

Picking up what our Fathers laid down.

6.19.2022

Father's Day 2022

Joshua 5:1–9 (CSB)

5 When all the Amorite kings across the Jordan to the west and all the Canaanite kings near the sea heard how the Lord had dried up the water of the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed over, they lost heart and their courage failed because of the Israelites.

2 At that time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelite men again." **3** So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelite men at Gibeath-haaraloth. (NAME MEANS CIRCUMCISION HILL)

4 This is the reason Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt who were males—all the men of war—had died in the wilderness along the way after they had come out of Egypt. **5** *Though all the people who came out were circumcised, none of the people born in the wilderness along the way were circumcised after they had come out of Egypt.* **6** For the Israelites wandered in the wilderness forty years until all the nation's men of war who came out of Egypt had died off because they did not obey the Lord. So the Lord vowed never to let them see the land he had sworn to their ancestors to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. **7** **He raised up their sons in their place; it was these Joshua circumcised.** They were still uncircumcised, since they had not been circumcised along the way. **8** After the entire nation had been circumcised, they stayed where they were in the camp until they recovered. **9** The Lord then said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the disgrace of Egypt from you." Therefore, that place is still called Gilgal today.

Introduction: Joshua starts 40 years after leaving Exodus.

A. The people who were at the foot of the Mountain in Exodus 40 are dead.

1. They died because they refused to believe God.

2. God led them to the edge of the Promised Land, and they balked.
3. Because of this, God had them march around for 40 years, 1 year for every day they scouted the promised land and refused to believe. (Numbers 14:33-34).
4. When the 40 years was over, no one who was fighting age at the time of the disobedience was alive except Joshua and Caleb.

B. In reading this passage this past week, I feel both hopeful and worried.

1. I'm worried about our failure to be obedient to God.
2. Worried about all the opportunities we are missing.
3. Worried about the generations that we are raising.

C. YET, I see hope.

1. Ronald Reagan said, "Freedom is a fragile thing and it's never more than one generation away from extinction."
2. There is also hope that, within one generation, we can see things turn around.
3. I'm believing that I'm part of that generation.
4. Let's look at this passage and see how a generation addressed their parents' rebellion and tried to change.

1. The enemies are not God's focus, Israel is.

5 When all the Amorite kings across the Jordan to the west and all the Canaanite kings near the sea heard how the Lord had dried up the water of the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed over, they lost heart and their courage failed because of the Israelites.

A. We humans like having someone to blame.

1. Common enemies unite us.
2. Having a common enemy also allows us to ignore our issues while focusing on the other.

3. Passing blame is easier than examining our own lives.
4. Jesus recognized this when He said, "Why focus on the speck in your brother's eye when you have a log in yours?"

B. **While you and I like to focus on the enemy, God focuses on us.**

1. We love focusing on the enemies.
2. The enemy is not an obstacle for God.
3. He is not worried about defeating them.
4. God is focused on preparing Israel.

C. God allows the enemy to live in dread for a while so that He can prepare the Israelite men.

1. If we only focus on the external problems, we miss the internal problems that will derail us.
2. Too many of us here are so focused on what's happening out there that you give no intention to what is happening inside you.
 - a. This is human nature.
 - b. But we aren't called to live by our human nature anymore.
3. Isn't it time that you and I start working with the Holy Spirit to do the hard work of our inward life?
4. When we fail to deal with OUR problems, we pass those problems on to others.

2. Circumcision: A pattern of Disobedience

A. This passage addresses the failure of Israel to circumcise a whole generation.

1. The oldest men would have been 59 or less (military age was 20 and over, and they were in the wilderness for 40 years).
2. All the men who came out of Egypt were circumcised.
 - a. Even in slavery, the older generations kept this promise.

b. Even when they could not feel God's presence, they practiced the Covenant sign of Abraham.

c. Their parents knew that the only way out of Egypt was through God's Covenant with Abraham.

1. Because God promised Abraham, God would deliver them.

2. The sign of that Covenant: Circumcision.

3. No circumcision, no covenant, and no deliverance.

B. But for 40 years, Israel did not practice the Covenant sign.

1. Here's the crazy part: Their parents believed, even without seeing or sensing God, for 100 generations of slavery.

2. This generation disbelieved for a whole generation while GOD WAS IN THEIR MIDST!

a. Millions died in Egypt without ever seeing the Presence of God. But they still carried the Covenant with them,.

b. But this generation died in the wilderness unnecessarily in the Wilderness while GOD's Presence led them.

3. Never underestimate the foolishness of a rebellious people.

C. Unfortunately, this rebellious spirit started in Moses.

1. God almost killed Moses in Exodus 4 for failing to circumcise his son.

2. Early on, Moses failed to obey God AND bring his son into the Covenant with God.

a. While Moses was leading His family to go deliver Israel from Egypt, Moses DID NOT circumcise his kid.

b. And God got angry and almost killed them because of their rebellion.

c. No Covenant, no deliverance.

- d. No Covenant, no Salvation.
- e. No Covenant, no Mercy.
- f. That's why Jesus said "This is a NEW COVENANT in my blood."

3. Moses failed to walk in obedience to this covenant sign.

- a. In fact, his wife Zipporah circumcised Moses' son.
- b. Moses did not do it.

D. TRUTH: **If we are not intentional with our obedience, we pass on our patterns of sin.**

1. During the wilderness wanderings, Moses again fails to ensure that the sons of Israel were circumcised and brought into the Covenant.

2. This was Moses' job to enact the Covenant.

- a. Moses was an amazing prophet, but he was not perfect or sinless.
- b. Therefore, Moses passed on this disobedience.

3. Furthermore, he led the fathers of the land to pass this disobedience down to the sons.

3. You cannot walk in victory AND disobedience.

A. God called upon Joshua to circumcise the sons that God raised up in place of the disobedient fathers.

- 1. Joshua was circumcised.
- 2. But he could not move Israel forward if he and Caleb were the only obedient men.
- 3. Joshua was the bridge.
 - a. He bridged the generation of the disobedient to the generation of promise.

b. In this way, Joshua foreshadows Jesus, who bridged sinful humanity with the sinless God.

c. In fact, both Joshua and Jesus are practically the same names, meaning "Save us."

B. The next stage in Israel's journey was to conquer Jericho.

1. As long as Jericho held, Israel would not be secure.

2. Jericho was to be the first physical battle of the Promised Land.

3. But the first spiritual battle was the battle with disobedience.

4. Before you slay spiritual giants or conquer enemy territory, you have to deal with your disobedience and rebellion.

5. We cannot expect God's blessing to be seen in public obedience to his commands if there is hidden compromise in the private world of the self and the family.¹

6. Hidden compromise doesn't stay hidden forever.

C. A good excuse is never a reason for disobedience.

1. "My parents didn't teach me."

a. "I'm too old to obey now."

b. "Won't this hurt?"

c. "The enemy will attack me while I'm vulnerable."

2. "we must never attempt to justify our disobedience by speculating about what the consequences might be."²

¹ Jackman, David. 2014. *Joshua: People of God's Purpose*. Edited by R. Kent Hughes. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

² Jackman, David. 2014. *Joshua: People of God's Purpose*. Edited by R. Kent Hughes. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, IL: Crossway. PG 61

4. Spiritual preparation precedes conquest.

A. Another author said it this way:

1. That such spiritual preparations preceded the actual "conquest" of the land illustrates the priorities we have noted: God was going to give Israel the land, and Israel's task was to be sure it obeyed and was adequately prepared spiritually.³

2. Before the victory came spiritual preparation.

B. If Joshua had not led Israel in obedience, he would have led them in defeat.

1. If you do not lead your family in obedience, you will lead them in defeat.

2. You can't walk in disobedience and rebellion at work and expect to live in victory at home.

3. Disobedience will follow you until you deal with it.

C. If you won't walk in obedience, God will raise up someone in your place.

1. Israel chose rebellion over presence and walked away from their position as sons.

2. So God raised up sons in their place.

a. Sons that are obedient.

b. Sons that will pick up the call of the Covenant and walk in it.

5. How can we start walking in Victory for our families?

1. Stop the disobedience.

a. The only people who could stop Israel from walking in disobedience was the men.

³ Howard, David M., Jr. 1998. *Joshua*. Vol. 5. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers. PG 144

- b. That's a heavy idea and not real popular in America today.
 - 1. And I cannot fix the issues that are "out there".
 - 2. But I can speak to you and implore you to pick up what other generations have left behind.
 - 3. Lead your families in worship!
 - a. Pray aloud and pray often.
 - b. Don't be loud for a football game but silent for prayer.
 - c. Read your Bible in front of your family.
 - d. Let others see you in the altars, let others see you lifting up holy hands, let others see your tears of repentance.
 - 4. What you are doing is not just for you or your blood kin.
 - a. There are many who are "spiritual orphans" who are looking for someone to follow.
 - b. Stop the disobedience so others can find freedom!

2. Start with the obvious.

- a. The obvious first step may be the most painful.
- b. Don't ignore the pain, name it.
 - 1. Joshua named their pain: The hills of circumcision.
 - 2. If I was writing my history, I would have ignored it.
 - 3. They could have completely ignored this painful story in their journey, but they didn't.
 - a. Instead they named it!
 - b. Can you imagine what this would have looked like?
 - c. What about the smell of rotting flesh?

4. There was pain in their obedience, but that pain was necessary to walk in future victory.

c. Some of us today KNOW what we should do, but it is painful to consider.

1. Yet, if you know what God is asking, you must do it.

2. Disobedience is ultimately more painful than obedience.

3. Make Circumcision hill a memorable place:

a. Gilgal became a place of significance.

b. It was where the Lord "rolled away" the disgrace of Egypt.

c. I can see 4 ways Circumcision hill became memorable:

1. A place of confession "our fathers were disobedient".

a. That's a tough confession.

b. To confess "my parents failed."

1. My father or mother did not lead me so well.

2. The purpose here is not shame but acknowledgement.

c. But instead of perpetuating our sin further, we start our victory by confessing our defeats, our sin.

2. A place of contrition.

a. Contrition means "the state of feeling remorseful and penitent".

b. This passage carries a sense of remorse.

1. Remorse for what happened.

2. Remorse for what could have been.

c. Why is contrition important?

1. We rarely change what we are proud of.

2. If we are proud of our sin and rebellion, we will never confess or change.

3. To start walking in victory God's way, there must be moments that we are not proud of.

d. We do not find victory over sin by denying that we have sinned, but by bringing that sin under the blood of Jesus through confession and contrition.

e. 1 John 1:8–10 (CSB)

⁸If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say, "We have not sinned," we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

3. A place of change.

a. True confession must lead to change.

1. Admitting we sinned, while making no plans to change, is not repentance but bragging.

2. When we decide to put away the sins and rebellions of our past, Gilgal becomes the place where we irrevocably change and move in a different way.

b. Think about how powerful it would be for you to point your family, friends, and neighbors to a moment in your life where your life forever changed!

1. People can't celebrate what they don't know about.

2. But some of you here today are in a point where it's time to show people your Gilgal.

a. It's time for you to testify of what God has done, what He has changed, and where He has brought you from.

b. You aren't declaring that you are perfect, you are declaring that you are changed!

c. Some of the most painful moments of our lives can become places of great testimony.

4. A place of Covenant.

a. As Israel stopped here in the Promise Land, more is at stake than perhaps realized.

b. The next part of this Chapter says that the newly circumcised men celebrated Passover for the first time in the Promised Land.

1. And then they ate from the crops of the land.

2. It was here, at the doorsteps of Jericho, that the manna ceased.

c. And it was here that the Covenant is picked up by the wandering generation.

1. By putting aside their parents' rebellion, this generation was able to march into victory in the Promised Land.

2. Unfortunately, they were not able to keep it.

Close: [We are on the precipice.](#)

A. Lately, I'm feeling a burden that hadn't previously been mine.

1. I use to be the youngest in the room, but no longer.

2. I'm in the midst of my adulthood and some of the prime years of life.

- a. With the wisdom, experience, and energy that God has given me at this point in life comes a responsibility.
- b. Lately, I'm feeling burdens that used to belong to those older than me.
- c. Now, those burdens are being passed on.
- d. God is raising up a generation to pick up what the Fathers had dropped.

B. Do you remember that quote from Ronald Reagan?

1. Perhaps you have heard that quote before, but here is the rest:

2. **Freedom is a fragile thing and it's never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by way of inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation, for it comes only once to a people. And those in world history who have known freedom and then lost it have never known it again.**

3. Governor Reagan was talking about American Freedom, and he was right.

- a. But I can't help but see spiritual applications.
- b. Freedom, or victory, but be fought for and defended for each generation.
- c. In words of our message, "each generation must be circumcised."
- d. Now, as believers, we take part in a circumcision not of human flesh but of the heart.
- e. But if you do not undergo this painful blessing, you have no part of the Covenant.
- f. In other words, if we do not give our lives to Jesus, we cannot claim the benefits that only Jesus can give.

C. I want to take this application one step further.

1. In our attempts or our parents attempt to make sure that the next generation has more than we had, we have done them a disservice.

a. We don't want to see our kids in pain, so we ignore the painful places of obedience.

b. We don't want our kids to do without, so we shield them from consequences and discipline.

c. We think that we are doing them a service, but instead we are teaching them how to disobey and pushing back the price that always comes due.

1. Can you imagine:

2. Baby boys were to be circumcised 8 days after birth: painful but forgettable.

3. But because of a generation's rebellion, adult males and teenage men had to fix where their parents disobeyed.

2. I want to show you a video clip from Coach Aaron McKie.

1. McKie played in the NBA and now coaches at Temple.

2. At his coach's funeral, Aaron McKie related this story that should cause us all to think: **VIDEO**

3. When blessing and success lead us to disobedience, we fail those coming after us.

1. The generation who marched victoriously out of Egypt, died in the wilderness just short of the Promised Land.

2. The next generation entered the Promised Land and obeyed.

3. But after Joshua and this generation died, notice what is said about them.

Judges 2:6–13 (CSB)

JOSHUA'S DEATH

⁶Previously, when Joshua had sent the people away, the Israelites had gone to take possession of the land, each to his own inheritance. ⁷**The people worshiped the LORD throughout Joshua's lifetime and during the lifetimes of the elders who outlived Joshua. They had seen all the LORD's great works he had done for Israel.**

⁸Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110. ⁹They buried him in the territory of his inheritance, in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰That whole generation was also gathered to their ancestors. After them another generation rose up who did not know the LORD or the works he had done for Israel.

¹¹The Israelites did what was evil in the LORD's sight. They worshiped the Baals ¹²and abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed other gods from the surrounding peoples and bowed down to them. They angered the LORD, ¹³for they abandoned him and worshiped Baal and the Ashtoreths.

4. The generation that was circumcised at Gilgal wasn't perfect.
 - a. But they lived for God and led Israel to follow God.
 - b. But their kids had to make the choice.
5. And they disobeyed.

CLOSE: We can't change the past, and we cannot control the future.

1. But we can lead today!
2. This morning, I want to pray for this body to be empowered to lead boldly and well in this day and time!

Prayer.