

## Putting Feet to Your Faith

### Joshua 5:1-15

- Joshua and the children of Israel have safely crossed the Jordan River, and now they're readying themselves to start claiming the inheritance that God had given to them through the promise He made to Abraham in Genesis chapter 12, roughly four hundred and seventy years ago give or take a year. So to say that they are excited and ready to go is an understatement, but before they leave God is going to ask something of them that in the natural doesn't make any sense at all, but is absolutely necessary for spiritual victory.

#### V1-15

- **V1** says that the surrounding nations have heard all about how the Lord supernaturally dried up the overflowing waters of the Jordan River so that the nation of Israel could cross over it safely, and it has caused their hearts to melt, and their spirit to become discouraged. Now this is in line to what Rahab told the spies back in **2:9-10** > how Jericho had heard about the Lord drying up the Red Sea and letting the Israelites cross over but then returning the waters to its natural state when Egypt tried to cross over drowning Pharaoh's army in the process.
- This happened forty years earlier, now they hear that the God Who performed that remarkable miracle in times past is still at work doing mighty wonders in this present day and they are terrified. This seems to be the perfect time to strike, as the people of Israel are united in following the Lord and listening to Joshua commands, the people of the land are paralyzed by fear, from a human perspective it's the perfect time to act: so one would expect Joshua to mobilize the troops and start attacking the enemy immediately.
- **V2** before moving God tells Joshua that before they move they first must submit and obey, and that meant allowing themselves to be circumcised. Wait a minute this doesn't make any sense militarily, the enemy is demoralized, intimidated, and afraid, he is already defeated, it's the perfect time to attack.
- Also if we do this to ourselves not only will it cause us to lose all momentum, and its going to make us physically weak, and vulnerable to the enemy's attack in enemy territory, as it takes at least ten days before we fully recover and be able to defend ourselves, by ten the enemy could attack us or send out for reinforcements, either way surely this must be a miscalculation on the Lord's part.
- **Is 55:8-9** says "God's thoughts and ways are higher than ours" and this is a reminder that Joshua was getting his orders from **The Lord**, and not from **military experts**, so even if what God asks us to do causes a delay then we delay, because it was not the expertise of the Jewish army, nor the emotions of the enemy, that would give Israel the victory, but the presence and blessing of the Lord, and we all need to remember that.

- **V3-7 Rom 9:4-5** tell us that Israel is a Covenant nation, a privilege God has given to no other nation on earth, this happened when the Lord called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, in **Gen 12:1-3**, and He sealed that Covenant with a sacrifice in **Gen 15:9-10**, then in **Gen 17:10** God gave circumcision as the sign of the Covenant to Abraham and his descendants.
- **Ex 4:24-26** when Israel came out of Egypt God stopped Moses in his tracks and threatened to kill him if he didn't circumcise his sons, for up to that point Moses hadn't been living as a Jew dwelling on the backside of the desert until he was called back by God to lead Israel into the promise land. This generation haven't been circumcised and before they can be used by God and defeat the enemy, they first must be consecrated to God.
- **V8-9** to do this it took faith because this meant they couldn't move until their wounds healed, and therefore became a stationary target, and if you know anything about military strategy that was suicidal, as now they are completely vulnerable for several days for the enemy to pick them off, all they can rely upon is the protection from the Lord.
- Obedience lives next door to blessings, because they obeyed the Lord despite the cost and the threat, then the Lord tells Joshua that He has rolled away the reproach of Egypt from them. The sin of unbelief has been replaced with the hope of trusting The Lord, when we because of fear, doubt, or human frailty put our emotions or intellect above what God has said, we can be sure that we will not be acting in faith but in the flesh. Israel despite how they felt about being circumcised right then simply obeyed God and are blessed for it.
- **V10-12** afterward they celebrate the Passover, remembering how the Lord redeemed them, and then God allows them to taste of the fruit of the Promise Land, which marks a transition in which the manna that God had been providing for forty years while they were in the wilderness is now over as they will now experience a new source of provision.
- This proves God always provides but in that provision He is free to change the source of His provision from time to time, we just need to trust Him and not the manner of provision, or we will stumble when those things inevitably change.
- **V13-15** not that the people are taken care of both physically and spiritually, The Lord appears to Joshua and reaffirms His presence to him. This is why at the very beginning of the chapter the Lord told Joshua to "**be strong and very courageous**" That's exactly what He is as he approaches the mysterious man with a drawn sword and as the shepherd over God's people he has the responsibility to see if this man is a friend or foe.
- Interesting The Lord says "**No**" because it's not the right question, and it's not the most important question to be asked, the question really wasn't if the Lord was on Joshua's side, the proper question was if Joshua was on the Lord's side! No matter what our position is in life, it's not on The Lord to line Himself up with our agendas, we need to line up with what God has said, and what He wants to do, anything else is a "**no**". Joshua submits to the Commander of the army of The Lord, this is a preincarnate appearance of Jesus in the OT.

