

September 25, 2011 GOD REMOVES THE REPROACH
Joshua 5: 1-9

We will go right to the text and I will introduce the lesson from the first verse.

Look at Joshua 5: 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 anymore, because of the children of Israel.”

You will remember that God had dried up the waters of the Jordan River and the people had passed over into Canaan on dry land. The last verse of Chapter 4 says that He did this in order, “That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty”. Verse 1 of Chapter 5 tells us that He has accomplished that end.

**Look at Joshua 5: 2-3, “At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.
3 And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.”**

Now, why was this CIRCUMCISION necessary?

Look at Joshua 5: 4-5, “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.

5 Now all the people that came out were circumcised: 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.”

Look at Joshua 5: 6, “For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people *that were* men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD swore that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD swore unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey.”

Look at Joshua 5: 7, “And their children, *whom* he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.”

**Look at Joshua 5: 8-9, “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.
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.”**

We will see in our lesson today, that what God did for His ðchosenö nation here ðthis dayö is a **remarkable** thing. **He** ðrolled from off them the reproach of Egyptö. Our lesson will be understanding (exactly) what God did.

The root of this word ðreproachö means to ðdefyö. **It is** used to describe the Philistine giantö attitude toward Israel.

Look at I Sam 17: 10, “**And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.**”

His attitude towards Israel (and Israelö God) was defiant, scornful. **It** was one of contempt, one of ðreproachö.

Before the giant, Pharaoh was the supreme example of one who ðdefiedö God. **His** hardened resistance to Godö command to, ðLet my people goö is renowned. **It** is easy to see how the Philistine giant and Pharaoh resisted God, scorned God, defied God. **And**, Pharaohö reproach of God was Egyptö reproach. That is why God calls it ðthe reproach of Egyptö.

But we need to see that this ðreproachö is not confined to Egypt. **ALL** are partakers. **Israel** (Godö elect, chosen nation), also defied, scorned, and reproached God. **How** did they do this? **Although** Israel had been delivered (physically) from Egypt, their hearts were still there. **Every** chance they got, they sought to return.

The allegiance of Israel (as a nation) remained with Egypt. **As Egypt** had acted towards God, so had the nation Israel. **They** defied God. **They** scorned God. **They** reproached God.

Look at Nehemiah 9: 16-17, “**But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments,**

17 And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou *art* a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.”

Israel’s ðreproachö was blatant. **They** REFUSED to enter the Promised Land (which is tantamount to rejecting Godö provision). **It is** the equivalent of rejecting Christ. **Their** forty years of wandering in the wilderness was a journey of idolatry, of scorn, of ðreproachö towards the true and living God.

As we saw back in verse 7, they had not circumcised their children. **They** had not observed the Passover. **They** had no regard for the law that Moses had delivered to them at Mt Sinai.

I.e. What Israel did for forty years, was demonstrate that as far as the true and living God was concerned, **THEY** and **EGYPT** were of the same mind.

And, **THIS** generation of Israelites was a part of this ðdefianceö. **Just** like their fathers, they were willing participants in ðthe reproach of Egyptö. **But**, though they were idolaters, though

they scorned, though they reproached God, God did something for them (I.e. THIS generation) that He had not done for their fathers.

Look at Joshua 5: 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.”

God ðrolled away/ ðtook from offð these their idolatry, their scorn, their defiance of God. **He** had made THIS generation willing to do what their fathers REFUSED to do. **They** entered into and took possession of the land of Canaan. They submitted to CIRCUMCISION. They declared their participation in the Covenant of Abraham and the Covenant of Moses.

As we know, there is a BIGGER picture here. ALL are partakers in ðthe reproach of Egyptð. **This** is a picture of God (eternally) ðrolling the reproach of Egypt from offð His elect people. **None** are exempt from idolatry. **None** are exempt from defying God. **None** are exempt from scorning God. **None** are exempt from their participation in ðthe reproach of Egyptð.

The people of God (His elect/chosen) have been delivered from the (legal) guilt and condemnation of sin. **The** death of Christ (their Substitute) delivered them from (this, legal) BONDAGE. **But**, they are STILL in BONDAGE. **They** are Spiritually dead. **Their** minds are BOUND in legalism and idolatry. **There** is yet a BONDAGE Godðs people must be delivered from.

All (even Godðs elect) are (by nature) in league with Satan.

Look at Ephesians 2: 1-3, “And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
3 among whom also WE ALL had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

To be in league with Satan is BONDAGE. **And**, we are ALL (by nature) in this BONDAGE. **The** problem is we don’t see this BONDAGE. **We** don’t realize this BONDAGE. **But**, it is REAL. **And**, we are in it. **We** are in it UNTIL Christ delivers us from it.

Look at John 8: 31, “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;”

I want to address my listening audience like Christ addressed those listening to Him. **I would** say to EVERYONE in my audience, who thinks that they are looking to Christ ALONE for all their salvation, ðIf YOU continue in Christðs word, then are YOU His disciples indeed.ð

Look at John 8: 32, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

If you continue in Christ's Word, (i.e. under the Gospel), you will know the truth. **And**, the truth will deliver you (set you free). **The** declaration of Christ will set you free from the BONDAGE you don't even NOW realize you are in.

Now, your reaction might be like the Jews in this discourse. **Look** at John 8: 33, "**They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?**"

Now, none of us are Abraham's (natural) seed. This would be equivalent to one of us saying: we are saved. **We** have accepted Christ as our personal Savior. **We** have changed our ways. **We** have done all that is required for a sinner to be found in the favor of God. **Nevertheless**

Look at Christ's response, John 8: 34, "**Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**"

He is NOT talking about being immoral here, or lawless. He is addressing a SPIRITUAL problem. **Committing** sin involves what a sinner thinks is making them acceptable to God.

The sinner thinking that (who) *they are* is making some contribution to their salvation is committing sin (Abraham's seed). The sinner thinking that (what) they *have done* has something to do with (their acceptance) with God is committing sin (Matt 7, "Lord haven't I...").

Bottom line: Any sinner not finding all their acceptance with God in the Righteousness Christ worked out charged (imputed) to them is committing sin. **That** sinner is defying God's salvation. **They** are scorning God's Savior. **They** are demonstrating their participation in the reproach of Egypt. **They** are servants (slaves) to whatever they think is recommending them to God (other than Christ's Righteousness). **That** is the sinner who is committing sin.

Look at John 8: 35-36, "**And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.**"

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

The servant is the one who abides in the house because of HIS continued contributions to the household. **If** he stops contributing, he won't be allowed to remain. **To** remain, he must do. **To** remain, he must serve. **That** is the position of a servant. And, that is BONDAGE. **Spiritual** BONDAGE is to think that salvation (at ANY stage, or at ANY time) depends on ANYTHING in the sinner. But, to be free is to abide in the house (to have a permanent place in the household of God) because of the SON'S doing.

Christ came to save His sheep from their legal guilt and condemnation. **He** accomplished that by His death on the Cross. **But**, He also came to save His sheep from their Spiritual BONDAGE. **He** came to CHANGE their thinking about what makes sinners acceptable to God. **He** came to deliver them from committing sin.

Look at I John 3: 9, "**Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.**"

God rolled from off **THIS** generation of Israelites their idolatry, their defiance, their scorn. **He** rolled off them their participation in the reproach of Egypt. **He CHANGED** their thinking from that of their fathers.

He delivered them from the **BONDAGE** that held their fathers **AND THEM** in this mind set for forty years. **He** made them willing to enter in and possess the land He had given to them through Abraham 470 years earlier.

And, He did this in order to **PICTURE** His rolling from off His elect their idolatry and **BONDAGE** to the sin that deceived them and kept them looking at something other than Christ for all of salvation.

How does God roll off the reproaches (the sins) of His people? He rolls them onto Christ. **He** has imputed them to Christ who bore them away to the Cross, and put them away in a Just Satisfaction.

Look at Psalm 64: 6-9, “**Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.**

7 Because FOR THY SAKE I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.”

Christ bore the reproaches of **ALL** men. **They** rejected Him as a Savior. **They** scorned Him. **They** buffeted Him. **They** spat on Him. **They** crucified Him. **And**, He bore (He endured) those reproaches.

But, God does not roll the reproach of Egypt from off **ALL** men. **Some** are left in their sins. **He** did not roll the reproach off Egypt (Pharaoh). **Pharaoh** drowned in the Red Sea pursuing Israel (**STILL** defying God). **And**, Egypt continued in their idolatry. **He** did not roll the reproach off the fathers of **THIS** generation of Israel. **They** died in unbelief.

But, he rolled them off **THIS** generation of Israel in this (temporal) sense: **He** made them willing to enter in and possess the land of Promise. He made them willing to submit to **CIRCUMCISION (I.e. To** declare their participation in the Covenant of Abraham and the Covenant of Moses).

And, He rolls the reproaches off His elect eternally. **Christ** bore the reproaches of His sheep. **They** were imputed to Him and He took them out of the way, nailing them to His Cross. **He** answered all the charges and suffered all the punishment His sheep deserved because of their reproaches. **Christ's** sheep are not facing any wrath from God because of their participation in the reproach of Egypt because (all) the wrath they deserved fell on Christ.

That is how God rolls the reproach of Egypt from off His elect. **He** rolled them onto Christ. **And**, Christ bore them away.

Next, what is the EVIDENCE that God had rolled away, from off His people, the reproach of Egypt?

Look back at Joshua 5: 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."

What is significant about THIS DAY? It is the day Israel's mind was CHANGED. God made them willing to enter in and possess the land their fathers refused to possess. God (radically) CHANGED their thinking.

And to PROVE that change, Israel submitted to CIRCUMCISION. (Physical) CIRCUMCISION was the EVIDENCE of that (radical) change of mind.

This day (through circumcision), Israel declared their (radically) CHANGED minds. This day (through circumcision), Israel declared their allegiance to the Covenant God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This day (through circumcision), they declared that God was THEIR God and that they were HIS people.

CIRCUMCISION has always been what DISTINGUISHED Israel from other people. This DISTINCTION started with a covenant God made with Abraham.

Look at Genesis 17: 4, "As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations."

Look at Genesis 17: 9-10, "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations."

10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

Physical CIRCUMCISION distinguished National Israel from the rest of the world (the nations). Paul said of Abraham in Romans 4 that Abraham "received the sign of circumcision...". To the Natural descendants of Abraham CIRCUMCISION was a sign (an evidence) that they were a part of (participants in) the Covenant God made with Abraham and the Covenant He made through Moses.

God CHANGED the minds of THIS generation of National Israel. He made them willing to enter in and possess the Promised Land. And, the EVIDENCE of their CHANGED minds was (physical) CIRCUMCISION.

But, Spiritual Israel does not submit to (physical) circumcision as an evidence of salvation. (Gal 5:1, "if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.") Spiritual CIRCUMCISION is what distinguishes Spiritual Israel from the rest of the (religious) world.

Look at Romans 2: 28-29, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; **neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:**

29 But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter*; whose praise *is not of men, but of God.*

What is the EVIDENCE of Spiritual CIRCUMCISION? **It is** a CHANGED mind. It is a mind that is LIBERATED from the BONDAGE of öcommitting sinö to the freedom of resting in Christ ALONE. **It is** a mind that is CHANGED from casting shame and reproach upon the Person and work of Christ (by thinking that something IN them has a part in their acceptance) to resting in His work for ALL of salvation. **It is** a mind CHANGED from one that öscornedö (reproached) God to one that (truly) worships God.

Look at Psalms 1, “**Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.**”

The öblessedö man is NOT the man that NEVER öwalked in the counsel of the ungodlyö.

Remember what we read in Ephesians 2. **We ALL öwalked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.** **We** were ALL in league with Satan.

Nor is the öblessedö man the man who NEVER östood in the way of sinnersö. **We** all start out on the öbroad wayö that is leading to destruction. **We** all start out on a öway that seems right to manö. **But**, it is a way that is leading to (eternal) death.

Nor is the öblessedö man the man that NEVER ösat in the seat of the scornfulö. As I hope you have seen, we ALL defied God. **We** ALL scorned God. **We** ALL were participants in öthe reproach of Egyptö. **The** öblessedö man is the man whose mind in CHANGED. **The** öblessedö man is the man God DELIVERS from these things.

The öblessedö man is the man DELIVERED from öworksö salvation to (true) grace.

Look at Psalms 1: 2, “**But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.**”

The öblessedö man is the man delivered from the BONDAGE of serving sin to the LIBERTY of serving righteousness.

Look at Romans 6: 17-18, “**But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness**

Nobody starts out serving righteousness. **We** ALL start out serving sin (öcommitting sinö). **We** ALL start out thinking that SOMETHING (in us) is making up SOME PART of our salvation and acceptance with God. **This** is something ALL need to be delivered from. And, it is something Christ delivers ALL His sheep from.

And, our deliverance from öcommitting sinö is one of the greatest EVIDENCES that we are born of God (i.e. that we are circumcised öin the heartö). **Can** a sinner (rightly) claim to be öborn of Godö who has not seen (and been delivered from) their BONDAGE to the sin that deceived them? **NOT** according to this context!

Moses was a õblessedö man. **He** experienced this Spiritual Circumcision. How do we know? We know because his mind was CHANGED.

Look at Hebrews 11: 24-26, “**By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;**

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.”

The õblessedö man is the man who rather than reproaching Christ is CHANGED to õbearing His reproachö.

Look at Hebrews 13: 10-13, “**We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.**

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”

God õrolled the reproach of Egypt from offö THIS generation of Israel. **He** CHANGED their minds. **They** entered the Land of Promise and were circumcised, thus declaring God to be their God and them to be His people.

He õrollsö that same reproach off His elect. **He** circumcises our hearts and CHANGES our minds from participating in õthe reproach of Egyptö to õbearing the reproach of Christö.

Close: From whom has God removed õthe reproach of Egypt?

Look at Philippians 2: 3, “**For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**”

We worship God in the TRUTH of His Word and in the Spirit that continually points us to Christ.

We see (are persuaded) that ALL our salvation is IN CHRIST, any contribution from us (totally) excluded.

We have been delivered from õcommitting sinö (finding confidence in the flesh) to finding NO CONFIDENCE there.

May God enable us to see õthe reproach of Egyptö, remove it from us, and enable us (instead) to õbear the reproachö of Christ. **That** is what God does for His people. **May** He do for you and me.

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