

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

John Wooden, is regarded as the most successful college basketball coach of all time.

His UCLA Bruins won 10 National Championships in College Basketball during the 60's and 70's.

Seven of those championships were consecutive.

Not one comes close that remarkable achievement.

Not only was he an excellent coach, he was an excellent recruiter as he was able to convince the best high school players to come play for him year after year.

Only the best played for him.

However, despite having these amazing freshmen classes year after year, his first practices with his players always focused on preparation.

And by preparation, I do not mean sitting around watching endless game film – and I do not mean teaching them how to dribble the ball correctly or how to pass the ball or even how to shoot the ball the right way.

By preparation, I mean that John Wooden prepared his players for the upcoming season by teaching them how to correctly put on their socks.

His thinking was that if his players failed to prepare themselves by putting on their socks the correct way, their feet would be prone to getting blisters – and if any of his player's feet suffered from blisters, then they would be

hurting the team's chances of winning because they wouldn't be able to play.

All because they didn't know how to put on their socks.

In our text this morning, God is going to make sure that the Children of Israel know how to put on their socks.

And because there are many parallels between the Children of Israel inheriting the Promised Land and the walk of the believer, we will see the significance for us on learning to put on our own spiritual socks.

Let's pray...

[Jos 5:1-15 NKJV] 1 So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who [were] on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites who [were] by the sea,

heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until we had crossed over, that their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel. 2 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." 3 So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. 4 And this [is] the reason why Joshua circumcised them: 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. 5 For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness,

on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised. 6 For 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." 7 Then Joshua circumcised their sons [whom] He raised up in their place; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way. 8 So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that they stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed. 9 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I

have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you."

Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day. 10 Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. 12 Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year. 13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and

said to Him, "[Are] You for us or for our adversaries?"

14 So He said, "No, but [as] Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" 15 Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand [is] holy."

And Joshua did so.

Two weeks ago, we saw the Children of Israel finally take their first steps into the Promised Land.

They took a step of faith; they trusted the promises of God and crossed the Jordan River.

It was God that held the waters back before their very eyes.

Two million Israelites crossed that day and as soon as the foot of the last priest that held the Ark of the Covenant had crossed, the Jordan returned to its natural state.

Finally, the Promised Land is there for the taking – all they have to do now is conquer all of the cities that are in the land.

Now, last week, as soon as they had finished crossing – we saw the Lord put a hold onto those plans as He commanded them to set up memorial stones.

And I explained how these memorial stones were supposed to be a reminder for them and the subsequent generations of God's faithfulness.

So they set up these memorial stones in Gilgal –

Gilgal becomes like a base camp for the Children of Israel.

We will see that Gilgal is the place where Joshua returns after many victories and even in his defeats.

[Jos 5:1 NKJV] 1 So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who [were] on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites who [were] by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until we had crossed over, that their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.

A few weeks ago when we covered chapter two, we saw how when the spies encountered Rahab the harlot, Rahab revealed to the spies that the Canaanites were broken

hearted after they heard what the Lord had done at the Red Sea forty years earlier.

That they had lost the will to fight because of what the Lord had done to the Amorite kings in the wilderness.

The problem for the Canaanites was that they didn't respond to the message that they heard.

Because 40 years later, when they hear that the Children of Israel have finally crossed over the Jordan and set foot on the Promised Land, they are experiencing the same thing.

They are broken hearted but they do not respond.

They could have repented and turn to God forty years earlier and chose not to.

They could have repented and turned to God now – just like Rahab did, yet they chose not to.

They rejected God's grace.

I am pretty sure we all have friends or family members that have hit rock bottom and we share the gospel with them.

We give them the message of hope.

They know the right thing to do – they see the evidence before their eyes – they see the transformation in our lives and the work God is doing in them - but, in the end they reject it.

They choose to live their lives without hope – because they have rejected hope.

Now, because the Amorites and the Canaanites were demoralized upon hearing that the Children of Israel are in Canaan – human logic would say that this is the perfect time for the Children of Israel to attack.

The people will not put up a fight if they have no longer have a fighting spirit in them right???

Always remember that God's logic supersedes human logic and God is going to command them to do something that according to human logic makes absolutely no sense.

[Jos 5:2-3 NKJV] 2 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." 3 So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.

Now, Gilgal, where they are right now, is not that far away from Jericho. It is about two miles.

I am pretty sure that Joshua was anticipating marching orders from the Lord on how to attack the fortified walls of Jericho when instead God commands him to make flint knives and circumcise all the males.

They are in hostile territory and God has just commanded Joshua to incapacitate his entire army.

The circumcision was not going to be performed by trained surgeons using precise surgical equipment and anesthesia; it was going to done using homemade tools.

Flint knives were usually made from a sharp rock.

It doesn't mean that Joshua had to perform all the circumcisions – it just means that he saw the entire operation.

Now, when we studied the book of Genesis, in chapter 34 we saw the daughter of Jacob raped, and in their response to their sister being raped, we saw Simeon and Levi trick the all of the men of Shechem into circumcising themselves. And as the men of Shechem healed, Simeon and Levi proceeded to kill every single one of them.

This could have easily been the outcome here in Gilgal, it wouldn't take much effort for a few soldiers from Jericho to come into Gilgal and kill all of the men.

So why would the Lord command Joshua to circumcise all the men???

Let's look at the origin of circumcision, Turn with me to Genesis 17.

[Gen 17:9-14 NKJV] 9 And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. 10 "This [is] My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; 11 "and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12 "He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. 13 "He who is

**born in your house and he who is bought with your
money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be
in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.** 14 "And the
**uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the
flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from
his people; he has broken My covenant."**

**So, the first reason on why the Lord commanded Joshua to
circumcise everyone was that the generation of men that
was there in Gilgal – they had never been circumcised in the
first place.**

During the 40 years in the wilderness – the Children of Israel
forsook the command of the Lord to circumcise their children
– and we see this in verse 4-7 in our text in Joshua.

The generation that came out of Egypt – they were circumcised.

But that generation is all dead. They all died in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb.

This generation before they can take hold of the promises of God, they had to go through a preparation – and that preparation involved cutting away the flesh – or consecration.

And through the consecration process they learned how to put on their socks.

You see God used circumcision to set His people apart.

The uncircumcision of this generation was symbolic of their fleshly life and their rebellion and self-will.

After all, that is what circumcision is – the cutting away of the flesh / the cutting away of self.

By commanding them to be circumcised, the Children of Israel were going to have to put all of their trust in God – they were not going to be able to protect themselves because of their condition.

The second reason that God commanded Joshua to circumcise the Children of Israel was that the timing was perfect.

God saw the hearts of the Canaanites – they didn't have the will to fight.

If they didn't have a will to fight – they were not going to attack the Children of Israel as they healed from their procedure.

Now for the believer, before we can pursue the life of abundance and contentment with Jesus Christ, we also have to cut off the flesh.

We also have to stop depending on ourselves or on the world and place our trust in Him.

Let's look at what Paul said in Col 2

[Col 2:11 NKJV] 11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

I asked you to make a note of without hands

As believers, we have already been circumcised.

Our circumcision is an internal one and a spiritual one. Not a physical one.

That sinful, fallen nature that we once had has been removed from us by Jesus Christ.

We have been given a new nature; we are a new creation in Jesus Christ.

The problem we face is that our new nature still resides in our fleshly bodies and because of this; our bodies still have inclinations and tendencies to satisfy itself in ways that are sinful.

We no longer walk in the ways of our new nature, we return to our uncircumcised ways.

How do we combat this?

Through the Word of God, it is sharper than any two-edge sword and guides and corrects us as it cuts away our flesh and helps us to walk in the spirit.

[Jos 5:8-9 NKJV] 8 So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that they stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed. 9 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.

The name Gilgal means the place of rolling –

I asked you to underline what was actually rolled away – and that is the reproach of Egypt.

The reproach of Egypt is the shame and dishonor of the degrading slavery that they experienced at the hands of the Egyptians.

But because they demonstrated their obedience and trust in God, God took away that shame and dishonor.

It is the same work that God wants to do in each one of our lives, He wants to take away the shame and the dishonor of our previous sin and rebellion and wants us to see ourselves for who we truly are in Jesus.

[Jos 5:10-12 NKJV] 10 Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the

very same day. 12 Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

There is another reason why Joshua had to circumcise the Children of Israel that day.

Exodus 12:48 tells us that no uncircumcised man shall eat of the Passover.

So this means that during their time in the wilderness, another thing that they forgot to do was to partake of the Passover.

They failed to commemorate their deliverance.

And here in Gilgal once their flesh has been cut away, they return to the ordinance of recognizing that it was God alone who was responsible for their deliverance.

This is one of thing that occurs after we cut away the flesh, we return to communion with the Lord.

And through communion, we are constantly reminded of our redemption at Calvary.

Not only do the Children of Israel partake of the Passover for the first time in forty years, they actually get a taste of the land for the very first time.

It was on that day that the manna ceased.

For six days of the week, they were commanded to go gather the manna that they were going to eat that day – they couldn't hoard or else the manna would rot.

It was only the day before the Sabbath that they were commanded to pick up enough manna for two days.

For forty years, the Lord provided for them.

Now, He is still going to provide for them – it is just that the provisions are going to come by another way.

Always remember that we need to trust in Him and not in His manner of provision.

One of the mistakes that we make is that we place our trust in His provision and when He chooses to change the manner in which He provides for us, we stumble.

[Jos 5:13-15 NKJV] 13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "[Are] You for us or for our adversaries?"

14 So He said, "No, but [as] Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" 15 Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand [is] holy." And Joshua did so.

It appears that Joshua is scouting Jericho when he encounters this Man.

Now, this is no ordinary Man, this is an example of a theophany in the Old Testament. This is Jesus Christ standing before Joshua.

If you read Numbers 22 and the account of Balaam and his talking donkey – they see this same Man with the sword in His hand.

How do we know it is Jesus Christ, because of Joshua's reaction?

He fell to his face and worshipped this Man.

You see scriptures are very clear that one should never worship an angel.

John, in the book of Revelation falls before an angel twice and the angel corrects John in both occasions.

Now, Joshua asks this Man a question, what side are you on???

And the man answered No –

You see, the important thing is not to try to get God on our side.

We must make sure that we are always on God's side.

Joshua knew he was standing in the presence of God.

And the first command that Joshua receives is for him to take his sandal off.

Now, these are the same words that God spoke to Moses when he approached the burning bush. Exodus 3

By telling him to take his sandal off, the Lord is essentially telling Joshua "As I was with Moses, I will be with you"

The same promise that He spoke to Joshua in Joshua 1.

And Joshua responds in total submission.

Before the Children of Israel could go conquer any of the land, they themselves had to be conquered by God first.

And by Joshua ,the one chosen to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land, submitting to Him, that demonstrated that they were already willing to surrender to His will.

One of the biggest obstacles in our Christian walk is failing to allow God to conquer us.

But without allowing Him to conquer us, we will never be able to live that abundant life that is promised to us.

Amen.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

CALVARY
Santa Cruz

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.



