

10/19/03

The Secret To Be Conquerors
Josh. 5:1-15

People want God to bless them and to make them victorious throughout their lives but they soon forget that God expect His people to live by certain principles.

* This principles of Scripture are often forgotten or neglected by people but not the expectation for God to keep on blessing.

If we are going to be victorious in our Christian lives and live abundantly, it will not be by living our lives they way we want to but the way God says we are to live them.

1. They have crossed the Red Sea symbolic of their baptism from their deliverance from Egypt.
2. The crossing of the Jordan was the reckoning of the Old man dead to walk by faith.

* A charge to die to the flesh life!

So now God gives to Joshua some prerequisites before the conquest of Jericho.

- I. Their re-commitment to circumcision, the covenant of God. Vs. 1-9
- II. Their re-commitment to the Passover of God. Vs. 10-12
- III. Their re-commitment to the leading of God. Vs. 13-15

I. Their re-commitment to circumcision, the covenant of God. Vs. 1-9

A. The command to be circumcised. Vs. 1-3

1. The powerful work of God had prepared the way. Vs. 1

a. The news that God had dried up the Jordan River at flood season reached all the kings of the Amorites and Canaanites.

1) None of their local gods had ever done anything like it!

2) Yahweh was the God of heaven and earth. Josh. 2:11, 3:11, 13

b. The hearts of all these kings melted as a result and their was no spirit any longer in them. Vs. 1

1) The word melted “macac” means to dissolve or waste away.

2) They had no courage to resist or the belief that they could defeat the people of God, Israel.

3) This is what God had promised. Deut. 2:25

2. The perfect timing was decided by God. Vs. 2-3

a. The command came from God, it was at this particular time that Yahweh said to Joshua. Vs. 2a

- 1) The vulnerability of the men before their enemies would be great.
- 2) The fear of God was God's way of given them a window time.
- b. The command was, "Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." Vs. 2
 - 1) This is noted to be the iron age by commentator, yet God calls for flint stone for the surgical procedure.
 - 2) The command indicated "the second time", not that the men were to be circumcised a second time but that this would be the second time they would be officiating this rite.
 - * The first time was in Egypt!
3. The command is obeyed by Joshua. Vs. 3
 - a. We are told, "So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel" Vs. 3a-b
 - 1) This is the general statement of confirmation to Joshua's obedience of God.
 - 2) The statement in no way implies or teaches that Joshua circumcised all the men.

- b. We are given the location where the rite was performed, "At the hill of the foreskins." Vs. 3b
 - 1) To us it seems a bit grotesque to think of such a hill and disgusts us.
 - 2) To Israel it seemed like a great idea, representing a dying to the flesh life.
 - 3) A mark of the people of God, to live a pure life.
4. Their history of this covenant was well known by all of them.
 - a. God's covenant of circumcision with Abraham was after he and Sarah had attempted to help God out to fulfill God's promise to them of a son, so at the council of Sarah, Abraham took Hagar and had Ishmael, at eighty-six years of age, a work of his flesh. Gen. 16
 - b. Thirteen year of silence followed and at age ninety-nine God changed the name of Abam, exalted father to Abraham, father of multitudes, making the covenant of circumcision with Abraham, which was to be a sign of the covenant, Gen. 17:9-14
 - c. God promised to Abraham a son, Isaac, who Sara would bear. Gen. 17:15-22

- d. Abraham was 99 years old, Ishmael 13 years old. Gen. 17:23-25
 - e. God Lord was going to kill Moses after He had sent him to Pharaoh because he had not circumcised his sons and Zipporah his wife circumcised both of her sons and said, "Surely you are a husband of blood to me." Ex. 4:25
 - f. The Jews placed a great importance on circumcision as the distinguishing mark of the people of God, calling the Gentiles, the "uncircumcised". 1Sam. 14:6
 - g. Circumcision was a required for partaking the Passover. Ex. 12:44, 48
 - h. Every male child, on the eight day was to be circumcised. Lev. 12:3
- B.** The reason for the command to be circumcised. Vs. 4-7
- 1. All the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. Vs. 4
 - 2. But all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised. Vs. 5
 - 3. The children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people who were men of war, who came out of

- Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD--to whom the LORD swore that He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, "a land flowing with milk and honey." Vs. 6
- 4. Then Joshua circumcised their sons whom He raised up in their place because they had not been circumcised on the way. Vs. 7
 - a. They were to use it to instruct their children much like the memorial of stones at the crossing of Jordan. Josh. 4, Ex. 12:26-27, 13:8
 - b. God told Abraham that anyone not circumcised would be cut off from the people. Gen. 17:14
 - c. The Sons of Jacob killed all the men of Shechem for defiling Dinah, using the sign of purity to do treacherous. Gen 34
- C.** The significance of the obedience to the command to be circumcised. Vs. 8-9
- 1. Regarding the present. Vs. 8
 - a. Their submission to the Lord in the radical surgery.
 - 1) Not one person complained.
 - 2) Not one person murmured.
 - 3) Not one person objected.

- b. Their trust in God after the surgery.
 - 1) To protect them, leaving themselves vulnerable to the enemy until they were healed.
 - 2) To see their hearts.
- 2. Regarding the past. Vs. 9
 - a. God rolled away their reproach of Egypt from them. Vs. 9a-b
 - 1) Some says the reproach of Egypt, was being slaves or circumcision, for Egypt practiced it.
 - 2) Reproach that God had brought them to die in the wilderness without entering the promised land, due to the rebellion at Kadesh-Brnea. Num. 14:12-16
 - 3) Their uncircumcised heart rejected God to walk in the spirit, so their uncircumcision for 38 years symbolized doom and death march, from the flesh life.
 - b. The name Gilgal means rolling away.
 - 1) They would enter the land at last.
 - 2) They would not be mocked any longer or be in the wilderness.
 - 3) Moses reminded God of this very thing. Ex. 32:12, Num. 14:13-16, Deut. 9:28

Illustration

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life has destroyed many lives and continues to do so and it is perfectly described by the word of General Charles De Gaulle!

* “We have no friends; we have interests,” said General Charles De Gaulle while President of France. What did he mean? Simply that France’s relationship with other nations could only be decided around her “**interests**”—commercial advantage or disadvantage. # 5496

Application

1. The circumcision of the Christian is that of the heart.
 - a. At the first church council met in Jerusalem because Jews from Judah came to Antioch and taught that the gentiles had to be circumcised to be saved but it was rejected to be unnecessary. Acts 15
 - b. Paul told the Romans the same principle. Rom. 2:25-29
* It is the seal of covenant. Rom. 4:9-13
 - c. To the Galatians. Gal. 5:1-4
 - d. To the Colossians he said we are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands. Col. 2:11
 - e. Moses understood this, as he told the people to circumcise their hearts. Deut. 10:16
 - f. It represents the cutting off the flesh life
 - g. Jeremiah spoke of their uncircumcised hearts also. Jer. 4:4

2. The circumcised heart is a heart that pleases God.

- a. It is obedient.
- b. It is sensitive to God.
- c. It is submissive.
- d. It is committed for life.

3. The nature of people has not changed, if you are living and denying your flesh you will be mocked and ridiculed.

- a. Because you believe the promise of God, that He has forgiven you of all your sins.
- b. Because you believe that Jesus is coming to take you up in the rapture.
- c. Because you believe in a literal return of Jesus to the earth to set up His kingdom.
- d. Because you believe in sin and that it is against God.
- e. Because you believe in eternal life.

* Peter puts it this way, "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters."
1Pet. 4:14-15

God required their re-commitment to circumcision, the covenant of God!

II. Their re-commitment to the Passover of God. Vs. 10-12

A. The people commemorated their past deliverance. Vs. 10

1. The location they camped was at the very place where their reproach had been rolled away from them, Gilgal. Vs. 10a

- a. Now they were the covenant people of God having crossed the Jordan by faith.
- b. Now they were the consecrated people of God having circumcised all the males.

2. The date of the commemoration exact. Vs. 10b

- a. They kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight. Ex. 12:1-6
 - 1) Forty year to the day, they had separated the lamb in Egypt for the Passover.
 - 2) Four day after they placed the blood on the door post and lintel to protect the first born.
- b. They kept the Passover on the plains of Jericho. Vs. 10b
 - 1) They were declaring to their enemies their dependency on God once again for their protection.

- 2) They were declaring to their enemies that their God was about to judge them.
- 3) This was in obedience to the Law, when they entered the promised land. Ex. 13:5
- 3. This is the third time they had partaken in the Passover.
 - a. The first time was in Egypt, prior to the Exodus. Ex. 12:1-6
 - b. The second time was in the wilderness of Sinai. Num. 9:5
 - c. Circumcision was-suspended during the wilderness due to their flesh life and reproach. Ex. 12:48
 - d. They forgot soon the work of God. Ps. 106:13, 21
 - * The plagues, the separation, the death of the first born, the deliverance of Israel!
- B. The people celebrated their present rest. Vs. 11
 - 1. This second generation enter entered the promised land of milk and honey.
 - a. They mixed what they heard with faith.
 - b. The first generation the did not and died in the wilderness.
 - 2. They experience freedom from the wilderness life. Vs. 11a

- a. They ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover.
- b. They ate unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day, celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread, from the 15-22 of April. Ex. 12:14-20, Lev. 23:6
 - 1) The reference to parched grain is barley, roasted corn, not wheat, that was in June.
 - 2) From the previous year or the present barley harvest
- c. Resting in the work of God for them.
- C. The people consummated a sample of their future provisions. Vs. 12
 - 1. They witnessed the cessation of manna. Vs. 12a-b
 - a. The manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land. Vs. 12a
 - 1) God had miraculously provided for them bread from heaven for forty years. Ps. 78:25
 - 2) God now did not need to provide it any longer. Ex. 16:14-36, Num. 7-9, Deut. 8:3, 16
 - b. The children of Israel no longer had manna. Vs. 12b
 - 1) That which their father's complained, remembering the

melons, leaks and onions while forgetting the whip and taskmasters.

- 2) The manna was gone forever.
 - 3) That which fed them would feed them no more.
- c. They witnessed the faithfulness of God's promise. Vs. 12
- * God now provided through the wealth of the land, that the people had planted and stored, as part of God's judgment and faithfulness to His people.

Illustration

Four year old Martha, hugging her doll in each of her pudgy little arms, looked wistfully up at he mother and said, "Mamma, I love them and love them and love them, but they never love me back." #3228

* What a picture of man, who is so often forgets to express his loving gratefulness to God for all He has done!

Application

1. The Lord's table is the fulfillment of Passover and is to be a time of refection, examination and expectation.
 - a. Refection by recognizing that God delivered me from the world being a slave of sin,

making me a child of God by His grace, when I deserved death. Eph. 2:8-9

- b. Examination by recognizing and confessing my sins to God in order to be in fellowship with God and not be chasten by the Lord. 1Cor. 11:27-30
 - c. Expectation by looking forwards toward the day that the Lord Himself will partake with us in the Kingdom. Lk. 22:15-16
2. The believer is to live in the present rest of the finished work of Christ.
 - a. He is the bread of life come down from heaven. Jn. 6:32-37
 - b. He is the One we have come to cease from our labor and heavy burdens to find ultimate rest. Matt. 11:28
 - c. He is our High Priest before the Father. Heb. 7:24-25
 3. Each of as believer's partake every day a sample of the future glory with Jesus.
 - a. We hear Him speak to us through the word.
 - b. We are comforted by Him, in our disappointments and hurts.
 - c. We directed, guided and anointed for our call in ministry.
 - d. He imparts to us knowledge and wisdom for the situations of life, as well as the strength to go through the most difficult things in life.
 - e. He opens and closes door for us at the perfect time.

- f. These are but some of the benefits of the first-fruits of the benefits of the resurrection of Christ.

* “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Eph. 1:3

God required their re-commitment to the Passover of God!

III. Their re-commitment to the leading of God. Vs. 13-15

- A. Joshua enquires to see if a man he sees is from God. Vs. 13
 - 1. Joshua goes out on a reconnaissance to view Jericho. Vs. 13a
 - a. Without doubt to strategize for the conquest.
 - b. Joshua has not been told yet how they are going to conquer Jericho.
 - 2. Joshua lifted his eyes and looked, only to see a man standing opposite of Joshua with his sword drawn in his hand. Vs. 13b-d
 - a. The man is ready to fight in the warfare.
 - b. The general Joshua is watching the man, so as to make a decision on what to do.

- c. The prophet Balaam saw this same sight. Num. 22:31
- 3. Joshua went to Him and asked Him, “Are you for us or for our adversaries?” Vs. 13e-f
 - a. Joshua acted very courageously at this point, not fearful, in obedience to the exhortation of God at his commission.
 - b. Joshua is ready to confront and engage the man if he is the enemy.
- B. Joshua bows in submission to God. Vs. 14
 - 1. The man tells Joshua, No. Vs. 14a-b
 - a. No I am not for your adversaries.
 - * This must of brought a great relief to Joshua.
 - b. But I think that that we should also take the answer of no, for Joshua and Israel.
 - 1) The reason being, as one commentator put it, is that the important thing is not to try and get God on our side but that we are on God’s side!
 - 2) When Israel was in sin, as Achan took of the accursed thing, God was not for them, He allowed them to be defeated!
 - 2. The man said, “But as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” Vs. 14c

- a. He was the Captain of the Lord's army, referring to the angels, not Israel.
 - b. Literally as General of the Army of Yahweh have I now come", He would defeat the enemy, it was His war. Gen. 15:16, Deut. 9:5, 18:12
 - c. He would use nature also. Josh. 10:11-14
3. Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped God. Vs. 14d
- a. The very posture of Joshua tells us that the man is no other than God.
 - b. Worship is ascribed and allowed to God alone, angels themselves prohibit worship by man. Rev. 19:10
* Joshua was the General of the armies of Israel but Jesus was God!
 - c. This is a Christophany, an appearance of Jesus prior to the incarnation.
 - 1) He appeared to Abraham, at Manre, when three angels appeared, one was Jesus Christ. Gen. 18
 - 2) He appeared to Hagar. Gen. 21
 - 3) He appeared to Jacob and wrestled with a man all night. Gen. 32
 - 4) He appeared to Gideon. Jug. 6:12-18

- 5) He appeared to Samson parents. Judges 13
 - 6) John tells that no one has seen God but the Son Jesus He reveals Him, in fact he tells us the Isaiah saw Jesus in his vision. Jn. 1:18, 12:41, Is. 6
5. Joshua said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" Vs. 14e-f
- a. Joshua entrusts Himself to the service of God in submission to His orders.
 - b. Joshua had one more confirmation of God being with Him, in order that he not be afraid.
* God told Abraham, "I am your shield and exceeding great reward. Gen. 15:1
 - c. Worship and service go hand in hand.
- C. Joshua acknowledges His obedience before God. Vs. 15
- 1. The Commander of the LORD'S army Jesus Christ told Joshua to take his sandal off his feet, for the place where he stood was holy. Vs. 15a-c
 - a. These are the very same word told to Moses. Ex. 3:5
 - b. The holiness of the ground was due to the fact that God was present.
 - c. This was the captain of the armies of Israel, Joshua knew that as God had

been with Moses, so He would be with him, exactly as God told him.

Josh. 3:7d-e

2. The servant Joshua did so. Vs. 15e
 - a. A sign of obedience.
 - b. A sign of reverence.
 - c. A sign of worship.
 - d. A sign of servant-hood.

Illustration

“The last words of Richard Baxter, the famous English Puritan divine, author of the celebrated work *The Saint’s Everlasting Rest*, and the man who preached as dying man to dying men’ were these, “Lord, what Thou wilt, where Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt.” #6112

Application

1. Today more than ever, we need to try the spirits as John exhorts us in the service for God, if we expect God to lead the church and our lives. 1Jn. 4:1
 - a. Some people do things that are contrary to the Bible, attempting to say they are of God.
 - b. The authenticity of the experience is not the standard for qualifying something to be of God, it is the Word of God.
 - c. There have been people in the past who have passed themselves off as being of God and excepted as such, due to their charismatic

personality, yet later found out to be liars and tricksters.

* The Anti-christ will do miracle, yet he will be directly from Satan. 2Thess. 2, Rev. 13

2. The submission of the believer for warfare is wisdom in dependency on God to fight on our behalf. Eph. 6:10-18
 - a. The Captain of the armies of heaven, “The Lord of host” is often the title in the Old Testament, particular in Isaiah and Jeremiah and is always for war and judgment, He has never lost a battle or defeated.
 - b. Jesus is the Captain of our salvation. Heb. 2:10
 - c. Paul on the Damascus road said, “What would you have your servant to do”. Acts 9
 - d. The army of God are mermaids of angels.
 - 1) Elisha prayed that God would open the eyes of Gahazi as the Assyrian army had surrounded them. 2King 6
 - 2) And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: `Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the **battle** is not yours, but God’s. 2Chron. 20:15
 - 3) Lord was sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him ... 1Kings 22:19

- 4) Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure... praise Him all His host. Ps. 103:21, 148:2

3. Obedience to acknowledge the holiness of God is the foundation for all future victories and conquest.

- a. Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of **holiness**. Ps. 29:2
- b. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting **holiness** in the fear of God. 2Cor. 7:1
- c. And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and **holiness**. Eph 4:24
- d. Pursue peace with all people, and **holiness**, without which no one will see the Lord. Heb. 12:14

God required their re-commitment to the leading of God!

Conclusion

God gave to Joshua some prerequisites before the conquest of Jericho.

- I. Their re-commitment to circumcision, the covenant of God, the cutting off of the flesh life!

- II. Their re-commitment to the Passover of God, recognizing God had delivered them!
- III. Their re-commitment to the leading of God, they were to follow!