

LESSONS FROM GILGAL:
WHAT TO DO WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE IMPOSSIBLE

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ISRAEL HAD ARRIVED IN THE PROMISED LAND

- 1) **THE JORDAN RIVER** closed behind them after they had crossed over. There was **NO PLACE TO RETREAT** in the event the battle went bad. **Either** they fought and won **or** they died in the land. **RETREAT WAS NOT AN OPTION.**

- 2) From the Jordan they travel to **GILGAL** for **THEIR FIRST CAMPSITE. GILGAL BECAME THE PLACE OF MANY SIGNIFICANT O.T. EVENTS:**
 - 1) Israel placed the **TWELVE STONES** in Gilgal AS A **MEMORIAL** to God's miraculous provision in crossing the Jordan River (Jos 4).

 - 2) GILGAL became **JOSHUA'S MILITARY HEADQUARTERS** while conquering the Promised Land. They returned to this **base of operations** several times.

 - 3) IN ISRAEL'S LATER HISTORY, Gilgal would become THE PLACE where **SAMUEL performed his duties** as a judge of Israel (1 Sam 7:15-16).

 - 4) They would proclaim **SAUL** King of Israel at Gilgal (1 Sam 11:14-15). Gilgal was the place where **Saul launched** his military attacks against the Philistines (1 Sam 13:2-15). It was also the location of **SAUL'S REJECTION** as king (1 Sam 13:8).

 - 5) It was at Gilgal that they reunited **DAVID** with the Israelites after Absalom's revolt was crushed (2 Sam 19:15,40).

- **THE NAME GILGAL** meant **CIRCLE OF STONES**. Perhaps it received that name from **the twelve stones** taken from the Jordan River and placed there as **A MEMORIAL**.

AFTER ISRAEL ARRIVED AT GILGAL WE READ:

(V. 1), "And it came to pass, when all **THE KINGS OF THE AMORITES**, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all **THE KINGS OF THE CANAANITES**, which were by the sea, **HEARD** that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that **THEIR HEART MELTED, NEITHER WAS THERE SPIRIT IN THEM ANY MORE**, because of the children of Israel."

RAHAB HAD GIVEN A SIMILAR REPORT to the two spies who lodged in her house in Jericho days before Israel had crossed the Jordan

(Josh 2:10-11), "FOR WE HAVE HEARD how the LORD **DRIED UP** the water of **THE RED SEA** for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto **THE TWO KINGS OF THE AMORITES**, that were on the other side Jordan, **SIHON** and **OG**, whom ye utterly destroyed. {11} And **AS SOON AS WE HAD HEARD** these things, **OUR HEARTS DID MELT, NEITHER DID**

THERE REMAIN ANY MORE COURAGE IN ANY MAN, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

S THE MIRACULOUS CROSSING of the Jordan HAD CREATED A **PHENOMENAL FEAR** in the hearts of the inhabitants of Canaan. A **TERRIBLE FEAR** PRECEDED THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL.

- **GOD USED THAT FEAR** to lead **RAHAB** TO SALVATION.
- THAT SAME FEAR was used to **hardened the hearts** of the other inhabitants in the land. It did **NOT RESULT IN THEIR SALVATION** as it had for Rahab. The same fire that melts the **WAX** hardens the **CLAY**.

S THE **FEAR THAT PRECEDED ISRAEL'S ARMY** was the result of God's presence in their midst. God was **FULFILLING** what He had said through Moses several times.

- (**Deu 1:30**), "The LORD your God which goeth before you, he **SHALL FIGHT FOR YOU**, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes;"

S **Moses** spoke those words after **THE TEN SPIES** had given their negative report and discouraged Israel from taking the Promised Land. The people were convinced they could not take the land because the people were **too tall and big**. The cities were **walled** up to heaven and **giants** were in the land.

S Because of their unbelief they had to spend **FORTY YEARS** in the wilderness.

- (**Deu 3:22**), "Ye shall not fear them: for the LORD your God he **SHALL FIGHT FOR YOU**."

S **Moses** told Israel that Joshua would take his place after his death. Joshua would be victorious conquering the Promised Land because God would fight for Israel.

- (**Deu 20:1, 4**), "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than you, be not afraid of them: for the LORD **THY GOD IS WITH THEE**, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt . . . {4} For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, **TO FIGHT FOR YOU** against your enemies, to save you."

S (**Zec 4:6**), ". . . Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

S ISRAEL'S **FIRST MAJOR OBSTACLE** after arriving in the land was the formidable walled city of **JERICHO**. It was located just over **2 MILES** from **GILGAL**. Jericho was one of those cities the spies had described **thirty-eight years earlier** as having walls that reached to the heavens.

S **EITHER THEY CONQUER JERICHO**, or Jericho conquers them.

EITHER THEY DEFEAT JERICHO, or Jericho defeats them.
Pretending that Jericho was not there was **NOT AN OPTION**.

- S **THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL HAD A MAJOR PROBLEM**. They had **none of the necessary MILITARY EQUIPMENT** to conquer a major walled city. They had no **battering rams**. They had no **catapults**. They had arrows, spears and swords, but that was not sufficient equipment to conquer a city like Jericho.

HOW WOULD THEY EVER CONQUER SUCH A FORMIDABLE CITY? What would they do in the face of the impossible?

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- S **LET'S APPLY** that question to ourselves. **WHAT ARE WE TO DO WHEN WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH THE IMPOSSIBLE?**
How does the **SONG** go?

“Got any **rivers** you think are **uncross able?** Have any **mountains** you think are too high to climb?”

- S **WHEN WE LEARN THE LESSONS OF GILGAL**, we will have the answer to that question. What Israel did in the face of their impossible Jericho is what we are to do in the face of our impossible circumstances. **IT WILL BE GOOD** for us to **LEARN THE LESSONS OF GILGAL**.

WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE IMPOSSIBLE

- I. **SUBMIT TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION** (PAST TENSE)
- II. **TAKE TIME TO WORSHIP, REMEMBER & CELEBRATE GOD**
- III. **ENTER INTO GOD'S PROVISION**
- IV. **FIND GOD'S WILL** (FUTURE TENSE)

I. SUBMIT TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION

(V. 2), “At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and **CIRCUMCISE** again the children of Israel the second time.”

- S **GOD'S INSTRUCTION WAS CLEAR** — EVERY MALE in the camp AT GILGAL eight days and older (Gen 17:12) was to **BE CIRCUMCISED**. **Forty years** had passed since Israel had left Egypt and the new generation had not submitted to that rite. Israel **HAD BEEN DISOBEDIENT** to GOD'S CLEAR COMMAND for forty years. The time for disobedience was over as God made clear His instruction to Joshua.
- S **GOD'S ORIGINAL INSTRUCTION** helps understand the significance of obeying the command at Gilgal before battling at Jericho. The rite of circumcision was **FIRST INSTITUTED IN GENESIS 17:**
- 1) The LORD appeared to **ABRAM** when he was **99 years old**.
 - 2) Abram and his wife, Sarai, had **THEIR NAMES CHANGED**. **ABRAM** became **ABRAHAM**; **SARAI**, became **SARAH**. The difference in their two names was an **aspirate**, that is, a *breath of air*. It is as if the breath of God is what made the difference.
 - 3) **GOD'S PURPOSE** in appearing to Abram was to establish **AN**

EVERLASTING COVENANT (a contract):

GODS PART

“. . . I will make my **COVENANT** between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly” (V. 2).

“thou shalt be a father of many nations” (V. 4).

“**I WILL GIVE** unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, **THE LAND** wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession;” (V. 8)

ABRAHAM'S PART

“walk before me, and be thou perfect” (V. 1).

“Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.” (V. 9).

This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and you seed after you; **Every man child among you shall be circumcised.**” (V. 10).

“. . . The uncircumcised man child . . . , that soul **SHALL BE CUT OFF FROM HIS PEOPLE**; he has broken my covenant.” (V. 13).

GODS' PART — I will bless and multiply you. I will give you the land of Canaan.

ABRAHAM'S PART — You keep the covenant of circumcision. You make sure your descendants keep it, too!

ISRAEL had gone **FORTY YEARS** without keeping their part of the contract with God.

NOW, SOMETHING IN US ASKS — **WHY CIRCUMCISION?** Why not some other sign? Out of all the thousands of other signs God could have chosen to mark His covenant people, why circumcision?

TWO REASONS:

- 1) **PHYSICALLY** it symbolized **separation** from the sins of the flesh: fornication, adultery, immorality, etc.
- 2) **SPIRITUALLY** it pictured **TOTAL SURRENDER** to God. It symbolized **A WILLINGNESS TO SUBMIT TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION** regardless how **painful and humiliating** it might be. **Submission was to say**, “O.K. God, it does not make sense, but I chose to obey you nonetheless.”

FORTY YEARS EARLIER ISRAEL HAD DONE JUST THE OPPOSITE. God told them to take the land and they **REFUSED GOD'S INSTRUCTION.** **AS A RESULT** they spent **FORTY YEARS** in the wilderness. **THEIR UNBELIEF PLACED GOD'S COVENANT ON HOLD.** Their inheritance of the land was **DELAYED FOR FORTY YEARS.** During that forty years Israel **LIVED IN CONTINUAL DISOBEDIENCE** to the commandments

of God.

S AT GILGAL, FORTY YEARS LATER, ISRAEL had returned to state of desiring obedience to God. **THEY SAID**, “O.K. God, **WE WILL SUBMIT** to your instructions this time. You are testing us and **WE WANT TO PASS** this test. **WE BLEW IT** forty years earlier, we do not want to blow it again.”

GOD’S INSTRUCTION AT GILGAL

(V. 2), “At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and **CIRCUMCISE AGAIN THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL** the second time.”

S THAT POSES ANOTHER QUESTION — WHY CIRCUMCISION AT THAT TIME? Why didn’t God require it before they ever crossed the Jordan when they rested safely from their enemies on the east side of the river? Now they were only two miles from Jericho and their enemies might attack. Circumcision would **RENDER THE ARMY INEFFECTIVE MILITARILY** for a period of days (read Genesis 34). **WHY** did God require their obedience at that time?

S FROM A HUMAN POINT OF VIEW IT WOULD HAVE MADE MORE SENSE to **HAVE ATTACKED JERICHO** immediately after crossing Jericho. The miracle of the river was **fresh** on every soldier’s mind. Great **unity** existed in the camp. The inhabitants of Jericho were **frightened** out of their minds. It made good human sense to attack while under the inspiration of God’s miracle at the Jordan.

S THE REASON WAS for the command at that time was ISRAEL WAS PREPARED EMOTIONALLY, BUT THEY WERE **NOT PREPARED SPIRITUALLY** for the battle that lay in front of them. Had they rushed ahead in the zeal of the moment, they would have fallen in defeat.

(Psa 33:16), “There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.”

(Prov 21:31), “The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but **SAFETY IS OF THE LORD.**”

THE LESSON FOR US IS CLEAR — JUST AS ISRAEL needed to prepare spiritually before they went into battle, **SO WE NEED TO PREPARE SPIRITUALLY** before we head into spiritual battles God intends for us to fight.

S OUR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION HAS A NAME. IN N.T. DAYS it is called **CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART**, i.e., **SPIRITUAL CIRCUMCISION.**

(Col 2:11), “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body

of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:"
(Rom 2:29),

S IT WAS NOT THE PHYSICAL ACT THAT COUNTED SO MUCH as it was THE SPIRITUAL ACT.

(1 Sam 16:7), “. . . The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”

S BAPTISM is AN ILLUSTRATION of this point. It is possible that a person was physically baptized, but their spiritual heart was miles from God.

S SPIRITUAL CIRCUMCISION IS TOTAL SURRENDER to God. IT IS A WILLINGNESS TO SUBMIT TO GOD’S INSTRUCTION no matter how **painful and humiliating** it might be. It is nothing short of **DEATH TO SELF** and **SURRENDER TO GOD**. Circumcision of the heart says, “God, it does not make sense, and this is going to cost me greatly, but **I CHOSE TO OBEY YOU.**” It is living the **CRUCIFIED LIFE**:

(Gal 2:20), “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

S TO ATTEMPT PERSONAL SPIRITUAL BATTLE APART CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART is to **INVITE** certain defeat at the hands of the enemy. Without submission to God’s plans for our lives, we will be fighting the battle in our own strength. That is a sure way to experience defeated.

SO, WHAT DO YOU DO when God asks you to do something **YOU DON’T WANT TO DO**? Perhaps His command is considered ridiculous and humiliating. It might be His command makes no sense at all. **WHAT DO YOU DO?**

WHAT DO YOU DO when God gives you a painful and difficult assignment? You **OBEY THE LORD!** If you refuse, you just might spend the next forty years in a spiritual wilderness. **THERE WILL BE NO CONQUEST WITHOUT SURRENDER TO GOD AND DEATH TO SELF!** We must **SUBMIT!**

(V. 9), “And the LORD said unto Joshua, **THIS DAY HAVE I ROLLED AWAY THE REPROACH OF EGYPT** from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.”

S BIBLE STUDENTS offer **DIFFERENT SUGGESTIONS** about what they consider to be the *REPROACH OF EGYPT*. I think *the reproach of Egypt* was **THE HUMILIATION** Israel experienced because they wandered in the wilderness for forty years because of their disobedience. As they left Egypt, they were headed toward the

Promised Land with their spirits soaring. I can envision **A CARAVAN OF TRAVELING EGYPTIANS** coming by their camp at year 35 while camped at **KADESH BARNEA** trying to sell goods. I can envision the Egyptians laughing with one another as they **MOCKED** the Jews. Those Jews were so confident 35 years earlier as they left Egypt. They were convinced they would immediately inherit the *Promised Land*.

S CERTAIN KINDS OF REPROACH come to the children of God just because of the sinful world. **We should expect that kind of reproach.** **THAT WAS NOT THE KIND OF REPROACH ISRAEL WAS EXPERIENCING.** They were under reproach for forty years because of their **BLATANT DISREGARD** for the commands of God. They had refused to submit to God's instructions. That is a reproach they could have avoided had they only obeyed God.

S HOW ABOUT US? It is **one thing** for the world to laugh because we are God's children. God has clearly told us, ". . . **All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution**" (2 Tim 3:12). That is to be expected. However, they should not expect the reproach that is the result of **OUR STUBBORN REFUSAL** to submit to God's commands. That is a reproach that has no scriptural support.

WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE IMPOSSIBLE
I. **SUBMIT TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION**

II. TAKE TIME TO WORSHIP, REMEMBER & CELEBRATE GOD

(V. 10), "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the **PASSOVER** on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho."

S PASSOVER WAS A MEMORIAL FEAST in memory of **GOD'S DELIVERANCE** from years of years of Egyptian bondage. Israel had lived **FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AS FOREIGNERS** in Egypt. Many of those years were spent as **SLAVES**. Passover was a time of **CELEBRATION, WORSHIP** and **REMEMBERING GOD'S GOODNESS** in delivering Israel from that bondage.

THE FIRST PASSOVER took place the night the death angel passed throughout Egypt sparing the oldest sons in homes where lamb's blood had sprinkled on the doorpost. **AT MIDNIGHT ISRAEL DEPARTED** from Egypt though the Pharaoh had said he would never let them go.

S REGARDING FUTURE CELEBRATIONS OF THE PASSOVER FEAST GOD GAVE ISRAEL CLEAR INSTRUCTION:

(Exo 12:14), "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD **throughout your generations**; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance **forever**."

S ISRAEL OBSERVED THEIR **FIRST** THE NIGHT THEY LEFT EGYPT (Ex 12). They celebrated THEIR **SECOND PASSOVER** just before breaking camp at Mount Sinai to head toward Canaan (Num 9:1-5). **THE THIRD RECORD** of Israel's observance of Passover is found in **JOSHUA 5 AT GILGAL**. **INDICATIONS ARE** that ISRAEL **HAD FAILED** TO KEEP PASSOVER throughout **the next 38 years of wilderness wandering**. **IN FACT ISRAEL WAS FORBIDDEN** from observing the Passover **UNLESS they had CIRCUMCISED themselves and their children** (Ex 12:44, 48).

During Israel's forty years in the wilderness, they were guilty of **DOUBLE DISOBEDIENCE**. **NOT ONLY** had they not kept the rite of **circumcision**, they had not kept the feast of **Passover**.

S **WHEN YOU WEIGH ISRAEL'S PAST FAILURE** to observe both **circumcision** and **Passover** in the wilderness, you get **A PICTURE OF MESSED UP SPIRITUAL LIVES**. THEIR SPIRITUAL LIVES were like **SCRAMBLED EGGS**. They had blown it royally and paid the consequences with years of wandering in the desert.

S **AT GILGAL GOD WAS HELPING THEM GET THEIR LIVES BACK TOGETHER**. God was helping Israel find order in the midst of disorder.

S When we make a spiritual mess of our lives, God wants to help us get our lives back together. God is for us. He wants the best for us. He wants us to know wholeness more than we want it ourselves. However, **WHEN WE** make a **MESS** of our lives, we must accept God's **HELP and GRACE** to get our lives back together. Only God can **UNSCRAMBLE EGGS** — but He can unscramble our eggs if we let Him.

S **IF YOU HAVE MADE A MESS OF YOUR LIFE** — if you have been living in a **SPIRITUAL WILDERNESS**, God wants to help you get your life back together. **HE IS TELLING US WHAT TO DO TO BRING THAT TO PASS:**

(Psa 46:10), "Be still, and know that I am God: . . . "

TAKE TIME TO WORSHIP

REMEMBER GOD'S GOODNESS BEFORE YOU BATTLE

STOP AND ENJOY THE SPIRITUAL ROSES

CELEBRATE GOD'S GOODNESS

S **THOUGH GREAT BATTLES** lay up ahead of you, **AT GILGAL** you are to remember God's goodness and **TAKE TIME TO WORSHIP HIM**.

(V. 10), ". . . The children of **ISRAEL . . . KEPT THE PASSOVER** on **THE FOURTEENTH DAY** of the month . . . "

S **WHAT WAS BIG DEAL ABOUT KEEPING PASSOVER?**

WEREN'T THEIR FUTURE BATTLES THE BIG DEAL? Why was it so important that they remember **THAT FEAST** and **NOT LET IT FALL** by the wayside?

S THE BIG DEAL WAS — MANY YEARS LATER AT ANOTHER PASSOVER, ANOTHER JOSHUA WOULD SIT at the table with His spiritual family and break bread saying, "Take eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of Me." He would be the "... the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). **AS THE BLOOD** of the lamb **SAVED THEM** at the first Passover, **SO** the blood of the Lamb of God would save them in fulfillment of the Passover.

JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ON PASSOVER. The city of Jerusalem was **CROWDED** with **RELIGIOUS PILGRIMS** from all over the known world who had come to celebrate that feast. At that Passover the world would be gathered to see God providing the means of man's salvation. **GOD'S TIMING IS ALWAYS PRECISE!**

LEARN THE LESSONS OF GILGAL

- I. **SUBMIT TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION (PAST TENSE)**
- II. **TAKE TIME TO WORSHIP , REMEMBER & CELEBRATE GOD**

III. ENTER INTO GOD'S PROVISION

(V. 11), "And they did eat of **THE OLD CORN** of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day."

S GOD HAD DESCRIBED THE LAND He was giving to Israel as "**A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY**" (Exo 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3) **THE TWELVE SPIES** of **NUMBERS 13** told of the fruit in the land God had promised. There were **POMEGRANATES** and **FIGS**. One **CLUSTER OF GRAPES** from the **brook of Eshcol** was so large that they carried it between two upon a staff. God had brought them into **A LAND OF ABUNDANCE & PLENTY**. "THE OLD CORN" was but a foretaste of the future.

S ACCORDING TO O.T. LAW, THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD followed **THE FEAST OF PASSOVER**. The Jews were to eat **BREAD WITH NO LEAVEN** in it for one week (Ex. 12:15, 18-20). To have bread, you must have **GRAIN**. God had even taken care of that matter. Israel had entered Canaan at the time of **THE BARLEY HARVEST**. The inhabitants **FLED** from Israel to Jericho for protection and left their grain behind. Grain for their bread was **READILY AVAILABLE**. While the inhabitants of the land of Canaan watched over the city walls of Jericho, Israel ate their grain. **THAT BRINGS ANOTHER VERSE TO MIND**

(Psa 23:5), "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

S THERE IS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE ISRAEL TRULY DESIRED TO BE FULLY OBEDIENT to the Law as they made preparations to take Canaan. **CHANCES ARE GOOD** that not only did they observe the Passover, they also followed God's instructions regarding **THE**

WAVE-OFFERING OF A SHEAF OF GRAIN, prescribed in Leviticus 23:10-14.

- S PASSOVER was a picture of **CHRIST'S DEATH** (1 Cor. 5:7). **THE WAVE OFFERING** was a picture, or type, of **CHRIST'S RESURRECTION**. The wave offering was always to be presented on **the day after the Sabbath that followed Passover** (Lev. 23:10-14; 1 Cor. 15:23). The day following the Sabbath was **SUNDAY, the first day of the week, THE LORD'S DAY, THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION** (Matt. 28:1).
- S **JUST AS** God had **PROVIDED** what **ISRAEL** needed to be **SUSTAINED PHYSICALLY**, so God would provide what they needed to be **SUSTAINED SPIRITUALLY**. He provided them with physical grain from which they could make **A SHEAF OF GRAIN. THE SHEAF OF GRAIN** represented **GOD'S SPIRITUAL PROVISION**. God was setting the stage for the coming of His Son.

(V. 12), "And **THE MANNA CEASED** on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; **NEITHER HAD** the children of Israel **MANNA ANY MORE**; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."

- S **THE PRECISE TIMING** displays the **PROVIDENCE OF GOD** in the affairs of His children. **FOR 40 LONG YEARS** Israel had been fed on manna in the wilderness. They had now entered **A NEW AND DEEPER WALK** with God. Natural food was now available and they would no longer require manna. Now they had to live by faith.
- S **WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE IMPOSSIBLE**
- I. **SUBMIT TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION (PAST TENSE)**
 - II. **TAKE TIME TO WORSHIP , REMEMBER & CELEBRATE GOD**
 - III. **ENTER INTO GOD'S PROVISION**

S **SOME WONDERFUL VERSES ON GOD'S PROVISION**

- 1) **(Mat 6:33)**, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
- 2) **(Luke 6:38)**, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."
- 3) **(Psa 34:8)**, "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."
- 4) **(1 Cor 2:9)**, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

IV. FIND GOD'S WILL

(Prov 3:5-6), "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. {6} In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall

direct thy paths."

(Jos 5:13), "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: . . ."

S It was probably nighttime, though the text does not say. Joshua was **"BY JERICHO."** What was he doing by Jericho? Why wasn't he at Gilgal? Perhaps he went there **TO SURVEY** the situation and **TO SEEK GOD'S WILL**. God had **NOT REVEALED** to Joshua how to take Jericho and that probably **WEIGHED HEAVILY** on his mind.

S **LEADERSHIP CAN BE LONELY**. Joshua, under God's guidance had led them safely thus far. They had crossed the Jordan River without harm. Now they are facing **THEIR BIGGEST OBSTACLE YET — JERICHO**. Joshua must have been wondering what the next step would be. **ALL JOSHUA COULD DO** was trust God's past promise to him. Yet that is exactly what God expected Joshua to do. God had promised Joshua:

(Josh 1:5), "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so **I WILL BE WITH THEE: I WILL NOT FAIL THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE.**"

S **ALL THE SUDDEN** before Joshua stood a soldier with sword drawn. Joshua's **HEART** probably began to race. Joshua did not know who he was or where he had come from. He had his **SWORD** drawn.

(Jos 5:13-4), ". . . Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, '**ART THOU FOR US, OR FOR OUR ADVERSARIES?**' {14} And he said, **NAY; . . .**" (neither)

S **THE ISSUE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE WAS NOT** whether God was on Israel's side or the Canaanite's side. **THE ISSUE WAS — WAS JOSHUA ON GOD'S SIDE.**

S "In a meeting with a small group of missionaries in China, **HUDSON TAYLOR**, founder of the **China Inland Mission** (now Overseas Missionary Fellowship) reminded them that there were **three ways to do God's work**: "**ONE** is to make the best plans we can, and carry them out to the best of our ability . . . **OR**, having carefully laid our plans and determined to carry them through, we may ask God to help us, and to prosper us in connection with them. **YET ANOTHER WAY** of working is to begin with God; to ask His plans, and to offer ourselves to Him to carry out His purposes."

"Joshua followed the third plan, and that's why the Lord blessed him. (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Series on Joshua*)

S **THE ISSUE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE IS NOT** whether God is on our side or the Canaanite's side. **THE ISSUE IS AM I ON GOD'S SIDE?**

(John 15:5), "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: **FOR WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO**

NOTHING."

(Jos 5:14), "And he said, **NAY; BUT AS CAPTAIN OF THE HOST OF THE LORD AM I NOW COME . . .**"

S THE HOST OF GOD'S ARMY WOULD FIGHT FOR ISRAEL. TIME AND AGAIN God had said through Moses, "**I WILL FIGHT FOR YOU.**" The time of **DISPLAYING THAT REALITY WAS AT HAND.** God was showing Joshua there **WAS MORE TO BATTLES THAN MET THE HUMAN EYE.**

S (Rom 8:31), "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

1) **REMEMBER WHEN ELISHA'S SERVANT** came running into the house telling Elisha that the armies of Syria were outside and asked what to do.

(2 Ki 6:16-17), "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. {17} And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

2) **JESUS TOLD PETER** that He could pray to the Father and He would provide more than **TWELVE LEGIONS OF ANGELS** if He needed them. Jesus did not call on those angels, but they were present if needed.

God has his hosts to protect His own today as well. They may not be seen with the naked eye, but they are there nonetheless.

(Heb 1:14), "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

3) **BILLY GRAHAM** tells the following story about the **REVEREND JOHN PATON.** He and his wife were missionaries in the **NEW HEBRIDES ISLANDS.**

"HOSTILE NATIVES surrounded his **MISSION HEADQUARTERS** one night, intent on burning the Patons out and killing them. John Paton and his wife prayed all during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came, they were amazed to see the attackers unaccountably leave. They thanked God for delivering them."

"A YEAR LATER, the **CHIEF OF THE TRIBE** was converted to Jesus Christ, and Mr. Paton, remembering what had happened, asked the chief what had kept him and his men from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise,

'Who were all those men you had with you there?' The missionary answered, 'There were no men there; just my wife and I.' The chief argued that they had seen **MANY MEN** standing guard --- hundreds of **big men in shining garments** with drawn swords in their hands. They seemed to circle the mission station so that the natives were afraid to attack. Only then did Mr. Paton realize that God had sent His angels to protect them. The chief

agreed there was no other explanation. (Billy Graham, *Angels, Angels, Angels*)

GOD HAD TOLD ISRAEL REPEATEDLY that HE WOULD FIGHT FOR THEM. This Captain of the Lord's hosts was showing to Joshua that **GOD WAS GOING TO KEEP HIS PROMISE.**

4) **LITTLE DAVID STOOD BEFORE THE GIANT NAMED GOLIATH AND SPOKE THESE WORDS**

- **(1 Sam 17:45)**, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."
- **(1 Sam 17:47)**, "And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for **THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S**, and he will give you into our hands."

S **IT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY COMFORTING** to Joshua to have seen **CAPTAIN OF THE HOST OF THE LORD.** It was **A SOURCE OF GREAT CONFIDENCE** in the mind and heart of Joshua.

(V. 14-15), ". . . **JOSHUA FELL ON HIS FACE** to the earth, and **DID WORSHIP**, and said unto him, 'What saith my lord unto his servant? {15} And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, 'LOOSE THY SHOE from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.' And Joshua did so."

S Many identify that **THE ANGEL OF THE LORD** as a preincarnate appearance of the Lord himself (Ex 3:2-4:17; Judg 6:11-23).

S **IT IS LIKELY** that Joshua received **HIS INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONQUERING JERICHO** while he was in the presence of the captain of the host of the Lord. Because Joshua had

- I. **SUBMITTED TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION**
- II. **TAKEN TIME TO WORSHIP, REMEMBER & CELEBRATE**
- III. **ENTERED INTO GOD'S PROVISION**
- IV. **HE FOUND GOD'S WILL**

S **HERE IS HOW TO FIND GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE**

- **(Prov 3:5-6)**, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. {6} In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."
- **(Rom 12:1-2)**, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. {2} And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, **THAT YE MAY PROVE** what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, **WILL OF GOD.**"

- I. **SUBMIT TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION**
- II. **TAKE TIME TO WORSHIP, REMEMBER & CELEBRATE GOD**
- III. **ENTER INTO GOD'S PROVISION**

IV. FIND GOD'S WILL