

## ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE AND MOVE ON LESSON 4

**Series Subject: Accept the Challenge and Move On!**

**Lesson 4: Conquest in Focus/Necessities Josh. 5:1-15**

**Today's Study: Josh. 5:1-15**

1. Covenant of Circumcision with God Renewed Vv. 2-9
2. Celebrating the Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread Vv. 10-12
3. Captain of God's Army Vv. 13-15

**Time is available only for a brief discussion of review questions from previous lesson.**

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. A Brief Review of Lesson 3 Part B

- (a) Lesson 3, we entitled "Campaign Canaan/Beachhead Established", has been covered in Joshua Chapters 3 and 4.
- (b) Joshua 4 repeats the crossing of the Jordan River with some additional details.
- (c) Four main points were discussed in Josh. 4 (Lesson 3 Part B).

#### (1) Commemoration of Faith—Cairn #1 Erected (Josh. 4:1-9)

- By going across Jordan, they were now in the Promise Land for which they long desired. However, this was not the end of their conquest of Canaan but the beginning because they had battles to be fought and to continue trusting God.
- Joshua erected a memorial (cairn) in the middle of Jordan where the priests stood (v. 9).
  - A "cairn" is a heap of stones piled up as a landmark or a memorial.
  - Joshua, by erecting this memorial (Josh. 4:9), gave a strong personal witness to God's presence and power.

#### (2) Crossing of the Jordan River (Josh. 4:10-14)

*We will only repeat four pointers . . . please review the lesson if necessary.*

- The Priest were Obediently Faithful (v. 10).
- The People were Obediently Faithful (v. 11).
- The East Jordan Tribes were obediently Faithful (Vv. 12-13).
- Joshua was Obediently Faithful (v. 14).

*Please review the emphasis on faith . . . page 17 (Lesson 3 Part B).*

#### (3) Continued Flow of Jordan (Josh. 4:15-18)

- Immediately after the priests were on the west side of Jordan, the water resumed its normal flow to its flooded level (Josh. 4:18).

- The entire process of the Jordan crossing was a strong testimony that this was only possible by the miraculous power of God!!

(4) **Camping at Gilgal—Cairn #2 Erected (Josh. 4:19-24)**

- Israel pitched camp in the eastern border of Jericho (v. 19)
- The memorial at Gilgal served as a witness of the miraculous power of God demonstrated on behalf of His people.
- The memorial served as a witness:
  - To inform **future generations** of the power and continued presence of God among His people, acting on their behalf (Josh. 4:20-23)
  - The crossing of the Jordan was possible only because of God's power and served as a witness to **all nations** (Josh. 4:24).

2. **Worldwide Outreach Josh. 4:19-5:1**

*This will include some repetition because we are focusing on Josh. 4:19-5:1.*

(a) **New Beginning**

(1) The old life of the Israelites had been a defeated life:

- It was a life of enslavement, oppression, persecution and suffering (Ex. 1:8-22).
- It was a life of complaining, grumbling, murmuring and unbelief (Ex. 15:22-27; 16:1-36; 17:1-7).
- It was a life of distrust and unbelief, of craving and lusting (Num. 11:1-35; 12:1-16).
- It was a life of negative and defeated, fearful unbelieving, of rejecting and turning away from God (Num. 13:1-14:45)
- It was a life of worldliness, of sexual immorality and intermarriage and engaging in idol worship (Num. 25:1-16).

(2) **Crossing the Jordan is a picture of crossing over from the old life to a new life, from a defeated life to a victorious life.**

- For Israel, a new chapter had started in their history; they could now march from victory to victory over all enemies that confronted them.
- While they left the negative past behind them, the twelve stones taken from the Jordan River were intended to arouse questions from curious minds; these questions would lead to that which they should never forget.
  - The answer to these questions as it relates to the memorial (Josh. 4:6-8, 20-23) would remind them of the supernatural work of God among His people.
  - **Josh. 4:23 NKJV**  
 “For the Lord, your God dried up the waters of Jordan before you until you had crossed . . . “

(b) The primary goal of these teaching was intended **for Israel and “all the people of the earth”** (Josh. 4:24).

- (1) God’s grace revealed to Israel was for the specific purpose of enlightening the whole world.
- God intended that Israel would be a depository and distributor of divine revelation.
  - Their history in Egypt, the wilderness, crossing the Jordan River, etc. can never become obsolete; God had an intended purpose of using it all to His glory.
  - It is from Israel would the **Word** that “became flesh ... dwelt among us” (John 1:14 NKJV), “that **whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life**” (John 3:16 NKJV).
  - Note the universal outreach of God’s love, mercy and grace.
    - **John 3:16 Amplified Bible**  
“For God so greatly love and dearly prized **the world** that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son.”
    - See also Isa. 55:1-12, NB Vv. 7-12; 1 Tim. 2:14; 1 John 4:9-10.

(c) As a result of the Red Sea and Jordan experiences there are three fundamental reasons Israel always fear (reverence) God; these facts would also be made evident to all nations.

- (1) Israel witnessed the demonstration of the omnipotence of God.
- (2) They knew that God would use His omnipotence on behalf of those who obeyed Him.
- (3) It was known that God communicated His will through human leaders.

(d) **Israel’s crossing of the Jordan River was possible because of the abiding presence of God with them which resulted in far-reaching consequences.**

- (1) For Israel it meant a safe passage over the flooded Jordan River; this established fact was obvious, especially due to the conditions of the river at the time they crossed and the number of people with livestock, etc., this was the work of God!
- (2) For the Amorites and Canaanites, it resulted in a state of paralyzing terror.
 

**Josh. 5:1 Amplified Bible**  
“... their hearts melted and there was no spirit in them anymore because of the Israelites.”
- (3) The dread of God working with and for His people had long demoralized and incapacitated the enemy.
  - Rahab had earlier testified of the terrified Canaanites (Josh. 2:8-11).
  - God promised that other nations would be in dread because of His abiding presence with Israel (Deut. 2:25).

- (4) For cities on the west side of Jordan, the river may have served to help deter enemies who were on the east side of Jordan, especially during the flooded period in April and May.
- With Israel's successful crossing the Canaanites realized the peril that awaited them.
  - Note the following quote:  
**"Wicked men were thus forced to recognize that their strongest defenses were worthless when used in opposition to God."**
  - **Deut. 2:25 NKJV**  
"This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you."
- (5) God is love, His mercy and grace are infinite, but He is also a God of justice. *Time would not allow, providing we have discussed this subject in other lessons, for now please note the following references:*
- **John 3:36 NKJV**  
 "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."
  - The result of rejecting God means experiencing His wrath: 2 Kings 22:13; Rom. 1:18; etc.
  - The future of the wicked is devastating Mal. 4:1, Matt. 3:12; 1 Thess. 5:3.
  - **The Good News is the gate is still ajar for the willing!!** Isa. 55:6-13, NB Vv. 6-7; 2 Cor. 6:2; etc.
- (e) **Two Practical Lessons (Briefly Noted)**
- (1) **Forsaking the old corrupted way! Renounce the deeds of darkness!!**
- The Israelites had to cross the Jordan River to live a new and victorious life before God.
    - Symbolically, we must **cross over the Jordan River.**
      - We must **"put off the old man."** We must turn from and leave behind the old life of sin and shame.
      - See Rom. 6:6; Eph. 2:2; 4:22; Col. 3:9, 18; 1 Peter 1:9; etc.
    - We are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:37); however, we can conquer and live victoriously only through Him!! We must abide **in Him!!** (John 15:1-8; etc.).
  - Going across Jordan also means **"putting on the new man."**
    - We must make new beginnings; it is a new life in Jesus Christ!!
      - We must now daily pursue a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:23-24).
      - We must be renewed in the spirit of our minds (Rom. 12:1-2; etc.) and begin to walk in the promises of God, conquering all that try to keep us out of the kingdom of heaven (Gal. 2:20; etc.)
    - See Luke 1:74; Rom. 6:4-7, 11-12; 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 7:1; Col. 3:10

- (2) Live a life of commitment and consistency, irrespective of any challenge.
- When our spiritual enemies see that we are confidentially trusting God and determined to move forward irrespective of false accusations, it will discourage their attacks (Titus 2:8; 1 Peter 2:15; 3:16; etc.). Oh! Beloved, let us put on the whole armor of God and stand (Eph. 6:10-18).
  - Note also:  
**Rom. 8:31 Amplified Bible**  
 “What then shall we say to [all] this? If God is for us, who [can be] against us? [Who can be our foe if God is on our side?] [Ps. 118:6].”
  - Read again Josh. 5:1; Deut. 2:25.

### Josh. 5:2. 8-15 KJV

“At that time, the Lord said unto Joshua, make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. . . . .

And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And the LORD said unto Joshua, ‘This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.’ Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat old corn of the land on the morrow after the pass over, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna anymore; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, there stood a man over him with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am, I come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD’s host said unto Joshua, ‘Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereof thou standest is holy.’ And Joshua did so.”

### A. Covenant of Circumcision with God Renewed Josh. 5:2-9

#### 1. Covenant Renewed (Josh. 5:2)

- (a) From the time Israel displayed outright unbelief and rebellion at Kadesh-barnea (Num. 13:31-14:35), the **symbol of the covenant** had been out of place.
- (b) The generation that doubted and rebelled passed away in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb (Num. 32:10-13; Heb. 3:16-19). **Now again God had a generation of people who had demonstrated belief in Him and obedience to Him.**

- (1) For this new generation, the rite of circumcision becomes meaningful.
  - God was regarding them as His people.
  - Beloved, the covenant with God was (is) intended for the obedient.
- (2) To accept the **sign of the covenant** but break the contract meant that such people had no meaningful relationship with God (See Josh. 5:6).
  - **“Sign of the covenant” or “symbol of the covenant.”**
  - Jewish men were circumcised as a symbol of the covenant (*Briefly noted below: “Conditions on which Established”*).
- (c) Two primary reasons for this multitude’s circumcision (Vv. 4-9)
  - (1) **First**, there was a need for the restoration of the **“sign”** of commitment, their covenant relation with God (Josh. 5:4-8)
    - As noted above the first generation of Israelites, that came out of Egypt, died in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb (Num. 32:10-13; Heb. 3:16-18).
      - They were circumcised, but not their children (See Josh. 5:4-5).
      - They died in the wilderness wandering because their awful sin had broken their covenant with God (Josh. 5:6; Heb. 3:17)
      - Their children were not circumcised because of their parent’s transgressions.
      - As a result, that rebellious generation was barred from entering the Promised Land (Josh. 5:6; Heb. 3:18-19).
    - Now we have a second generation of Israelites (that came out of Egypt) standing in the Promised Land.
      - They had been raised up by God in their parent’s place.
      - They were now to recommit their lives to God and renew their covenant with Him.
      - **All the Israelites male were circumcised, thus identifying them as true followers of God and true inheritors of the Promised Land.**
  - (2) **Second**, their circumcision “rolled away the reproach of Egypt” (Josh 5:9).
    - They were now the free-born children of God!
      - No more in bondage! No more chains!! No more cruel/merciless task masters!!
      - Now they were in the Promised Land, therefore, their circumcision confirmed they belong to God not to Egypt.
    - Standing there in the Promised Land authenticates the reality that the reproach was indeed removed!!

## 2. Conditions on Which Established (The Covenant)

- (a) God first gave the circumcision to Abraham (Abram) as a **sign of the covenant** God established with him and his descendants.

(1) See Gen. 17, carefully note Vv. 9-14

(2) **Gen. 17:11 NKJV**

“And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a **sign of the covenant between Me and you.**”

(b) Under the old covenant (Gen. 17) circumcision marked every male as a child of Abraham and servant of the Lord God.

(1) Circumcision qualified them to partake of the blessings of the covenant.

(2) Circumcision was a sign and seal of God’s covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 17:11 ... noted above).

- **It was a sign or mark that they had accepted God’s covenant and God Himself as their Lord!**

- It was a seal of righteousness which they had by faith (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:11).

- It was to remind the people of God’s promises to them and their own personal obligation to the covenant.

(3) Circumcision was also indicative of their commitment and unswerving obedience to the covenant with God.

### 3. Central Focus

*Why was this event of the circumcision a matter of top priority? We noted the essential factors of renewing the covenant but there was yet another very important matter, at least it was one of several steps of **“Spiritual Preparation.”***

(a) This matter of “Spiritual Preparation” was noted in Lesson 3 Part A, pages 10-13, as well as throughout this lesson. **In Lesson 3 Part A we noted:**

(1) The people were commanded to sanctify themselves (Josh. 3:5).

(2) By setting themselves apart they would be more in-tuned with God and be more open and ready to observe, appreciate and relate to the great wonders God was about to do among them (Josh. 3:5).

(b) Even though God’s people had invaded the Promised Land (initially), the spiritual preparation of circumcision, The Passover and The Feast of Unleavened Bread were necessary before they begin the actual conquest.

(c) **Joshua’s “Central Focus” was on God!!**

(1) He demonstrated that while an effective military strategy was most essential it took second place.

- Joshua’s loyalty to the will of God was first and foremost.

- Such loyalty to God was evident through his entire period of leadership and serves as an outstanding example for us as well!!

➤ **Matt. 6:33 KJV**

“But seek ye **first** the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things will be added unto you.”

- This was practically demonstrated and exemplified by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:36-46, NB Vv. 39, 42, 44).

(2) The military challenge while Israel was healing after the circumcision.

- Joshua was aware that the act of circumcision could implicate (compromise, ensnare, expose, etc.) his entire army before the enemies.
- As a result of such potential danger to his army, it should be noted that Joshua's act was **one of devotion and completely yielding to spiritual interest** and is especially significant and arresting.
- Amidst the possible adverse challenges to his army, Joshua knew that the reproach of Egypt was experienced only because of disobedience to God's known will.
  - He was glad that those days of the reproach of Egypt were behind him and he would press forward in loyalty to God.
  - It must be remembered that disobedience and rebellion always bring sorrow and regret.
    - "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23 KJV)
    - "But the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits "(Dan. 11:32b NKJV).
    - Here is a thought that we all need to remember: **"No one ever lose anything of lasting value when he seeks "first the kingdom of God." (Matt. 6:33)**

#### 4. Circumcision and the Believer (Practical Lessons)

(a) Conveyed to the Believer ... **What does circumcision communicate to the believer today?**

(1) Jesus Christ has performed a **spiritual circumcision** upon believers.

- He has cut away the old sinful nature of the believers.
- This is not removing a piece of flesh but a far reaching (thorough surgery)
- He has removed all sins that were committed ... He cuts away **"the body of sins of the flesh."**

(2) God's true circumcision is of the heart not the flesh.

- Circumcision was intended to go beyond only being a ritual.
- It was meant to be a positive indicator of a life of sincere commitment and undivided obedience and loyalty to God.
- It was regarded **a sign** (Gen. 17:11) not limited to the external but a sign that a person's heart belonged to God totally and wholly, a sign that one was following and living for God, fully and completely.
- See Rom. 2:28-29; Deut. 10:16; 30:6.

**Rom. 2:28-29 NKJV**



“For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but from God.”

**Dear beloved, true circumcision is a heart cleansed from sin by the Spirit of God!!**

- (b) Comparison ... Looking at both the Old Testament and New Testament ***Old Testament “Circumcision” and New Testament “Baptism” can be compared as follows:***

<b>Circumcision: the cutting away of the flesh meant one was . . .</b>	<b>Baptism: being immersed in water meant that one was . . .</b>
1 Renounces the flesh, all human efforts in approaching God	1 Dying to self and the past (Rom. 6:3; Luke 9:23)
2 Willing to believe God and obey God, to be identified as a follower of God no matter the pain or cost.	2 Being raised to newness of life, willing to live a new life for Christ no matter the cost (Rom. 6:4)
3 Becoming identified with the people of God.	3 Becoming identified with the followers of Christ, the Church (1 Cor. 12:13)

*Pointers quote from The Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible.*

- (c) Classic Example, . . . Seen in Abraham

- (1) Rom. 4:11 says that God gave circumcision to Abraham for two reasons: to be a sign of Abraham’s faith and to be the seal of Abraham’s righteousness.

**Rom. 4:11 NKJV**

“And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also.”

*(Read the chapter for context. NB Vv. 9-14)*

- Abraham received circumcision as a sign or symbol only.
- Circumcision was not the road into God’s presence; it was not what made Abraham acceptable to God.
  - He had been blessed long before the circumcision ceremony was introduced.
  - Abraham found favor with God by faith alone before he was circumcised.

- Gen. 12:1-3 tells of God’s call of Abraham when he was 75 years old; the circumcision ceremony when he was 99 years old (Gen. 17:1-14).
- **Circumcision did not confer righteousness on Abraham; it only confirmed that he was righteous.**
- Above we presented a brief comparison with circumcision and baptism; here we note that circumcision **ONLY** attest to Abraham’s faith.
  - This was applicable also to all his descendants ... **it was a sign of unflinching faith and loyalty to God.**
  - There are many who seem to have a wrong concept of “water baptism” believing that they are saved because they are baptized. *Discussion on this topic is not possible currently ... note the following quote from the Bishops Licensure Study Guide (Church of God).* “Baptism is a spiritual sign authorized by the Word of God. It manifests by outward act and symbol the inward experience of the believer in his/her repentance and regeneration, which are the works of grace.”
- (2) **Rites and rituals are signs of something that has already taken place.**
  - **Circumcision** was done by those who believed God and had committed themselves to Him.
  - **Water Baptism** testifies of the work of God’s grace within. Repentance preceded water baptism; we are not baptized in order to be saved but baptized because of the regenerating experience within.
- (3) **Rites and ritual have not lost their importance.**
  - They are extremely important because they are signs and seals of the believer’s faith.
  - To neglect or reject a rite given by God is to be disobedient and is a clear sign that one lacks sincerity.
  - We noted in our previous lesson that when we believe God, we will do exactly what He says (Example see Lesson 3 Part B page 17).
    - Anyone who believes and truly trusts God is ready to follow Him even in the rite and rituals and ordinances (whatever term may be used) of the Church.
    - Abraham did not obey and wholly dedicate himself to God because he was circumcised; his faith, obedience and commitment were exercised even when God had not yet given circumcision as a sign.

## B. Celebrating the Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread Josh. 5:10-12

### 1. Celebrating the Passover (Josh. 5:10)

#### (a) Foundation Facts

##### (1) The Passover

- The Passover is a Jewish holiday commemorating the Hebrews liberation from slavery in Egypt and “**passing over**” of the forces of destruction, or the sparing of the first born of the Israelites, when the Lord “**smote the land of Egypt**” on the eve of the **Exodus**.
    - The word “**exodus**” means “going out;” a departure or emigration; usually a large number of people.  
*Simple stated, it means “going out” as documented in the Book of Exodus the “going out of Israel from Egypt.*
    - For the first Passover account see Ex. 12.
  - The significance of the Passover may be summarized as: “It celebrated **The Exodus**, the freedom from slavery, of the Israelites from Egypt that followed the Ten Plagues.”
- (2) **The Passover is a symbol of God’s power to deliver His people through the blood of the Lamb.**
- For Israel it was the blood that identified their homes as “**houses of safety.**”
    - This was briefly discussed in Lesson 2 page 12 and Lesson 3 Part A page 2.
    - Note Ex. 12, NB Vv. 1, 29-30.
  - **The Passover lamb is a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God**
    - **John 1:29 Amplified Bible**  
“The next day John saw Jesus coming to him and said, Look! There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world! [Ex.12:3; Isa. 53:7].”
    - See also 1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Peter 1:19; Rev. 7:9; etc.
  - Spiritual Preparation
    - The importance of spiritual preparation has been noted several times in this series.
    - The Israelites were spiritually prepared for the Passover
      - No Israelite man could participate in the Passover unless he was circumcised (See Ex. 12:48 ... read Vv. 43-50 for more details)
      - Now they were circumcised they could participate not only in this Passover but on an annual basis.
      - A very strong lesson to be learnt regarding celebrating “The Lord’s Supper.” At this time, I simply ask that we carefully and prayerfully read 1 Cor. 11:23-34, NB Vv. 27-30.

(b) **Features of the Passover**

*Goal: To briefly note a few important features which will include some repetition.*

- (1) This is Israel's third Passover Celebration (Josh. 5:10).
- The first was celebrated in Egypt (Ex. 12, NB v. 3).
  - The second was observed one year after leaving Egypt, when camp was organized and religious practices established (See Num. 9, NB Vv. 1-2).
  - It is unfortunate that so many years had passed that this celebration was not observed; yet the facts remain and speaks out! The Passover was not observed for so many years because sin separates us from God, and such was the underlining reason for Israel in this situation (Isa. 59:1; Rom. 3:2; 6:23; Heb. 10:26-31; etc.).
    - For this generation of Israelites, the past must now remain behind them; any remembrance was the necessity to remain obedient and faithful to God and not repeating past failures. Most importantly they were to focus on the abounding mercy and grace of God who loves and cares for them!!
    - The culminating of their redemption began in Egypt.
      - The Red Sea experience placed a great separation between them and their bondage in Egypt.
      - Now a second crisis had placed a flooded Jordan between them and a wilderness life.
    - The Passover (Josh. 5:10-11) should have been helpful to look back and to remember God's great intervention on behalf of His people. Such realization was a most precious encouragement for both faith and hope.
    - Oh! Beloved, what He has done for others, He will do for you (us)!!
      - Not only to pardon our sins (Isa. 55:6-7; 1 John 1:8-9; etc.) but to supply all our needs (Phil. 4:19; etc.).
      - It is no secret what God can do  
What He has done for others  
He will do for you!!
- (2) As noted, before: The Passover celebrates Israel's deliverance from Egyptian slavery.
- (3) Passover also acknowledge the awesome, unmatched power of God!
- By celebrating the Passover, the Israelites would be focusing upon the power of God that delivered them from a horrifying future.
  - This factor of God's great deliverance would foretell what they could expect as they face the enemies of the Promise Land.
    - God's power would still deliver them just as He did from Egyptian bondage.
    - Great challenges were ahead of them, but they knew that God was with them and is able to give them the victory.

- (4) The Passover would be reminding them of Him who they served and that He is able to deliver and secure them in the Promised Land.
- (5) The Passover always mark a new beginning.
- When God delivered Israel from Egyptian slavery, they began a new life, a life of freedom and hope of a glorious future.
  - Their old life was suddenly broken off and a new life began.
  - This new way of life would also be that of all future generations if they abide in God's will.

**(c) Future with hope because of Jesus Christ!!**

- (1) Israel's experiences of deliverance and a new life is a picture of conversion and what is involved.
- The person's old life is suddenly broken off and a new life in Jesus Christ begins.
  - Belief in Christ leads one to faith and genuine faith produces obedience resulting in a transformed life experience (John 1:12; 2 Cor. 5:17).
  - As we saw in John 1:29, 36, Jesus Christ, the Paschal Lamb, is the Savior of all men.
    - Saves a person from sin to righteousness.
    - Saves a person from death to life.
    - Saves a person from judgment of God to the approval of God.
    - Save a person from hell and eternal damnation to eternal life in the presence of God.

**Luke 19:10 KJV**

"For the Son of man came to seek that which was lost."

**(2) The person's conversion becomes the greatest day of his life!!**

- He is justified by faith through Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1-11, NB Vv. 1-2).
  - As a reminder: "**justification**" is God's righteous act of removing the guilt and penalty of sin through faith in Christ's atonement for sin.
  - Justification is a change of the individual's position in regard to the judgment of God and the charges of the law against him.
  - To make it simple: in justification God declares the penitent sinner not guilty. We commonly say: "Just as if he had not sinned."
- He begins a new life in Christ, turning away from his old life and beginning to live a new life in Jesus Christ.
- He lives victoriously, conquering all that confronts him in the Promised Land of God.
  - **Ezek. 36:26 KJV**

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

➤ See also Matt. 8:33; John 3:3; Acts 3:19; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10; etc.

(3) In Jesus Christ our Passover Lamb we experience the forgiveness of sins, a new life and a glorious future (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7; Eph. 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Rev. 7:9; 12:11; 12:22).

## 2. Celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Change Over (Josh. 5:11-12)4

(a) Celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Josh. 5:11).

(1) Symbolism

- We have noted the importance of “Spiritual Preparation” previously . . . let us briefly review:
  - Joshua commended the people to “sanctify” themselves (Josh. 3:5).
  - In chapter 5 we have:
    - All males were circumcised (this was done before the Passover celebration) (Vv. 2-9)
    - The celebration of the Passover (v. 10)
    - Now it is the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Vv. 11-12)
- This we will note again, **while the conquest of Canaan was top priority, spiritual preparation was mandatory. This is a most essential lesson for the Church (Universal) to learn and adapt; especially when many local congregations are too busy to hear God knocking on their doors trying to get in!! (Rev. 3:20).**
- We are noting here that celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread also contributed to Israel’s spiritual readiness.
- **The Feast of Unleavened Bread symbolized the urgency to be free from the world and its sin, the urgency to be liberated so that believers could live for God in the Promised Land.**

(2) Standard Procedure (*Briefly Noted ... a separate study is recommended*)

- The Feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated along with the Passover. It was first observed in Egypt along with the Passover (Ex. 12:17-20).
  - This was a seven days celebration during which the Israelites were to put leaven out of their dwelling, completely out of their presence (Ex. 12:19-20).
    - During this period, they were not to eat bread with leaven (yeast) (Ex. 12:18-20).  
*Generally speaking, “leaven” is a raising agent used in dough and batters; some examples are yeast, baking soda, baking powder, air and steam.*

- As used in Scripture, **leaven or yeast symbolizes evil (sin, corruption)** and **unleavened symbolizes righteousness.**
- When the Israelites were leaving Egypt (Ex. 12:37-42), they had to do so hurriedly.
  - They had to flee with such haste that they did not have adequate time to make bread with leaven or yeast in it.
  - They had time to simply grabbed whatever unleavened bread they had and took it along with them (Ex. 12:37-42, NB v. 39).
- As noted, before, the Feast of Unleavened bread symbolized the urgency to be liberated in order to live for God in the Promised Land.
  - The Israelites were rapidly moving forward to a new life, a new life free of the entanglements of Egypt (Egypt: a type of the world and its sinful allurements that enslaves under Satan's tyranny).
  - They were not to tarry but to move quickly towards the Promised Land.
  - The Israelites were to be in a state of readiness to get out of Egypt. Time for them was limited which required them to take only unleavened bread (Ex. 12:39).

(b) **Change Over (Josh. 5:12)**

- (1) What we have here in Josh. 5 is the second generation of those who came out of Egypt.
- The first generation, because of their unbelief and rebellion against God, perished in the wilderness (Num. 32:8-13; Heb. 3:16-19).
  - This new generation was now in the Promised Land, for which they had anticipated.
  - This would be the first time celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the Promised Land.
- (2) Note two important facts:
- **They ate food of the land!**
    - **Josh. 5:11**
      - KJV:** "... and they did eat of the old **corn** of the land ..."
      - NKJV:** "... and they ate of the produce of the land ..."
      - LASB:** "... and roasted grain harvested from the land ..."
      - **"Corn"** as used in the KJV refers to "stored grain."
      - This is referring to "the seeds of small grains, wheat, oats, rye, or barley."
    - Obviously, this was food that the local Canaanites had left behind as they fled when the Israelites crossed the Jordan River.
      - Most likely, these people sought asylum in Jericho city or some other city, leaving behind their barns and fields.

- The supplies they left behind were suitable for the needs of the Israelites.
- Eating the food of the land, was a foretaste of God’s blessings in the Promise Land.
  - Blessings after blessings were to be theirs, and this first fruit, this first produce from the land, was only a foretaste of blessings yet to come.
  - We, the Church, robustly join in and say:  
Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine  
**O what a foretaste of glory divine**  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God  
Born of His, Washed in His blood
- **The manna immediately stopped the day after they ate this food (Josh. 5:11-12) taken from the land.**
  - For forty years God had miraculously provided manna for His dear people (Ex. 16, NB Vv.11-51) and it continued until they entered the Promised Land (Josh. 5:12)
  - Among the new experiences of this Canaan life was a change in diet: **“the manna ceased” (Josh. 5:12 ... Ex. 16:14-36; Num. 11:7-9; Deut. 8:3, 16).** “O taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him” (Psa. 34:8 ESV).
- **The timing of these events teaches some important lessons:**
  - **First**, God’s help was given to those who were, at that time, unable to help themselves.
    - As a result, the manna was discontinued when Israel could address the need.
    - Manna was not given to them a day too soon and it did not continue a day too long.
  - **Second**, the manna and corn provision represent an obvious demonstration of God’s activity in human affairs.
    - Paul recognizes such a principle at work in the lives of Christians when he says:  
**“In Him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28)**, and.  
**“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. 8:28).**
    - Our blessed Lord Jesus declared, **“Without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5)**
  - **Third**, these timely benefits were not bestowed thoughtlessly.



- They were given to those who maintain a very special relationship with god.
- We should remember the previous disobedient and rebellious generation perished; they could not inherit the Promised Land. (Heb. 3:16-19)
- **God will NOT forsake the righteous!!** Note a few examples: (a) The blessings pronounced in Psalm 1 and Matt. 5:1-12; (b) David's astounding reassuring testimony in Psalm 37:25 (c) God's guarantee Matt. 6:25-34, NB v. 33 (d) **Psa. 34:15: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry."** **"Cast ALL your cares upon Him because He cares for you!!"** (1 Peter 5:7).

(c) **Christlikeness!!**

**Practical Lessons relating to "Unleavened."**

*As a reminder, we note above ("leaven" symbolize "evil" (b) "unleavened" symbolize "righteousness")*

**Josh. 5:11 NKJV**

"And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, **unleavened bread** and parched grain ...: (See also Ex. 12:17-20, 39).

(1) **Urgency to be free from the world and its sinful enticement.**

- There should be urgency and determination to be free from the world and its morally depraved standards.
- We not only saw the urgency exemplified when Israel was fleeing Egypt but by Moses when he gave up a sinful and luxurious life to be identified with the people of God, despite the adverse consequences (See Heb. 11:24-25; see also Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15; etc.).
- We are aware that Satanic bondage continues today (John 8:44); however there is deliverance because the **main purpose of Jesus' mission to earth was to liberate man from the bondage of sin** (Matt. 1:21; Luke 2:11; **19:10**; John 3:17; etc.).
- **The danger sign has been lustrously glowing for everyone to see: "Danger Ahead!! Leave Babylon and Come!! Escape the imminent danger!! Get Out and Get Out Now!!!**
  - We must sense the urgency to get ready and get ready now!! (2 Cor. 6:2; Isa. 55:6-7; etc.)
  - It is mandatory to immediately flee the evil of the world and begin to live a victorious life in the Promised Land of God (John 3, NB Vv. 1-11; etc.

- While it is not God’s will that any should perish, judgment of unrighteousness is certain (2 Peter 3, NB Vv. 5-11; Heb. 2:3; 9:27; etc.)
- Egypt is symbolic of this world and the evil it represents!
  - Just as God’s judgment loomed over Sodom (Gen.16-19:28) or over Egypt (Ex. 12), even so all sin not confessed and forsaken will be judged (Rev. 20:11-15; etc.)
  - We must flee before the judgment of God falls upon the wicked and evil world.
- **Matt. 24:44 Amplified Bible**  
 “You also must be ready therefore, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect Him.” (Matt. 24:36)
- See also Matt. 25:10, 13; 1 Thess. 5:3; Rev. 16:15; etc.
- Beloved, we are living in a time when the Church (Universal) has taken a compromising position with the world but we are charged by the Word of God to be separated (**2 Cor. 6:11**; Isa. 52:11; Eph. 5:11; etc.). We must move on but also note Matt. 5:20; etc.

(2) **There should be NO hesitation to personally forsake sin.**

- A person is to be **cleansed from sin** and such experience is possible only through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 9:14; etc.).
  - It is to be done without delay, because delay is danger; we must not wait until the horse has gone through the gate before we close it!! Immediate action is necessary!!
    - We have already noted the “now factor” (2 Cor. 6:2; etc.)
    - We must also remember no one knows his time here on earth (Ecc. 9:12), neither does anyone want to hear the “too late” response (Prov. 1:24-32; Rom. 1:21-32; etc.); and no one know when Jesus Christ will return (Matt. 24:36, 42; 25:1-13).
  - See also Matt. 16:6, 12; Rom. 5:8-9; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; **2 Cor. 7:1**; Gal 5:7-9.
- Forsaking sin authenticates the fact that one has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.
  - Despite the compromise and adapting of worldly standards within the Church (Universal), the Word of God remains unchanged. We are either one way or the other, there is NO other alternative (Matt. 7:13-14).
  - We are identified by our fruits (lifestyle) (Matt. 7:15-20, 21-23, 24-27).
  - The distinctiveness of those who are genuinely surrendered to Jesus Christ cannot be camouflaged nor concealed, it will be obvious (See 1 John 3:1-10).
    - Christ purifies us and it is our responsibility to maintain purity ...  
**1 John 3:3 NKJV**  
**“And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself ...”**

- We pursue such lifestyle of Christlikeness because Christ is pure!!  
Note again 1 John 3: 3 “... just as He (Christ) is pure.”
- See also Rom. 6:4; John 6:32-35, 48-51, 58; 1 Cor. 15:4; Eph. 6:14; 1 Tim. 6:11-12; Heb. 10:12.

(3) **There must be a determination to abstain from sin.**

- Pharaoh was determined to have Israel returned to captivity, so he pursued them only to the doom of his army (Ex. 14, NB Vv.5-9, 26-31).
- Similarly, Satan is not satisfied with the fact that we are determined to sincerely serve God; we are no longer his captives, but he intends to try and regain control of our lives.
  - Carefully note **1 Peter 5:8**, Satan is “as a roaring lion ... seeking whom he may devour.” The tense used here shows he is continuously seeking a way to enslave us.
  - Our responsibility is to resist him! (Note **1 Peter 5:8-9** ... see also Eph. 4:27; 6:11; James 4:7).
- God has done a marvelous work in our lives! Beloved, we have a treasure in this earthen vessel (2 Cor. 4:7); let us protect what we are freely blessed with, let us do our part and resist the devil, **we must NOT partake of the leaven!!** (Rom. 6, NB Vv. 11-14)
- See also Rom. 12:9; 1 Cor. 10:6; 1 Peter 3:11; Prov. 4:27.
- **1 Thess. 5:22 Amplified Bible**  
“Abstain from evil [shrink from it and keep aloof from it] in whatever form or whatever kind it may be.”

(4) **The evil must be removed from our lives and our homes.**

- No leaven bread was allowed in the Israelites’ home during the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12:19).
- The memorial stone (Josh. 4:6-7, 21-23) was a reminder also for parents to teach and nurture their children in the things of God (See also Deut. 6:6-7, 20).
- Eli failed in correcting the evil that characterized his sons and such led to the downfall of his ministry, a ruined family and great hurt to the nation of Israel (1 Sam. 2:22-36; 3:11-14; 4:12-22).
- **“The family that prays together, stays together”**; for so many this has become a norm of the past and has been neglected or forsaken; regarded as obsolete, totally unnecessary in today’s world although it is fundamentally important in assisting the nurturing of our children and bonding families together to the glory of God!
  - The knowledge of God helps us to live above sin (Read Psa. 119, NB Vv. 9-16; etc.)

- Joshua's testimony in Josh. 24:15, is more than a beautiful thought to be quoted or for wall plaques, etc.; it should sincerely be a way of life for all believers!!
- See also Matt. 16:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9; Heb. 12:1; etc.

(5) Years ago, we sang the following chorus in our churches

Leave Babylon, leave Babylon  
 Leave Babylon and come  
 Don't mind your friend who laugh you to scorn  
 When Christ was here, they done Him the same  
 Look to yourself and see how you live  
 Leave Babylon and come.

**Isa. 55:7 LASB**

"Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the Lord that He may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for He will forgive generously."

**C. Captain of the Lord's Army Josh 5:13-15**

**1. Contact (Josh. 5:13)**

(a) Power of God

(1) Demonstrated in His mighty acts on behalf of His people.

- Delivered from Egyptian bondage
  - Ex. 3-14: The Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread and the setting apart (sanctifying) of the male first-born to God, all tell the story of God's deliverance

**Ex. 13:14 Amplified Bible**

"And when, in time to come, your sons ask you, What does this mean? **You shall say to him, by the strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt the house of bondage and bondmen.**"

- Note also the song of praise after the Red Sea experience, see Ex. 15 NB Vv. 3-13, highlight v. 11.
  - Demonstrated also by the miraculous crossing of the flooded Jordan River (Josh. 4 and 4)
  - All nations were aware of God's power and care for His people, as a result they were terrified (Example see Josh. 2:9-11)
- (2) Indeed, power belongs to God, above Him there is no other! (This we have noted several times but worth repeating ... He is a mighty God! A great God!! And He loves and cares for His own!!)
- Our victories over all opposing forces are solely by God, because power belongs to Him (Psa. 62:11; Zech. 4:6; etc.)
  - See also Neh. 9:6; Psa. 33:9; Col. 1:6; Heb. 1:3; etc.

- **The song: How Great is Our God**

How great is our God  
 How great is His name  
 He's the greatest one  
 Forever the same  
 He rolled back the waters  
 From the mighty Red Sea  
 He says I'll lead you  
 Won't you trust in me?

(b) Presence of God

- (1) The miraculous manifestations attested to the reality of God's presence among His people.
- (2) This assurance was given to Joshua and with the charge to be strong and courageous (example Josh. 1:5, 9; etc.).

(c) Preparation Continued

(1) **Surveying Jericho (Josh. 5:13)**

- Joshua continued to show thoroughness and focused attention as a leader.
  - In this situation (Josh. 5:13) he was making sure he did everything necessary for continued success; he was not taking anything for granted.
  - Here he was alone surveying Jericho (Josh. 5:13)
  - He had travelled some distance away from camp, close enough to Jericho which would allow him a more accurate awareness of the geography and other features of Jericho.
- With his first major battle in the Promise Land impending, he was doing what any wise military commander would do.
  - Nehemiah also did similar before embarking on his planned rebuilding efforts for the walls of Jerusalem (See Neh. 2, NB Vv. 12-16).
  - For Joshua, most likely, the cost of war must have rested heavily on his mind, creating some pressure and tension.
  - He knew that war involved injuries, death, etc. and pain and sorrow to family members.

(2) **Strong compelling urge to communicate with God!!**

- With several things confronting him, Joshua yearned to be in the presence of God, **alone**.
- Forty years earlier, Joshua and Caleb did their best to assure the people, that God would be to give them victory over all challenges that may confront them in Canaan (Num. 14:1-10, NB Vv. 6-10)
  - He encouraged the people not to fear because the Lord was with them (Num. 14:6-9).

- Now (Josh. 5) as he had come for the first battle to conquer Canaan, Joshua was deeply concerned as he focused on the challenges ahead, so he takes a walk, seeking solitude with God.
  - He needed a very special time alone with God! **Locked in with God!!** Guess we all know what that means, especially in the wee hours, when everyone is asleep, and it is just **you and God!!** Oh!! Indeed, we commune with God as friend with friend, yielding our ALL to Him in prayer and supplication!! WHAT BLISSFUL MOMENTS!! SUCH MOMENTS WE FIND DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN!!!
- (3) **Sword drawn visitor!! (Josh. 5:13)**
- We do not know how long Joshua prayed, but when he looked up (v. 13); he was face to face with a man who had a drawn sword.
  - **God visits His people! He is their Deliverer!!**
    - For Moses it was a burning bush that was not consumed Ex. 3, NB Vv. 1-10).
      - The burning bush not consumed reminds us of Israel's suffering as a furnace.
      - However, their afflictions were God's afflictions, (**note Ex. 3:7-10**). *Even today believers experience their fiery trials experiences 1 Peter 1:7; 4:12) but God delivers!!*
      - **Ex. 3:9-10 ESV**  
"And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel out of Egypt."
      - Note what Jesus said to Saul (Paul) ... see Acts 9:1-18, NB v. 4.  
**Acts 9:4 NKJV**  
**"Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul why are you persecuting Me.'"**
      - Christ identifies Himself with His people (Matt. 10:40; 18:5; 25:40; Luke 10:16; 1 Cor. 8:12).
      - We, the Church, find our victory **in Jesus Christ**; no matter who opposes the believers! **Victory in Jesus my Savior forever!!** Beloved, let not your heart be troubled!! Believe in Jesus He will see us through!! Sometimes it is hard to understand, but **all things work together for good to them that love the Lord ... (Rom. 8:28)**.
    - **THE MAN WITH THE DRAWN SWORD (Josh. 5:13) IS A SIGN OF VICTORY!!**
      - Jehovah will not allow His people to face their battles alone! (Only sin separates man from God and when sin is confessed and forsaken there is healing in Jesus name!!)

- **The message conveyed here in Joshua 5:13, is easily seen: “God stands forth with a drawn sword to lead Israel all the way!”**
  - Joshua’s question to his unexpected visitor: “Are you a friend or foe?”
    - Joshua firmly requires of the person to identify himself and rightly so, they were at war and nothing is to be taken for granted.
    - It was a challenge of a soldier as one who would not allow anyone to occupy a debatable position ... proper security must be maintained.
2. **Counter-response (Josh. 5:14)**
- (a) Joshua asked a question and he got an answer:  
**Josh. 5:14 NKJV**  
 “So He said, ‘No but as commander of the army of the LORD I have come ...’  
**NOTE:**  
*There is much more to what I am about to share than we have the time to discuss in more detail. May God bless and guide you as you continue to explore this subject (if you so choose).*
- (b) Look again at our text and note verse 14.  
 (1) “And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship ...” (Josh. 5:14 NKJV)
- Beloved, **ONLY God** is to be worshipped; it is rightly due to Him!!
    - If this person (Joshua’s visitor ... Josh. 5:13-15) was an angel, who are created beings (Col. 1:16), Joshua’s worship would have been refused (Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9).
    - **ONLY GOD is to be worshipped!!(Ex. 20:1-5; Matt. 4:10; Col. 2:18; Rev. 14:7)**
  - As observed in our text, Joshua’s worship was not forbidden because of who his visitor was!!
- (c) **“Commander of the army of the LORD (Josh. 5:14 NKJV)**
- (1) A pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ.
- When you carefully analyze verses 14 and 15, as well as Josh. 6:2, you will note this fact of who his visitor really is.
  - Please note these two words **“Theophany”** and **“Christophany.”** (*Briefly presented*).
    - Before the incarnation (Luke 1:31; John 1:1-18, NB v. 14; Phil 2:7; etc.), God revealed Himself in physical form in different ways as recorded in the Old Testament.
      - Such appearances are referred to as **“theophanies”** meaning visible appearances or manifestations of God that are visible to the human senses.
      - Below I will list a few outstanding examples of Divine appearances during the Old Testament period.
    - Some scholars refer to these appearances as **“Christophany”** or the appearances of Christ prior to His arrival as we have in the Gospels.
      - **John 8:58 KJV**

“And Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was I am.”

- Jesus being God is eternal: Micah 5:2; John 8:58; 17:5; Heb. 7:3; Rev. 22:13; etc. He was and is and always will be!!

*Some sources also refer to “Christophany” as visions of Christ after His resurrection*

(2) Clarifying a few pointers ... *(briefly defining some words used above)*

- **Incarnation:** God clothed Himself with humanity (become flesh), became man, in the person of Jesus Christ; He is the Son of God and the second person in the Trinity.
  - He was truly God and truly man (John 1:1, 14; 1 Tim. 2:5; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:9; etc.)
  - The incarnation was not the beginning of Jesus Christ (John 1:1; 8:58; Col. 1:17; 1 John 1:1-2; Rev. 1:17-18; etc.)
- **Theophany and Christophany** have been defined above.
- **The Divine Visitor** Josh. 5:13-15; 6:2.
  - **Explaining the usage of “Lord”** (Josh. 5:14-15 & 6:2)
    - **“Lord” with a capital “L”** has been used in the Amp. Bible and as seen in Joshua’s response to his visitor in Josh. 5:14 (KJV). You should also note that **Commander** of the Lord’s army is a capital “C” in the NKJV (v. 15).
    - **“Lord” with a capital “L”** is from the Hebrew **“Adonai”** and means “God is my Lord.”
    - A few examples: Ex. 20:7; Psa. 83:18; 148:1; Isa. 12:2; 42:8; etc.
  - **Explaining the usage of “LORD”** Josh. 5:14-15; 6:2
    - **“LORD” with all capital letters.**
    - **“LORD” with all capital** is used in reference to **“Yahweh”**
    - See Lesson 1 Part A, page 2, for a brief discussion on the usage of “Yahweh”
    - A few examples: Deut. 6:4; 2 Sam. 7:26; Psa. 34:2-4; 99:6; etc.
- **Another point of interest is the usage of: “the Lord of host.”**
  - This term is used throughout the Old Testament in reference to God.
  - **Psa. 24:10**
    - **“Lord of host” or “Lord of armies.”**
    - God has infinite number of angels at His command.
    - He is sovereign over all that exists (Matt. 26:53).
  - **Psa. 46:7**
    - He is Commander of the heavenly armies (Josh. 5:13-14).
    - Used frequently in the Old Testament to express God’s sovereignty.
  - **Isa. 6:1-4, NB v. 3**
    - The infinite holiness of God is clearly noted



- There was confidence also that Jerusalem was secured because of the “Lord of host” or the “Lord Almighty.”

(3) **Note the following Divine appearances in the Old Testament** (*Briefly Noted*).

- **To Abraham**
  - In Canaan ... the land promised to him (Gen. 12:7-9).
  - God renewed His covenant (Gen. 17:1-4).
  - On His way to destroy Sodom and a son promised to Abraham (Gen. 18)
- **To Jacob**
  - Fleeing Esau’s wrath ... an encounter at Bethel (Gen. 28, NB Vv. 11-19)
  - Returning home ... anticipating meeting Esau (Gen. 32, NB Vv. 22-32).
- **To Moses**
  - The call to leadership (Ex. 3, Vv. 1-9).
  - On Mt. Sinai alone with God (Ex. 19, NB v. 20; 33:18-34:8)
    - With Aaron, his sons and the seventy elders (Ex. 24, NB Vv. 9-18)
    - When leadership was transferred to Joshua (Deut. 31, NB Vv.14-15).
- **In our current text ... He appears to Joshua** (Josh 5:13-6:5)

(d) **His presence** (Josh. 5:13-6:5) **is the continued assurance to Joshua of divine help** (Josh. 1:1-9).

- (1) The Lord was there to instruct Joshua of the plan to invade Jericho ((Josh. 6:1-5)
- (2) **The people who are set apart for His purpose and filled with His presence will accomplish great wonders to His glory and His honor!!**
- (3) Joshua is made aware of the unseen presence of God and His heavenly army prepared to do battle alongside His faithful people (Acts 12:5-11; 18:9-10; 23:11; 27:23).
- (4) **Joshua’s experience teaches us, as believers, that we are not alone in our struggles on this earth.**
  - There are spiritual forces fighting on our behalf and sure there are also forces against us, but we are not in it by ourselves.
    - **Heb. 1:14 Amplified Bible**  
“Are not the angels all ministering spirits (servants) sent out in the service [of God for the assistance] of those who inherit salvation?”
    - Oh, beloved, you have divine help . . . only believe! Claim! Utilize! (Ex. 14:19; Psa. 91:11; Dan. 6:22; Acts 12:7; 27:2).
  - We also have the blessed Holy Spirit, who remains at our side as our helper and defender (John 14:16-23, 26-27; etc.)

3. **Command (Josh. 5:15)**

- (a) A few reminders of what led to this moment (Josh. 5:15).

- (1) Joshua, compelled by the challenges ahead, went to survey the area of attack and desired a time of solitude with God (v. 13).
  - (2) Joshua's encounter with a visitor of whom he boldly asks to identify himself: "Are you for us or are you for our adversaries?" (5:13).
  - (3) The astounding reply he received from his visitor: "No but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." (5:14 NKJV).
  - (4) The great respect Joshua paid Him when he understood who he was (v. 14).
    - Joshua paid homage to Him  
"And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship." (v. 14).
    - Joshua requested of him to give commands and directions  
"What does my LORD say to His servant?" (v. 14)
    - **Joshua's response was one of submission, reverence and humility.**
      - Initially, he demanded, as a mighty soldier, ready to defend his people, that this visitor identifies himself (v. 13).
      - Now he acknowledges his servitude to God.  
"What does my LORD say to His servant" (5;14 NKJV)
        - His attitude implied an earnest desire to know the will of Christ and a cheerful readiness and resolution to do what he was told.
        - Joshua acknowledged himself as an inferior officer and stands ready to receive orders.
        - This tone of mind clearly showed that Joshua was fit for the leadership position he was in; the fact remains: **those who know how to obey are those who are best to give command.**
- (b) The LORD required of Joshua further expressions of reverence.  
"Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.' And Joshua did so" (v. 15 NKJV).
- (1) The same command was given to Moses (Ex. 3:5) when God was sending him to bring Israel out of Egypt.
  - (2) Here (Josh. 5), God gave the same order, to confirm Joshua's faith in the promise that He would be with him as He was with Moses (Josh. 1:1-5, NB v. 5)  
*(We will look at other significances of this command below)*
  - (3) The LORD was preparing Joshua to receive instructions regarding the siege of Jericho.
- (c) **Taking the shoe (sandal) off is a sign of reverence and respect.**
- (1) The ground was holy because of God's presence.
    - Indicating that people ought to approach God with solemnity and humility.
    - Taking the shoe (sandal) off expressed an inward reverence through an outward behavior in their worship.

- Showing such respect avoids anything that is disrespectful, thoughtless or offensive.
- There are some eastern religions today that require bare feet when entering their temples.

(2) **God has a high standard for approaching Him.**

- For example, He had very high standards, rules and regulations for the Levitical priesthood (Example see Lev. 8-10).
- Another example of the importance of God's standards is seen when David decided to have the Ark of God returned to Jerusalem (*referred to in another lesson*).
  - Doing it man's way resulted in chaos and tragedy (1 Chron 13).
  - Doing it the prescribed way resulted in praises and glory to God and a blessed experience (1 Chron. 15, NB Vv. 15-16)
- God remains the same and still requires holiness as the standard of living for all His people (Lev. 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16).
- "Where you stand is holy ground" (v. 15)
  - As noted above: holy because of the holy presence of the Commander of the Lord's army. The Promised Land, the whole land was holy, to be set apart totally to God.
  - This was an enormous assurance for Joshua because it meant victory was guaranteed.
  - Since the land belonged to God, He was going to claim the land through His people Israel. Victory was assured!!

- **The song: Holy Ground**

As I walked through the door, I sensed His presence  
 And I knew this was a place where love abounds  
 For this is the temple, Jehovah God abides here  
 We are standing in His presence on holy ground

*Refrain*

We are standing on holy ground  
 And I know there are angels all around  
 Let us praise Jesus now  
 We are standing in His presence on Holy ground

In His presence there is joy beyond all measure  
 And at His feet peace of mind can still be found  
 And if you have a need, I know He has the answer  
 Reach out and claim it for we are standing on holy ground

- **Psa. 24:3-4 Amplified Bible**

“Who shall go into the mountain of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His Holy Place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted himself up to falsehood or to what is false, nor sworn deceitfully. [Matt. 5:8]”

- (d) For Israel, the battle was the Lord’s and He had already won the victory.
- (1) The enemy was already defeated!!
  - (2) Joshua’s task was to believe God and march forward to conquer the enemy.
    - Faith in God was crucial, it was compulsory to believe God and to trust Him for strength and guidance.
    - As noted in another lesson, faith in God results in action, therefore Joshua had to march forth into battle if he was going to conquer the enemy.
    - **The Hymn: Onward Christian Soldiers**  
*Verse 1*  
 Onward Christian soldiers!  
 Marching on to war,  
 With the cross of Jesus  
 Going on before.  
 Christ the Royal Master,  
 Leads against the foe;  
 Forward into battle,  
 See, His banner go!

#### 4. Challenges of Life Will Be Experienced but God!!

- (a) Throughout life there are times when we need a special experience with God!!
- (1) Our experience varies
    - A deep sense of loneliness, discouragement, depression, emptiness or purposelessness.
    - Or it may be some accident, health issues, diseases or death.
    - Or some severe problem, difficulty, obstacles, or loss of many things.
    - These do create a desperate need for some special time with God.
  - (2) Our responsibility is to maintain total confidence in God and get alone with Him as Joshua did.
    - God will meet us if we just get alone and seek His face (Heb. 4:14-16).
    - God is there for us and will help us!!
      - He will give us His presence, power and guidance.
      - God will help, He is our helper in time of need (Psa. 46:1-3)
- (b) Also note the following Scriptures: **Heb. 2:17-18; 4:15-16**; Deut. 33:27; Psa. 17:8; 27:5; 40:17; Isa. 43:1-2.
- (1) **Isa. 41:10 NKJV**: “Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

(2) **Isa. 41:10 Amp. Bible:** “Fear not [there is nothing to fear], for I am with you; do not look around you in terror and be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen and harden you to difficulties, yes, I will help you; yes I will help you; yes will hold you up and retrain you with My [victorious] right hand of rightness and justice. [Acts 18:10”

(3) **Onward Christian Soldiers**

*Verse 2*

At the name of Jesus  
Satan’s host doth flee;  
On then, Christian soldiers,  
On to victory!  
Hell’s foundation quiver  
At the shout of praise”  
Brothers, lift your voices,  
Loud your anthem raise!

*Refrain*

Onward, Christian soldiers  
Marching on to war  
With the cross of Jesus  
Going on before

**2 Tim. 2:15**

**KJV**

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

**Amplified Bible**

“Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.”

### LESSON 4 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The crossing of the Jordan River marked a new life for the Israelites. In what ways were their old life a defeated life? Give references.

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2. Briefly explain the following statement:  
“God’s grace to Israel was for the specific purpose of enlightening the world.”

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3. As a result of the Red Sea and Jordan River experiences what are three fundamental reasons for Israel to continuously fear (reverence) God?

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4. The miraculous crossing of the Jordan River, what did it mean to (a) Israel (b) Amorites and Canaanites?

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5. Complete the following:  
“Wicked men were thus (a) \_\_\_\_\_ to (b) \_\_\_\_\_ that their (c) \_\_\_\_\_ defenses were (d) \_\_\_\_\_ when used in (e) \_\_\_\_\_ to God.”

6. We noted in our lesson that going across Jordan River, is symbolic of the old and new life. Briefly explain the significance of these experiences (the old and new life). Give references.

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7. Explain what is meant by “**sign of the covenant.**” (Gen. 17)

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8. What were two primary reasons Joshua circumcising such a multitude? (Josh. 5:4-9)?

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9. What two outstanding factors were noted as conditions on which the “**Covenant of Circumcision**” was established?

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10. When Joshua circumcised such a multitude (Josh. 5:2-8): (a) in what way did such an act could have implicated his army? (b) What did such an act prove about Joshua?

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11. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

“True circumcision is a \_\_\_\_\_

*(Base on Rom. 2:28-29)*

- (a) heart cleansed from sin
- (b) heart convicted of sin
- (c) heart grieved by sin
- (d) hear wounded by sin



12. Match the statements on the left with their corresponding reference on the right

STATEMENTS	CORRECT REFERENCE	JUMBLED REFERENCES
Dying to self and the past		1 Cor. 12:13
Raised to newness of life willing to live new life for Christ		Rom. 4:11
Becoming identified with the followers of Christ, the Church		Rom. 6:3
Circumcision a sign of Abraham’s faith and seal of his righteousness.		Rom. 6:4

13. (a) Answer True or False (b) Explain your answer.

“Circumcision bestowed righteousness on Abraham.”

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14. (a) What are **rites** and **rituals**? (b) How is this definition applicable to (1) Circumcision (2) Water Baptism?

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15. (a) Briefly explain what the Passover is. (b) As noted in our lesson, in Josh. 5, we have an account of the third Passover. List all three, noting place celebrated and give references.

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16. Why was it important for the circumcision (Josh, 5:2-8) to be done before the Passover celebration (Josh. 5:10-11). Give references?

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17. Briefly define "justification."

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18. What does the "Feast of Unleavened Bread" symbolize?

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19. (a) In its general usage what is “leaven”? (b) In Scriptures, explain what is symbolized by (1) “leaven” (2) “unleavened.”

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20. Briefly explain what “corn” as used in Josh 5:11 is referring to.

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21. Briefly explain some practical lessons for the believer aspiring “Christlikeness” as it relates to the emphasis on being unleavened.”

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22. What may have been the possible reasons why Joshua was seen by Jericho, as recorded in Josh. 5:13?

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23. Briefly define (a) Theophany (b) Christophany.

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24. Briefly define "incarnation." Give references.

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25. Joshua was told to "take off his shoe because where he was standing was holy ground" (Josh 5:15). Based on this command, what are some important lessons taught?

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**We will discuss the answers to as many questions as possible in our next class.**