

THE PLACE TO WAIT

Joshua 4:1-24

Introduction:

1. At last Israel was in the land of promise after many, many years of waiting but it wouldn't be easy for there were many places that would have to be captured. War was about to begin and when God is involved, blessings and battles go together.
2. Before launching into war to capture their land of promise, Israel needs to learn some vital lessons and instructions from God, therefore in the place called "Gilgal" they wait.
3. Later the place called "Gilgal" became holy ground to Israel and through the years many returned again and again and among them was a man named Joshua.
4. The title "Gilgal" means "The reproach has been rolled away." Such a fitting thought for Israel at that time.
5. As Israel had their "Gilgal" so Christians of today have their "Gilgal" also.

I. ISRAEL WAS TO REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED AT GILGAL

1. Anything the Lord does is worthy of remembering.
 - The heart of man is prone to forget what God has done.
 - Various methods are needed and used to refresh our memories.
 - It is for our own advantage to remember what God has done for us.
 - It is for the advantage of our children and others to be told what God has done for us.
2. God told Israel to take 12 stones from the river bed to be taken into the land of promise to be a lasting memorial of the events that happened there.

II. ISRAEL WAS TOLD TO CROSS THE RIVER AND THEN WAIT

1. The priests were not to move from their places in the river until ordered to do so.
2. Once everyone had crossed over, they were to wait for further instructions from God.
 - They were not to rush into the land of promise.
 - Even with the signs of God's presence, they were still to wait.
 - God had more instructions and lessons that Israel needed before proceeding on into battles.
3. God wanted Joshua to be respected and obeyed by Israel as they had done to Moses.
 - Whenever the presence of God appears to be with a person, that person is to be feared and respected.

III. ALL GENERATIONS OF ISRAEL WERE TO KNOW OF GILGAL

1. The twelve stones were taken from the river bed and piled up in the middle of the river bed to be another reminder of the work of God for Israel.
2. God instructed the parents to tell their children and grandchildren of the times and works of God. They were to train their children in the way they should go.
 - Of all the instructions to their children, the most serious lessons were about God.

IV. THE CROSS IS THE CHRISTIAN'S "GILGAL"

1. At Gilgal, God removed the reproach of backslidden Israel. At the cross of Jesus Christ, God removed the reproach of the lost man and woman.
 - Sins were removed - Satan was defeated - A land of promise opened up to those who would claim it.
2. As every Israelite entering the land of promise had to go by the way of Gilgal, so every person entering the Christian's land of promise must go by way of the Cross.
3. As Israel was instructed to remember Gilgal and tell their descendants about what happened there, so every Christian is to remember the cross and tell their family members and every person who will listen about what happened on the cross.
4. Israel had 12 stones on the river bank and 12 stones in the middle of the Jordan river to remind them and their following generations of God's great work for them. Christians have the cross to remind them of God's great work for them.

CONCLUSION:

1. God has been faithful to help us as He did His people of olden days.
2. How great is the stupidity and ingratitude of those who do not recognize God's almighty hand and refuse to acknowledge His goodness in the many times He has delivered them.
3. "Gilgal" was a place many returned so often, just to remember. How often do you return to the cross, just to remember?