

Refuge City Church — July 18, 2021

“Reasons to Rejoice” [Joshua 5]

Introduction

- The Jordan River has been crossed. Memorials and Monuments set up to remember and rejoice at the occasion. God has fulfilled His promise to His people.
- TODAY: we look at **four** more reasons to rejoice prior to the initiation of conquest.

Joshua 5

1 As soon as 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 that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel.

- For those who heard of what God did for His people, their hearts melted. They grew faint & fearful.
 - If it was a zealous fear of what the God of the Israelites could do, they could have followed suit with a ‘Rahab-like’ mindset.
 - This also could have been an excellent time for the Israelite army to attack.
 - So why not take advantage for the timing?! [militarily/strategically perfect]
 - God’s timing is better, and obedience to His commands take precedence over our plans/ideas.
 - **QUOTE:** “...divine plans are not made according to human strategy.” [Carl Armerding]
- God knew there were a few things that needed to take place prior to Joshua and the army launching their assault.

Reason to Rejoice #1: Circumcision

2 At that time the Lord said to Joshua, “Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time.” **3** So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.

4 And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people who came out of Egypt, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way after they had come out of Egypt.

5 Though all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people who were born on the way in the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised. **6** For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished, because they did not obey the voice of the Lord; the Lord swore to them that he would not let them see the land that the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey. **7** So it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised. For they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.

8 When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. **9** And the Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” And so the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

- According to **Genesis 17**

- **1** When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, **2** that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.
- **7** And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an *everlasting* covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. **8** And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.
- **10** This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.
- **14** Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.
- A physical, eternal reminder of faith in God.
- A symbolic gesture of salvation, and that one belongs to God’s family.
- A constant reminder of one’s commitment to His Lordship and trust in Him.
- Circumcision was a common custom by a lot of nations outside of Israel.
 - But for Israel, it would become a memorial of God’s salvation, faithfulness, and their obedience.
- **APPLICATION**
 - **Colossians 2:11-12**, “In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”
 - **Galatians 5:6**, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.”
 - Since we are no longer under the Mosaic Law, but under the blood of Christ, circumcision is no longer seen as a memorial covenant between humanity and God.
 - **Romans 4:9-11**, “Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well,”
 - **Romans 10:4**, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”
 - We could connect it with Baptism, which provides a similar outward, physical action that is representative of inner redemption.
 - You could deny baptism, as some feel it lumps them in to *legalistic religious practice* by doing something outwardly to prove salvation.
 - Doing so does not deny you salvation in Jesus’ name.
 - But why deny what God has properly ordained for us to do?
 - Obedience to God supersedes commitment to human preference.

Reason to Rejoice #2: Passover

10 While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho.

- **Joshua 1:7**, “Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.”
- **Exodus 12:48**, “...no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.”
- **REMINDER:** Passover was recognized every year, and served as a reminder of God’s salvation from slavery to Egypt.
- So how do we do this today in the church? **[Communion]**
 - **QUOTE:** “...let it ever be borne in mind that as no uncircumcised person was permitted to partake of the Passover, so none who are living in willful sin can feed on the flesh and blood which were given for the life of the world. There must be a Gilgal before there can be a Passover in the deepest and fullest sense.” [F.B. Meyer]
 - This is why I take extreme care to explain every month that those who have not accepted God’s free gift of salvation should not partake in communion.
 - **1 Corinthians 11:28**, “Let a person examine himself...”

Reason to Rejoice #3: Provision

11 And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. **12** And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

- God’s promise had been fulfilled, and they were now able to eat the food of the land.
 - **Exodus 3:8**, “and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey...”
- Manna was no longer needed, and therefore ceased.
- **APPLICATION:** There may be seasons where God provides little, so you are then more dependent upon Him for your provision.
 - So don’t see your need as a lack of God’s presence in your life, or a lack of His mercy.
 - See those moments as opportunities to fall further in to His arms of spiritual provision. He always provides, but what you may lack in the physical, God will supply abundantly in the spiritual. Take advantage!
 - **Matthew 7:7**, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”

Reason to Rejoice #4: God’s Sovereignty!

13 When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?” **14** And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the Lord. Now I have 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** And the commander of the Lord’s army said to Joshua, “Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.

- Let there be no confusion. Joshua was in the very presence of God!
 - He falls to worship. He calls him 'lord'. He removes his shoes as he's on holy ground. [same word given to Moses at the burning bush; Exodus 3:5]
- We could even surmise that Joshua was in the very presence of Jesus!
 - Jesus always was!
 - **Micah 5:2**, "...from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."
 - Jesus is, and is greater than angels!
 - **Matthew 26:53**, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?"
 - **Hebrews 1:13**, "And to which of the angels has he ever said, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?'"
 - Jesus is to come!
 - **Revelation 19:11, 14-15**, "Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty."
- This was a "burning bush" moment for Joshua.
- It was an opportunity for him to once again fall under the authority of his true Commander.
- **APPLICATION**
 - It is important that we understand that every battle, and every victory belongs to the Lord!
 - He will use us, but ultimately, it is His plans that prevail.
 - **Proverbs 19:21**, "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand."
 - **Proverbs 21:1**, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart."
 - Do you need to be reminded, and maybe humbled, that your life falls under the authority of God?

CONCLUSION

- We all need a 'Gilgal' in our life.
 - A place of refuge, rest, and remembrance of who God is to us. His faithfulness. His provision. His sovereignty over our lives.
 - A place we go to receive from and remember Him.
 - A place where obedience and submission to His will is recognized, learned, and pursued.
- What circumcision was for the Israelites, baptism is for us today.
- What Passover was, communion is for us today.
- What Gilgal was, the Church is for us today.