

JOSHUA CHAPTER 5

STARTING ALL OVER AGAIN WITH A NEW GENERATION

5:1 The reaction of the Canaanites to Israel's arrival was **FEAR** and **DREAD** but while they were terrorised, God had other business to do.

5:2 This generation had not been **CIRCUMCISED** in the wilderness... and they **could** not be God's people under the Covenant of Abraham **without** circumcision.

- Remember Moses was **also** not circumcised when God appeared to him in the Burning Bush in Ex 3:1-6.
 - and God insisted on him **ENTERING** the Covenant of Abraham **BEFORE** his Ministry in Egypt: Ex 4:24-26

Notice that God insists on the **DIVINE ORDER** in everything **IF HE** is to act.

- things have to be done **God's** way – not **our** selfish way and not the way of the world.

- Ⓝ Israel has arrived on the 'resurrection' side of the Jordan: one can only defeat one's foes on **THIS** side when we have 'died' and 'risen' through, with and in CHRIST.
 - when we have become **a New Creation**: 2 Cor 5:17

Notice This circumcision takes place:

- 1) **AFTER** God has shown them His Presence and Power
- 2) **AFTER** they successfully crossed to their new Homeland
- 3) **As soon as they arrived** because they **could** not celebrate Passover otherwise
- 4) 4 days **before** Passover – to give them time to recover
- 5) **BEFORE** they take on the task given to them to be the instruments of Judgement for the inhabitants of this land.

5:2 says circumcise them **THE SECOND TIME**. In Book of Numbers we dealt with all the rebellion of those who were part of the Exodus from Egypt.

5:3-6 explains that those who left Egypt were all circumcised – that means **BEFORE** they left Egypt – **and before** they celebrated their **FIRST PASSOVER**.

- 40 years of lapsing has followed and now the Chosen People – in the **new** generation must be circumcised for the **second** time before their **SECOND PASSOVER**. See **Gen 17:9-11** when **all** males must be circumcised... so their rebellion against God in the Wilderness was very serious. → like people today who don't even want to Baptise their infants.

- Ⓝ It is no wonder they fell so often into sin when they were **OUTSIDE** the Covenant Grace, and it was no wonder that the older generation met with Judgement from God when they failed Him so greatly.

- Ⓝ All this shows up the Loving Kindness of God and His Patience in much greater light. He doesn't give up on us even when we give up on Him

5:5 During the Wilderness most of those who left Egypt were in **Apostasy**.

- to break a Covenant incurred the death penalty cf **Num 14:32-34**
- that's why they died in the Wilderness **Because** God was released from **His** Promise to take them to the Promised Land.
 - **NB** this is the **KEY** to verse 5 here!
 - when Israel finally broke her Covenant with God – after many provocations!
 - Only **TWO** were designated to enter the Promised Land Ⓢ Joshua & Caleb and their Households.

5:6 For 38 years Israel was spiritually **crippled** by Apostasy.
 They did not give their children even **the Sign** of Abraham’s Covenant
 so they were “foreigners”: see **Eph 2:1-3**

Their children did not bear **the mark** of the Covenant-relationship with God.

- so God had no covenant responsibilities to them!
- yet He continued His grace, mercy and loving-kindness to them **all during** those awful years **in the hope** that at least the children would come to Him: cf Matt 19:14

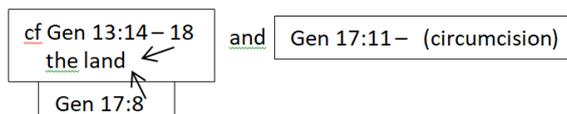
(VIP) To understand the importance of these events go to **John 5:1-15**. **There** a man was crippled for 38years: representing Israel in the Wilderness of the Book of Numbers and also the wilderness of sin which crippled him.

- By a sovereign act of mercy Jesus healed the man and later told him to **“sin no more or something worse may happen to you”**.
 - this something worse is the crippling of **the soul**... which lands it in Hell.
 - Jesus asked the man a **critical** question: **“Do you WANT to be well again?”**
- The application to the Church today is very clear...
 - it has been in apostasy a long time
 - there is general rebellion against the Divine Will
 - they don’t bother to Baptise their children – or marry in Church
 - and the dying cannot hope for the last rites – unless they have exceptional priest-believers...

In the Book of Heaven those in this condition **usurp** God’s gifts that were meant for His Beloved children in Covenant-relationship with Him and living in union with Him.

(NB) The miraculous passage of Israel through the Jordan showed **God’s** willingness to **begin again** and offer all His gifts, graces and privileges to the **children** of those who apostatised! Hence the **SECOND** Circumcision and the **SECOND** Passover.

- They were the children of **ABRAHAM** and He would keep His Promise to Abraham.



5:8 Israel had to stay in the camp (at Gilgal) until all the men **HEALED**.
 Here is another unnoticed miracle: why did their enemies not attack when Israel was most vulnerable?
 With no man fit to fight she could have been annihilated!

- Again, we must acknowledge the **UNSEEN**, but powerful Presence of God protecting them...

(NB) **Circumcision and us:** what is the message God wants to communicate to **you and me?**

Principle : Everything in the OT **prepares** for the NT.
 : Everything begun in the OT **is completed** in the NT.
 Everything in OT **POINTS** prophetically to NT fulfilment.

- (i) Everything in the Life of Christ happened **“for us** and for our salvation”.
- (ii) Jesus was circumcised as an infant... so we are circumcised “through Him... and in Him” since we are **His Body**, the Church.
- (iii) Why? Because He came TO **RE DO, REPAIR** and **REPRESENT** us to God in His Divine Will (Book of Heaven)

Col 2:10 (NKJV) **For, in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and you ARE complete in HIM who is the head of every Principality and Power.**

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

Col 2:12 **buried with Him in Baptism in which you were also raised with Him through Faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.**

Col 2:13 **and you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of the flesh, He has made alive together with Him having forgiven your sins.**

Col 2:14 (JB) **He has overridden the Law, and cancelled every record of the debt that we had to pay; He has done away with it by NAILING IT TO THE CROSS...**

- During the **SCOURGING** Jesus had **His** Body of flesh **TORN** from Him (Hours of the Passion), His Body was CUT (circumcised) to cut away our sins and transgressions and pay for our freedom to rise from the death of sin.

Rom 6:1-14: We entered into this gift through **Baptism**, but we must consciously enter into the fullness of what Christ has done for us.

- Ⓝ This is all done by **Faith** – not by **Feelings!** It is on **the level** of **Spirit** preparing us to enter fully into His Divine Will.

Gal 2:20: **I am crucified with Christ"**

Rom 6:2: We **have DIED** to sin!

Is: 44:22: **I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your sins.
Return to me for I have redeemed you.**

- Ⓝ **Because** we have died to sin **the King's daughter is all glorious within:** Ps 45:13 / Ps 59
- **Because** of this **There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus...** Rom 8:1...

- We must take Paul's warnings in **Rom 2:25-29** where he says that:
 - (a) Physical circumcision for Israel was fine (IF) they kept the Law cf Deut 28:1-14: the Blessings of keeping the Covenant

Especially v25 → Deut 28:15-46: the Curses of Breaking the Covenant

- (b) For **us** circumcision is of **the heart**. It is in **the spirit**, not in the flesh. God wants the **INTERNAL** miracle. cf Ps 51:6
Lord, **You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts You will make me know wisdom.**

cf Deut 10:16 shows that God wanted **INTERNAL** circumcision from Israel also.

Therefore circumcise the foreskin OF YOUR HEART and be stiff-necked no longer.

cf Lev 26:41 and Jer 9:26 both speak of Israel being **uncircumcised in the heart**
cf Acts 7:51

- (c) Repentance for the Prophets of Israel meant **circumcise your heart:** Jer 4:4 cf Acts 7:51
God does not want just **OUTWARD** profession of faith but **INWARD** moral purity.
Jer 4:14 **Wash your hearts of wickedness**

- Ⓝ This inward circumcision is the preparation for **union with God:** Heb 12:14
is the preparation for a miracle of grace in the soul

- The transformation involves (a) that something (a block) is removed from our souls. cf Ezek 36:26 **"I will take away the STONY HEART... give you a heart of flesh"**
 - thus attachment to sin is replaced by a love of holiness.
 - cf Acts 2:37 where the crowd were **cut to the heart** resulting in massive conversions.

(NB) To **truly** love God **Deut 30:6** says **The Lord your God will circumcise your heart And the heart of your descendants (!!)** to love the Lord with **all** your heart...

Notice some steps here:

- (a) the 'old' man... sinful, worldly life: **Col 3:19**
- (b) circumcision (i) our part in repentance
(ii) God's part in grace
- (c) the 'new' man rises to grace and union with God.
cf Gal 3:14 and Gal 6:16 **Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision** (in the flesh) **means anything. What counts is A NEW CREATION**

Note: Physical circumcision had to be carried out on the **8th Day** – a number which signifies a **NEW** beginning / a NEW LIFE: **Lev 12:3 / 2 Cor 5:17**

- (VIP) **Note:**
- It is only **AFTER** the circumcision that Israel is told to face her foes!
 - Only those truly on God's side can overcome and defeat the great Enemy
 - While there is attachment to sin, to the world, to the flesh, **the Devil** has a **foothold**.
 - Only then can we fight **the good fight of the faith**: 1 Tim 6:12
 - We must **remain steadfast in the Faith**: 1 Pet 5:9
 - 1 Jn 5:4 says: **This gives us VICTORY over the world: our Faith** and our trust in God.

Notice that it was only **AFTER** Israel had passed through 'death' in the Jordan and 'rose' to new life in the Promised Land that she was required to **circumcise** herself.

- So it is with us when we want to live in Union with God.
- We have committed ourselves to God... **SO**

- (i) Rom 6:12 **Do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies...**
- (ii) Col 3:1-5 **Set your hearts on things above... put to death what belongs to the sinful nature.**
- (iii) Eph 4:17-32 Live as children of **the light**
- (iv) 1 Jn 1:5-7 Walk in the Light
- (v) 1 Jn 4:7-21 Live in God's Love
- (vi) 1 Cor 13:1-13 Live in neighbourly love