



Way Point Chronicles

Traveling through the Old Testament by Chronological Stories

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Joshua is told to circumcise all the males of the nation. Notice it says, *“the second time.”* This is not saying the second time for these people but the second time for the nation to do it. The first time was when God gave the rite of circumcision to Abraham as a sign of the covenant to the nation. The first time is recorded in *Genesis 17*. This is speaking to the nation of a new beginning as with Abraham.

Let's explore the physical implications of the act of circumcision. For this we need to go back to the time of Jacob. In *Genesis 34* is recorded the story of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, avenging the honor of their sister Dinah. They demand that the Shechem and the whole family be circumcised before they would allow Shechem to marry Dinah. They agree to this but notice what occurred after the circumcision was performed. *Gen 34:25 And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.*

While these men were helpless and could not defend themselves, they were killed. This adds new significance to the fact that God allowed the children of Israel to cross over the river and camp in the front yard of the enemy before He instructed them to circumcise all the males.

Though, we might ask why God wanted them to wait until they crossed the river before the circumcision, the answer somehow seems obvious. God wanted them to know that He would be their defender and that even the days while they were helpless they would be safe in His care. This was a lesson in trusting God. *Ps 127:1 says, Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

Josh 5:8 says they all abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. They were helpless within themselves but safe in God's hands. Remember the words of the Apostle Paul, *“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. 2 Cor 12:10*

The safest place for them was in will of God. The strongest defense they had was the hand of protection of God. God had taught them for the last 40 years to trust Him. They now are put in a situation where they had no other choice.

III- The Spiritual Significance:



Coordinates:
Joshua 5:1-9

Sights to See:

- 1- The fact that God works in the background of our lives to bring about His purposes is seen with the fear on the hearts of the enemies of Israel. This should hearten us to trust Him more.
- 2- Many times the spiritual things of one generation are not conveyed and practiced in such a way that they are passed to the next generation. Circumcision was supposed to have been practiced but was neglected.
- 3- Many times God allows the circumstances of life to become such that we have no choice but to depend on Him.
- 4- Is your faith such that if God wanted you to be totally dependant upon Him for life and death that you would surrender to His will?
- 5- When we repent, as symbolized by the circumcision of the next generation, God removed the shame from the past transgressions.
- 6- Why does it seem we have to wait to be totally helpless at times to totally depend on God? Many men have only looked up while flat of their back.



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Beyond the obvious that we have just stated of trusting God there are other spiritual significances as well. There are additional reasons that God had. We are not left to speculate.

Joshua 5:4 And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. The NIV says “Now this is why he did so.”

All of the people who came out of Egypt had been circumcised. ***Joshua 5:5 Now all the people that came out were circumcised...***

However, all of these had perished and none of those born in the wilderness had been circumcised. ***Joshua 5:5b but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised.***

The spiritual implication of this circumcision for this generation was to identify them with the generation before and ultimately to the Abrahamic covenant. Not only had the generation before them neglected to circumcise their children but also they had neglected to walk in obedience to God. This was the neglect of the former generation.

Then we see from ***Joshua 5:9 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. The additional spiritual implication was “This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.”*** The word reproach is “*cherpah*” (kher-paw’) and means, disgrace. It is translated in the KJV as shame, rebuke and reproach.

This reproach of Egypt could be any of several things or a combination of many. It could mean that the children of Israel had not only failed to circumcise in the wilderness but had failed to circumcise the last years in Egypt and simply carried over the practice of not circumcising their children.

I can also mean the reproach of them being in bondage to the Egyptians as slaves. This slavery was a humiliation to the nation. This bondage pictures for us men’s bondage to sin. Christ rolled away the reproach of sin for us when He suffered shame on the cross. We might even see this bondage as them living among pagan people and now they are in the land they have been promised by God.

IV- No Choice But to Depend on God

When the circumcision takes place they had no choice but to depend on God for protection. Joshua reminds them of the generation before who had passed. ***Joshua 5:7 And their [the generation before] children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. 8 And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole.***

They could not defend themselves for several days after this. Remember now they are in the front yard of the enemy. They had to put their faith into practice and lay their and their family and children’s lives on the line and depend on God.

We see from the following verse that we certainly can depend on God. ***1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.***

We are exhorted to depend on God in the normal course of days of life. ***Matthew 6:25-26 KJV Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*** When we find we have no choice but to depend on God we will find He is sufficient.