

# Truths From Israel's History, Part 2 - Gilgal

by Ed Miller

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*The sermon explores the significance of Gilgal in Israel's history as a place of spiritual preparation and the removal of the reproach of Egypt for believers today.*

**Duration:** 1:02:24

**Scripture:** Joshua 3:12, Joshua 4:1-10, Joshua 4:19 - 5:12, Psalm 43:3-4

**Topics:** "Old Testament", "Faithfulness Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on four stories from the Bible: the crossing of the Jordan River, the setting up of the base camp at Gilgal, the taking of Jericho, and the defeat and subsequent victory at Ai. The speaker emphasizes that these stories carry the burden of God's heart for the second generation of believers, who face unique challenges. The sermon highlights four key truths illustrated by these stories: the importance of remembering God's faithfulness through monuments, the reinstatement of the Passover, the significance of the Passover lamb, and the appearance of the captain of the Lord's host with a drawn sword. The speaker encourages the audience to understand and carry these truths to help remove the reproach of Egypt.

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## Transcript

I'll ask you to turn, please, to Joshua, chapter 4, if you would. I remember some time ago I was reading through Proverbs, and I read that verse. I didn't think about locating it until I was just sitting here, and I didn't know where it was.

It was a verse on hunting, and God looked not with great favor on someone who hunted for fun. And He said, you know, those are wicked who don't eat what they take in the kill. And the way the Holy Spirit applied that to me is, I love to hunt in the Scriptures for truth.

And, but I wonder if I eat what I take in the kill. And I think the Lord would have us not only search out and find wonderful things, but then feed on that truth and appropriate that truth. As we come again to the study of God's Word, I remind you and I remind my own heart of that indispensable principle, total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit, helpless dependence before the Lord.

That doesn't mean we shouldn't hunt. We should hunt. But it also shows that God rewards spadework, and He delights to show Himself to those who seek after Him.

There's a wonderful verse I'd like to begin with. It's not in Joshua. It's in Psalm 43.

It's verse 3 and part of 4. O send out your light and your truth, let them lead me. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy. And isn't that a wonderful thing? When He sends out His light and truth, then we'll end up at the altar and to God whose altar it is.

And so I'm going to ask you brothers to share with me again in believing prayer as we bow before Him. I don't need to tell you that you don't come into God's presence when you bow your head. You're already in God's presence.

God was in this room before you got in this room. And in a special way, when you came in the room, God came in the room because of His presence in you. But we do acknowledge that presence by bowing before Him.

So let's do that. Our Father, we thank You this morning that we can call upon You and wait upon Thy Holy Spirit to unveil again in a fresh and living way the dear Son of God to our hearts. We thank You for every part of the Bible in a special way this morning for chapters 4 and 5 of Joshua.

We pray that You would open up our hearts to behold our Lord Jesus. Take us beyond the sacred page. Show Yourself, Thou that dwells between the cherubim.

Shine forth, send forth Thy light and Thy truth, we pray. Then we'll go to the altar of God, to God our exceeding joy. Draw us this morning, Lord, and we'll run after Thee.

We ask in Jesus' precious name. Amen. I remind you of the prayer that is sort of the key prayer for my heart for the entire weekend from Psalm 72 and verse 6. May He come down like rain upon the moongrass like showers that water the earth.

And then two verses later it says, And may He rule from sea to sea. Well, that's our prayer, of course. We're meditating on a wonderful portion of God's precious Word together.

We're looking at Israel's redemptive history. We're looking at Israel at the time when they crossed the Jordan River all the way to their victory at Ai. We're looking at wonderful chapters, chapter 3 through chapter 8. Last evening I suggested to you what I felt was at least the direction of my heart for this weekend.

I'd like to take those four passages, four stories, the crossing of the Jordan River, the setting up of the base camp at Gilgal, the taking of Jericho, and then the defeat and the subsequent victory at Ai as the four stories that I feel will carry the burden of God's heart as I understand it for this weekend. It's not so much, as I said yesterday, how to cross Jordan, but there's three quarters of a million people who have been redeemed who haven't crossed yet, and many of those with special problems. And the special problems are they're a second generation of believers.

And that second generation has a harder time than the first generation. I noticed that in our children. They just had a bigger struggle.

My firstborn son, in a special way, felt like everything was handed as an heirloom to him. And he was getting it from mom and dad, and he didn't get it from the Lord. And how he had to struggle to get it from the Lord Himself.

And so there's this second generation of believers that need to go in, and God often uses the first generation of believers to help the second generation of believers to enter in. And you have that illustrated here. Of course, when we say to enter in, we're talking about in the picture, the land.

In the reality, the Lord. It's Him. All that was pictured in that land was a picture of our Savior.

There's no other purpose to cross Jordan except to get to Him. There's no other purpose to learn the lessons of Gilgal, except if it prepares me to enter in and possess a full Savior, a full Christ. That's why we take Jericho.

That's why we learn from Ai. It's to go in and possess a full Christ, and by God's grace, to enable others to go in and possess that same Savior. Now, in our look at these wonderful stories, we've been looking, in a particular way, at the instruments God used to get the people across the Jordan.

He used the priests to get the people to Gilgal. He used the elders to take the people into Jericho. He used Joshua, the military leader, to continue in the land.

He used Joshua and the elders and the army and the entire body of believers. And so we've been focusing. We'd like to focus on those things.

If you missed any of that discussion last evening, I don't want to spend the whole time reviewing, but I think there are some tapes that will be available and so on. That brings us this morning to the next phase of helping others possess a full Savior. Chapters 4 and 5, the setting up of the base camp at Gilgal.

According to accepted geography, Gilgal was about five miles from where they crossed, from the Jordan, and then there was another two or three miles to get to Jericho. In other words, Gilgal was a little more than halfway to their first conflict in Jericho. I've already noted that God didn't bring them directly from the Jordan River and straight to Jericho.

Certainly He could have done that, but He didn't do that. And there's instruction. There's reasons why He didn't.

Crossing the Jordan is certainly the first step, but there is some preparation needed before we attempt Jericho. And God gives this at Gilgal, some things that need to be learned and need to be learned soundly before we dare go to Jericho and face the enemy. And it was at Gilgal that the Lord laid down these wonderful principles where they had to learn the most basic of all Christian truths.

And I'm suggesting if God's going to use us to help others possess a full Savior, we must not only get them across the river, but by God's grace, we better carry them to Gilgal as well. We looked at the priests holding the ark on their shoulders in order to learn how to assist others across the Jordan. In this particular story, it is not the priests holding the ark on their shoulders, but it's the elders, and they're holding something else on their shoulders.

And so if you'll join with me in chapter 4, we'll begin reading at verse 2. Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, and command them, saying, Take up for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the lodging place where you'll lodge tonight. And so Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel, one man from each tribe. Joshua said to them, Cross again to the ark of the Lord your God, into the middle of the Jordan, and each

of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel.

Now, what did these stones represent? Of course, the answer is the whole nation, all the people, twelve men, one from each tribe, twelve tribes making up the body, the whole nation. And these selected, hand-chosen elders, these leaders, had to each take a stone and put it on his shoulder. And that stone represented his tribe, his congregation, his flock.

And then the elders carried that which represented the people of God. The elders shouldered the camp. The elders carried the stones.

Don't just read that la, la, la. The elders carried the stones five miles, picture it, carried Gilgal's uphill, five miles uphill to this wonderful place at Gilgal. Now, I don't think on the level of earth that's an easy task necessarily.

I know they had the power of the Lord to do it. It was a great privilege for those men to be chosen to carry the people of God to this special place where they could learn these precious truths so they could be prepared to enter in and appropriate a precious Savior. That's what it was all about.

There's a sense as priests where our entire ministry is going forth in faith and standing on ground that God has dried up and holding up Christ. And that's our whole ministry as priests. But then there's another sense as elders where there's another ministry.

And it's carrying the people of God to the place where they can learn some of the most basic of all principles. And that's what's illustrated, I think, in this story. And some of God's dear people will never get to Gilgal if the elders don't carry them there, if the elders don't lug them there.

This morning I'd like to show you the great purpose of Gilgal as I understand it from the heart of God. What God accomplished at Gilgal, what were the great truths of Gilgal. Look, please, at chapter 5, verse 9. And the Lord said to Joshua, Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you, and so the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

And then if you go back, please, to chapter 4, verse 19 and 20. And now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month and camped at Gilgal on the eastern edge of Jericho. Those twelve stones which they had taken from the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.

Now the word Gilgal comes from a word that means circle or wheel or rolling. Some people think that when the stones were set up in Gilgal, they were set up in a circle rather than piled as an altar. They were set up in a circle.

We don't know. Usually the definition that's given of Gilgal comes from verse 9. Today I have rolled away, circle, rolling. Today I have rolled away the burden, the reproach of Egypt from you.

It's the place where the reproach of Egypt is rolled away. That's what Gilgal is. That's what God does there.

If we're going to help others possess a full Savior, we must help them across the Jordan. But then we must also take them, carry them to the place where the reproach of Egypt is finally rolled away. That has to precede the taking of Jericho.

Now whatever that reproach of Egypt is, it's got to be rolled away. It can't be rolled away until you cross Jordan. It must be rolled away before you get to Jericho.

What's that reproach of Egypt? Here was the situation. God's redeemed people, redeemed by power and blood from Egypt, had been wandering around in the wilderness. They had been redeemed from, but they had not yet been redeemed unto.

There's a redemption from and there's a redemption unto. They were redeemed from Egypt in all it represents, but they had not yet been redeemed unto Canaan and all that it represents, the fullness of the Savior. And because they were redeemed from, but not unto, the reproach of Egypt was still on them, sort of like when Lazarus was raised from the dead.

He was alive, but he still had his grave clothes on. And he was still bound. He was still in bondage.

And he had those clothes of death on them. Even though they were redeemed, with these eyes you couldn't tell they were redeemed. They were out of Egypt, but the reproach of Egypt was still on them.

They were still in bondage. You looked at the redeemed people of God and scratched your head and said, if they're redeemed, why are they wandering around in unbelief? Why are they wandering around the desert? Why aren't they content? Why are they grumbling? Why are they groaning? Why are they griping? Why are they trudging through the wilderness? Why are their lives so barren? Why is there no fruit? Why don't they have a testimony? Where's their joy? Where's their peace? I thought they were redeemed. Yeah, they are.

But the reproach of Egypt is still on them, because they haven't been redeemed unto. They've just been redeemed from Egypt. Thousands of Christians haven't been to Gilgal, I fear, and the reproach of Egypt is still on them.

They're out of Egypt. They're saved. They're delivered.

They'll tell you about the Passover lamb. They'll tell you about the blood that got them across and so on. But they're wandering around like the uncircumcised, as they were in the whole wandering.

And they look just like the uncircumcised, and they still had on them. They were living under condemnation and guilt and shame and so on, because the smell of Egypt was still on them. The burden of Egypt, the weariness, the labor, the fear, the frustration, the oppression of the flags.

God said they need to go to Gilgal, and someone's going to have to carry them there. The reproach of Egypt was rolled away at Gilgal. This is all final preparation.

Now, there are four pictures I'd like us to consider this morning from chapters four and five. Four pictures that contain age-abiding principles, wonderful truths of life. The first picture has to do with the 24 stones.

When we say, by the way, the elders have to carry people to Gilgal, what we mean definitely is that God uses His people, who have understood these things, to carry His people to the truths that took place at Gilgal, where the reproach is rolled away. The first picture is the 24 stones, the two monuments of 12 stones. Twelve stones were set up in Gilgal, and 12 stones were set up in the middle of the Jordan River.

We'll look at those passages when we come to them in our discussion. Chapter 3, verse 12, chapter 4, 1 to 10, chapter 4, 19 to 24, and so on. We'll look at that as we come to it.

Twenty-four stones. There's a truth there that we need to carry them to. The second picture is the flint knives, and that's illustrated in chapter 5, 1 to 9. The flint knives have to do with the renewal of the covenant of circumcision.

There's a principle there, and we have to carry them to that truth. They're not ready for Jericho until they've understood that truth. The third picture is in chapter 5, verses 10 to 12, the Passover lamb.

They reinstated the Passover. Twenty-four stones, the flint knives, the Passover lamb, and the final picture is in chapter 5, verses 13 to 15, the appearance of the captain of the Lord's host with the sword drawn in his hand. Those four truths, illustrated by the stones, illustrated by the flint knife, illustrated by the Passover lamb, and illustrated by the man with the sword drawn in his hand.

To those truths, we must carry them, because then the reproach of Egypt rolls away. May God help us as we look at these wonderful, wonderful stories. In the first principle, illustrated by the two monuments of twelve stones, if you'll follow please, chapter 4, verses 2 and 3, take for yourself twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, and command them, saying, Take up for yourself twelve stones from here out of the middle of Jordan, from the place where the priest's feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the lodging place where you'll lodge tonight.

Each tribe had a stone that was taken up out of the dry river bed, the bed that God had dried up, and carried over to Gilgal where they would lodge. And then chapter 4, verse 9, then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the place where the feet of the priest who carried the ark of the covenant were standing, and they're there to this day. So one monument of twelve stones was set up in Gilgal, and the other monument of twelve stones was set up right in the middle of the dry river bed where the priest stood, and there Joshua arranged those twelve stones.

Now, those two monuments of twelve stones each tell a wonderful story. Those of you who've crossed the Jordan will recognize the story as I unfold it. Look please at chapter 4, verse 18, one of those verses that we are tempted to read, la, la, la.

May God help us to see what He's saying. Chapter 4, verse 18, It came about when the priest who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord came up from the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of the priest's feet were lifted up to the ground, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place, and went over all their banks as before. I want you to try to picture this, and the waters went over all their banks as they did before.

I made a point yesterday from chapter 3, verse 16, that when God dried up the Jordan, since there was a literal place named Adam, and He rolled it back to Adam, and everything from Adam to death, He dried that up. That's what the river Jordan represents. By His death and resurrection, He's dried that up.

I can see it'd be a little bit of a puzzle for someone stepping out of the Jordan walking on dry ground, crossing over the Jordan. It's back. Did you notice it all came back? Are you telling me that stream from Adam to death is still flowing? I thought it dried up.

There's a lesson here that God's people need to hear, and the elders have to carry them to that. It's a puzzle for some to stand on the resurrection side, to have crossed over on dry ground a river that God had dried up, and then to turn around, and instead of seeing dry ground, you see a raging river. Ever been there? A raging river.

One of the most confusing issues in my entire Christian experience was that very thing. How it bothered me after all the years I had known the Savior to see that river still raging. All that abiding corruption in my heart, things still flowing from Adam and ending in death, and I thought it was dry.

How come that river is still flowing? It's still there. So frustrating. And I'm not ready for Jericho unless I understand God's heart on this.

It's important to understand the principle illustrated by the stones. It's important to understand how the Jordan can still rage after it's been dried up. I think many of us have confessed the truths theologically.

God dried up the river. I'm crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live.

Not I. Christ lives in me. I'm alive in Him. I reckon myself dead to sin.

And then you get alone and you look in the mirror or you look at your heart and you have to confess that river is still there. And that stuff flowing from Adam and all the way to death, it still flows and sometimes it rages. And in this case, it flowed and flooded.

It was overflowing all its banks. How can I be saved and still have that river flood like that? The first principle addresses this mystery. This enigma.

This frustration to the people of God. Why can I stand on the banks of the river and with this eye say that it's still flowing and with this eye say that it's dried up? The principle theologians have a name for it. They call it identification.

And they call it identification truths. See, there's a part of me you can see. Let's go to Gilgal.

See, there I am. Look at my stone. You can see that.

With these eyes, you can see my actions and you can see my attitudes and you can see my behavior and you can see what I do. But there's also a part of me that you can't see. Just like those stones that were buried over with that river.

A part that's secret and a part that's deep and a part that's hidden and a part that's covered over. And a part that I know is there. And it's reflected by the part you can see.

And there's a mirror image. And there's two monuments. And one of them is established in the land.

But that's just a picture. It's established in Gilgal. But that's just a picture.

It's established in Christ. And that's what it's a picture of. And it's important for me to know when I look at that river that my stone is in Christ.

It's important for you to know when you look at the river where your stone is. It's in Christ. It's established in the land.

It's established in Gilgal. It's important to know that God has done something that nobody else can see. And they look at your life and they see this raging river and they say, you're no different.

And I say, I'm different. There's something down there. There's a monument down there that you may not see.

But it's there. And the people of God need to know it. They need to know where their stone is.

They need to know it's established in the land. Two thousand years ago in the person of Christ, I crossed the Jordan River. 1965 when I believed, I crossed two thousand years ago.

I crossed again. I can picture a child coming up to his father or his grandfather, to his mother. Explain to me, Dad, because that's what he said is going to happen.

The kids are going to come up and look at these stones. Tell me, Dad, Mom, what do these strange stones mean? Why do we have these stones here? And the father, the grandfather, the relatives say, Son, child, let me tell you a story. Let me tell you.

We got to go for a walk. Let's go for about five miles. I want to show you something.

So they go down to the banks of the Jordan River. And the father or the grandfather or the mother or whoever it is, the saint says, Son, this is going to be hard for you to believe. Remember that pile of rocks you saw up there in Gilgal? There's another pile like that right out there in the middle of the Jordan River.

You can't see it, but it's there. How can it be there, Dad? Let me tell you a story on how God dried that up one day. Let me tell you a story about how the water stood on a heap one day.

Let me tell you about a story how the priest held the ark and how the ark of God dried it up. And then the parents would tell their children the story of where their stone is and how there's a mirror and how it doesn't look like it, but it's still there nevertheless, and so on. Wonderful, wonderful principle this.

As my son Stephen and I studied this together, he reminded me to remind you that the stones were only a picture of the people of God that represents us. And in our day, my son has never come to me and said, what do those strange stones mean? He's never done that. They have come and said, you're strange.

What are you all about? How come you run in that circle with others that look just like you? It's your life that they see. And then you explain to them these great truths of identification with Christ. When I studied this, I puzzled why they set up 12 stones at Gilgal.

You see, if I had written the Bible and I speak as a fool, I would have set up 9 1/2 stones at Gilgal. You know why? Because those 2 1/2 tribes that never got over. Tribe of Reuben and the tribe of Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh.

They said, we don't want to go over. I said, well, they don't deserve to have their stone over there. Put 2 1/2 stones over there.

God said, no, they're the people of God. And I don't care what the river looks like. Your stone's in the land.

And I don't care where you pitch your tent. Your stone's in the land. And they need to hear it.

They need to hear that. And the elders need to carry the people of God to that place where they can learn these identification truths that God sees you in Christ and God sees you in the land. And even though the river rages and even though you might camp on the other side and be in the wilderness.

Brothers, are you thankful this morning that your stone is in Christ? Sometime you look at that river. Sometime you look at where you pitch your tent. And you wonder, we're just made of clay.

We're so stupid how we rebel against the Lord. And God keeps reminding us that our stone nevertheless is in the land. Our stone is in Christ Jesus.

Now that's the first principle and it's illustrated by those two monuments of stone. There's a second principle they must learn. And we must carry them to that truth.

Joshua 5, verse 2 to 8, At that time the Lord said to Joshua, Make for yourselves flint knives, and circumcise again the sons of Israel the second time. And so Joshua made himself flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath Haralot. This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them.

All the people who came out of Egypt were males. All the men of war who died in the wilderness along the way after they came out of Egypt. For the people who came out were circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness until all the nation, that is the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished because they did not listen to the voice of the Lord. To whom the Lord had sworn He would not let them see the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. Their children whom He raised up in their place, Joshua circumcised.

For they were uncircumcised because they had not circumcised them along the way. Verse 8, When they had finished circumcising all the nation, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. This is the principle of circumcision illustrated by these flint knives.

As you know, this is the covenant that God had instituted with Abraham. Genesis chapter 17 verses 10 to 27. The sign that was to be the symbol of the everlasting covenant that God's people belong to Him.

I told you there is a separation from and there is a separation unto. A redemption from and a redemption unto. In circumcision, you have both pictures.

You see, in circumcision, as you know, a little piece of literal flesh is removed from the body, is separated from the body. The flesh is separated from the body. That becomes a picture in the Word of God.

Separation from, separation unto. God said, I am doing this because we have a special union and you belong to Me. Most teachings or many teachings on separation only emphasize separation from.

Christians should not do this and should not go there, should not be involved in this and should be separated from that kind of thing. But the main point of separation is not separation from. It is separation unto.

Separation unto the Lord, unto union with Him, unto a relationship with Him. I am so glad God put these two things piggybacked in the Bible. Because first I look over my shoulder and I see that river raging.

And I say, I know it is dry, but it does not look dry. And I look at my heart and it looks like everything from Adam to death continues to flow. And God says, now let me tell you about circumcision, separation from the flesh.

Both are true. It keeps flowing, but then God begins to do this marvelous work. At Gilgal He renewed this circumcision.

Now this picture, of course every picture breaks down. And this God is so wise. And for God to select a piece of flesh taken from the source of life itself, and to separate that flesh from the body, He could not give the full picture.

Listen to the full picture. Colossians 2.11 Colossians 2.11 says, In Him you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands in the removal of the body of flesh by the circumcision of Christ. In other words, if God would have given the picture to show the reality, it would not be a little foreskin removed.

You would have to be excoriated. You would have to have your whole flesh taken off. The whole body of the flesh to picture the reality.

The circumcision not made with hands. For 40 years, God's people had neglected this right, this sign that they belonged to the Lord, that they were separated unto Him. They had neglected that for 40 years, so they walked around uncircumcised.

They looked just like the unsaved. Now, since they've crossed the Jordan, God says there's got to be a difference. I want you to know, first of all, that you're identified with Christ.

I want you to know, secondly, that by the covenant of God, in a circumcision not made with hands, you're separated unto the Lord. They need to know that before they go to Jericho. That they're separated unto the Lord.

When God instituted the right of circumcision, Genesis 17 verse 12, He said, Every male who's eight days old shall be circumcised. That's an amazing picture, you know. That's part of the final preparation.

They had to become like little children, eight days old. Again, we sort of read this, la, la, la. They're about to enter a seven-year war.

They're about to go into conflict with all of these ites. They're going to face 31 different kings, who each region had its own king and its own army. You say, I'm going in to take the land.

It's a time to be tough. It's a time to be strong. It's a time to be alert.

It's a time to be trained. It's a time to be ready. It's a time to be a soldier.

It's a time to go forward as men. God put the fighting forces, every one of them, in the position of a baby eight days old. God circumcised the fighting forces and He made children out of all of them.

And He weakened them on purpose. He said, you're My people and you're separated unto Me. Who takes the land? Children take the land.

It's all by covenant. And they need to hear that. They need to know that.

And God says to these elders, I want you to carry them up there to the place where the reproach of Egypt is rolled away. They need to know their stone is in Christ. They need to know that because otherwise they'll get frustrated when they see that river go by.

And they'll wonder how if they're even believers. They need to know they're identified with Christ and their stone is in the land. They need to know that they are My people by covenant, everlasting covenant.

That I'll circumcise them. That their separation that I require doesn't depend on them. I'll do it and they'll be little babies.

And the babies are going to conquer the land and thresh the field. They need to hear that. Third principle they need.

Very basic truth. Chapter 5, verse 10. While the sons of Israel camped at Gilgal, they observed the Passover on the evening of the fourth day of the month on the desert plains of Jericho.

On the day after Passover, on that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes, parched grain. And the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten some of the produce of the land so that the sons of Israel no longer had manna. They ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan during that year.

Go back, if you would, to chapter 4, verse 19. Joshua 4, verse 19 says, Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month. Why would the Holy Spirit be so specific to tell us exactly the day that they came up out of the Jordan River? The tenth day of the first month.

And the answer is found in Exodus 12, 1-6. When they got out of Egypt at Passover, God said, On the tenth day, and no day but the tenth day, you select a lamb. You choose a sacrificial lamb to take your place.

And then a few days later, of course, you know the story of the Passover. Forty years to the day, they stepped out of the Jordan and the first thing they had to do was select a lamb. As soon as they got out, they had to select a lamb and celebrate this Passover.

I believe God was saying at least three things by this wonderful reinstitution of the Passover. They had neglected it throughout the years. Number one, I think He was saying, The way in is exactly the way you got out.

How do I get out of Egypt? Through the blood of the Lamb. How am I going to get in to Canaan? Through the blood of the Passover Lamb. The same way you got out is the way you get in.

I've heard people say, Well, I've had faith to get saved, but I don't have the faith to appropriate life in Christ. It's the same faith. How'd they get out? They walked on dry ground.

How'd they get in? They walked on dry ground. How'd they get out? The Passover Lamb. How are they going to get in? The Passover Lamb.

And He's saying, As you have received Christ, finish it. So walk in Him. You continue the way you've begun.

You were never more surrendered to the Lord than that first moment you gave yourself to Him. You might talk later about, I accepted Him as Savior, and then later I accepted Him as Lord. That's not true.

That's theological bunk. When you accepted the Lord, you accepted Him as a person. And He is Savior, and He is Lord, and He is Priest, and He's everything.

And when you came to Christ, you took Him as He was, and He was everything. Now, you may have departed from that and need to come back to that. You can talk about a second blessing, and a third

blessing, and a hundredth blessing, but it boils down to rediscovering the first blessing, no matter how you slice it.

And it's coming back to what you got in the first place. And God is bringing them back now to where they began. They need to know that they're in Christ.

They need to know that. They need to know that they're separated unto God and belong to Him by covenant. They need to know that.

And they need to know it's all because of the blood of the Passover Lamb. Every good thing God's ever done for you has been because of the blood of Jesus. And every good thing God's ever done for me has been because of the blood of Jesus.

And it's just as easy to get in as it was to get out of Egypt. The second thing I think God teaches us by reinstating this Passover at this time, He was teaching them that they did not deserve to go into Canaan. I can picture some of the Jews who might have been tempted to be proud and say, God's going to use us as executioners.

Why, those sinful Canaanites? They deserve what they're going to get. We're going in and annihilate them in the name of the Lord. And they deserve to be annihilated.

They're sinners. They're wicked. And they don't deserve to live.

By God reinstating the Passover at Gilgal, He made them realize again the only reason they're going to escape judgment is because of the substitute lamb. They didn't deserve to get out of Egypt. And they don't deserve to go into Canaan.

They deserve everything the Canaanites are going to get except the Passover lamb took it in their place as their substitute. And God used this Passover as a grade humbling agent in order to bring them low. And then the third thing God accomplished by reinstating the Passover was the end of the Passover.

How'd the Passover end? Feeding on the lamb. They had to eat the lamb. Feeding on the lamb.

And it's right at this point that the Holy Spirit breaks into the record as they're feeding on the lamb. And God says, Now the manna stopped. And now they started to eat the goodness of the lamb.

The lamb is Christ. And they begin to feed on the lamb. Don't take these people to Jericho until they've been to Gilgal.

They need to know about identification that they are in Christ Jesus. They need to know that. And we need to carry them to that truth.

They need to know that they're separated unto God in holiness. And God has done it. And that their holiness doesn't depend on them.

It depends on Him. They need to know it's all because of the blood. And I don't deserve to go in.

And nobody deserves to go in. They need to know how to feed on Jesus before they get to Jericho. Say, we need to know the wiles of the enemy and how to fight Satan.

Don't fight Satan before you feed on Jesus. Learn how to feed on Him first. And you'll be amazed how those walls will come down.

People get hurt at Jericho because they haven't been to Gilgal. Say, well, it's tough taking some Christians to learn these truths. Yeah, they're heavy sometimes.

Don't give up, saints. Carry them there. Tell them about their identification with Christ.

Tell them. Teach them. Show them where their stone is.

They get frustrated with the river. They get frustrated where their camp is. Show them where their stone is.

Show them what circumcision is and how it relates to Him. It's Christ. They need to know these things.

They need to know that they don't deserve it. They need to know it's based on the blood. They need to know it's because of the cross.

They need to feed on Jesus. One last picture and we'll be done. Chapter 5, please.

Verse 13 to 15. We're going to pick this up this evening. I'm only going to give one point from this story now.

And then tonight we'll begin here because this is a very strategic part of taking Jericho. And this is the appearance of this wonderful angel of the Lord. Verse 13.

It came about when Joshua was by Jericho. He lifted up his eyes and looked. And behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand.

Joshua went up to him and said to him, Are you for us or for our adversaries? He said, No, rather indeed, I've come now as a captain of the host of the Lord. Joshua fell on his face to the earth and bowed down and said to him, What has my Lord to say to his servant? The captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, Remove your sandals from your feet for the place where you're standing is holy. And Joshua did so.

Now there's a whole lot in these five verses. And we'll discuss much of that this evening, Lord willing. But the point that I want to make now is this.

He's the one that got me over Jordan by drying up the Jordan. And he's the one that's going to have to get me into the land. I can show you from the Scriptures that the taking of the land of Canaan took approximately seven years.

It was a seven-year war. Here we are at Gilgal. As you go through the book of Joshua, many swords are going to be drawn in this book for that seven-year war.

But what's the first sword that's drawn in the book of Joshua? See, it's not in the hand of Joshua. It's not in the hand of any soldier. The first sword drawn in this book is in the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of the Host of Armies of Heaven and Earth, the Lord Jesus Himself.

And among the many things he's saying here, he's saying 2 Chronicles 20.15. 2 Chronicles 20.15 says, The battle is not yours, but God's. The battle is not yours, but God's. You know why Gilgal is so important? Some of the greatest truths that you'll ever learn in your Christian life take place there.

If you're going to help others to appropriate a full Savior and to know what it is to enter into the land and live in abundance, they have better learn what identification means. Identification with Jesus. Separation unto Jesus.

Feeding on Jesus. The battle belongs to Jesus. Those are things you need to learn at Gilgal.

You know what happens when you learn them? The reproach of Egypt rolls away. The reproach of Egypt rolls away and we're ready to go forward and take the land. May God help us as priests to go forth in faith and stand on ground.

God has dried up and hold high the Lord Jesus Christ. Live under His Lordship that they might pass over. And as elders, may the Lord grace us to pick up the whole body of Christ, our particular group that we represent, and burden, carry that burden, and carry it however many miles you need to carry it until they learn those great and indispensable truths without which they're not going to possess the land.

Oh, may God help us. We want to go in. We want to help them in.

And I'm suggesting what they learned at Gilgal, those four great truths, are so necessary before we dare stand up against Jericho. Well, let's pray. Father, thank You not for what I think these things mean, but for everything You've inspired them to mean will You work those things in our hearts.

And Lord, thank You for the privilege we have to carry Your people to these precious truths. And precious indeed they are. Work them in our hearts, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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