"Take off your sandals, for the place you are standing is holy" ^{Exodus 3:5}.

Who was the "man" (the "commander of the Lord's army")? He was a preincarnate appearance of Jesus (the Angel of the LORD ^{Genesis 22:15-18, 2 Kings 1:3}, also referred to as a Christophany).

This conclusion is based on: (1) Jesus replied He was on "neither" side, because He is always on His own side, and it is up to people to be on His side. (2) Joshua recognized Him right away and worshipped Him. Had the commander been an ordinary angel, the angel would have rebuked the worship ^{Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9}. and (3) Jesus repeated the words He spoke to

Joshua F: 5

Moses at the burning bush (which Joshua would have known from his association with Moses).
The presence of Jesus makes any place "holy".