

JOSHUA (12) – Joshua 5:1–12

Covenant Fellowship Church

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Resource: Dale Ralph Davis, *Joshua: No Falling Words*, ch. 4

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENTS: vv. 1–10

- We have studied the prologue of the book of Joshua, dealing with *entering the land*. Now we begin the next section of the book (Joshua 5–12), dealing with *taking the land*.
- V. 1: in light of vv. 2–9, why is the fear of Israel surprising?

Recall the wall of water, perhaps 120 feet high—VISIBLE from a distance.

Notice: the KINGS are afraid of Israel!!

What is “Christianophobia”? Today, whose “hearts are melting,” and how can we discern this?

Romans 8:28–29: “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”

Goes together with **Romans 8:38–39:** “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- Vv. 2–8: the circumcision of the current generation

Vv. 4-7: = the heart: here we learn the rationale for the circumcision, why now?

V. 6 gives a clue: see Numbers 14, esp. vv. 34–35; we cannot be sure that the Lord prohibited circumcision, but the symbolic reality was that because of her disobedience, Israel was “cut off”—they were God’s people and yet they were not.

HERE IS THE WARNING: early on in Israel’s post-Exodus history, “they had been circumcised” but “they did not listen to the voice of Yahweh.” You can have the “mark” of the people of God but lack the RESPONSE of the people of God.

Consider 1 Corinthians 10:1–5: you may hold membership among God’s flock, without having a relationship with the Shepherd.

(over, please)

- V. 6b: here we read about two “swearing’s” by the Lord: the exodus generation did not listen to Yahweh’s voice, so He “swore that they would not see the land” that the Lord “had sworn to their fathers to give them.” In Exodus 32:13 God has sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give their descendants the land. Then, He swore an oath prohibiting a generation of their descendants from entering the land.

Did the later oath contradict the earlier oath? No. REMEMBER: Unbelief may forfeit the benefits of the covenant promise but it cannot negate the promise itself. Unbelief cannot annul God’s promises.

- V. 10: “While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho.”

Ponder: on the plains of Jericho,

Several broader implications

1. *Worship (including the sacraments) is preparation for warfare.*
2. *The sacraments “do something”—that is: they impart something, they effect (bring about) something. As means of grace they channel, facilitate, impart grace. ALWAYS: the grace of the gospel. Sacraments are “the gospel made visible.”*

GOD’S PROVISION CONTINUES: vv. 11–12

- This marks a new beginning, a turning point, a new age. V. 9 is a “hinge verse.”

Key idea: the daily manna from heaven has ceased, and Israel is now eating of the produce of Canaan (mentioned three times in vv. 11–12).

Several implications:

1. God continues to provide, but He does so ***through ordinary means***, like food that is grown, cultivated, harvested, and prepared.
2. Most of God’s gifts to His children are not dazzling, but wrapped in brown paper. Safety on the highway, health, a paycheck, supper with the family. All of this is an ordinary day’s work for our God.
3. Human culture, when done in obedience to God, supplies God’s blessing and provision. BUT ISRAEL WAS HERE ENJOYING THE FRUIT OF UNBELIEVING CULTURE AS GOD’S PROVISION.