

Joshua 5

Israel Is Circumcised

Now it came about when all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard how the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the sons of Israel until they had crossed, that their hearts melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the sons of Israel.

2 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make for yourself flint knives and circumcise again the sons of Israel the second time." 3 So Joshua made himself flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.

4 This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, died in the wilderness along the way after they came out of Egypt. 5 For all the people who came out were circumcised, but all the people who were born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

6 For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, that is, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished because they did not listen to the voice of the LORD, to whom the LORD had sworn that He would not let them see the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

7 So their children whom He raised up in their place, Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them along the way.

8 Now when they had finished circumcising all the nation, they remained in their places in the camp until they recovered. 9 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the shame of Egypt from you." So the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day

10 While the sons of Israel camped at Gilgal they celebrated the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the desert plains of Jericho. 11 Then on the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and roasted grain.

12 And the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten some of the produce of the land, so that the sons of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan during that year.

13 Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, he raised his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing 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 enemies?"

14 He said, "No; rather I have come now as captain of the army of the LORD." And Joshua fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down, and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?" 15 And the captain of the LORD'S army said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

- What questions were provoked within you?
- Did anything confuse you?
- Did anything move you emotionally?
- Did God instruct you to do something?
- Did you gain any insight into God's character

Paul's observations and insights

1. God's enemies in the land had now become Israel's enemy too.
2. Why were they circumcised in the first place?
3. Why couldn't God let His people exist, alongside His enemies, in the land of Canaan?
4. The news of Israel's success drained the courage out of Gods enemies.
5. Have you ever experienced strength just drain out from within you?
6. How can any Nation expect to fight against almighty God and win?
7. How do you manage the pending reality of your destruction?
8. What does the term, 'they had no spirit left within them' mean?
9. As God spoke to Moses, so He was now speaking to Joshua.
10. The name of Joshua means saviour.
11. Why circumcise the men of Israel this time?
12. It's one thing to circumcise a newborn baby but doing it to grown men must have been quite uncomfortable!
13. The previous circumcised generation all died in the wilderness through their lack of obedience.
14. They had, in their rebellion, neglected the circumcision of their children in the wilderness.
15. Why do God's people refuse to listen to the voice of God? Do they not realise they are God's people?
16. Can you imagine living in the desert for forty years, eating manna and quail, drinking

water from a rock?

17. The forty-year desert experience was the price they paid for their rebellion!
18. This new generation had stepped back into obedience to the Lord God almighty.
19. What does the term, 'a land flowing with milk and honey', mean to you?
20. Part of the circumcision process was a period of recovery time.
21. How does Joshua feel, listening to the Lord declare that God had rolled away the shame and reproach of Israel?
22. What does Gilgal mean? The circle of stones.
23. The next part of Israel's obedience was to celebrate the Passover, something they had neglected.
24. Can you imagine being there, celebrating the Passover on the desert plains of Jericho?
25. What was the significance of eating the produce of the land?
26. Why did the manna stop coming?
27. Out walking, Joshua encountered a soldier, swinging a sword, armed and ready for battle.
28. I love the question Joshua puts to the soldier, 'are you for us or against us?'
29. The soldier simply says, 'no'!
30. Would Joshua had seen the man with the sword if he hadn't raised his eyes?
31. Why did the soldier not say to Joshua, 'I am for Israel'?
32. As captain of the army of the Lord, we can see this soldier is important.
33. Why did Joshua fall down on his face and convey such humility?
34. Joshua asked the soldier, 'do you have anything to say to me from the Lord?'
35. Great men and women have their great life encounters with God.
36. What does the removal of the sandals mean to you.
37. What is it to be standing on holy ground?
38. It's an impressive thing to see Joshua, the Son of Nun, fearless - yet on his knees.