

The Salvation of Jehovah

Being Addresses on The Book of Exodus

Chapter 7

Joshua 5

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for this great deliverance. As I look at the cross, I not only see Christ's death and resurrection for me, but I see equally my death and resurrection with Him -- I have parted company now through grace, with the old thing; I am not trying now to regulate this wretched flesh, for nothing could cure that.

That was a wonderful thing -- I have often thought it over in my own mind -- when Naaman, who was a leper, with all his grand position, a great man, mighty and honorable, who had won victories, but had this horrible disease, when he wanted to be cleansed, the message of God was, as it were, Nothing can cleanse defiled flesh but death -- Jordan, the very thing we are looking at, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times." Naaman replies, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." Afterwards, when he went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child. Nothing can end flesh but death. Law will not cure it; restrictions or demands on it, or holy good resolutions will not cure it; it will break out through them all; death has judicially ended it, and through grace a Christian can take that fact up to-day, and say, "Jesus died, and I died with Him, buried in His grave I lay."

I have died with Christ, the whole thing has gone to faith in His death, and now I am risen with Him. The Lord grant we may enter into it in all the blessed reality of it, for His Name's sake.

Chapter 7: Joshua 5

Before we look at this chapter, there is a little point that I desire to say a word about Josh. 4:23, where Joshua explains how it was that they had crossed over the Jordan. Of course it was a divine explanation, still, it is an explanation:

For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over.

Now that is a very interesting point, because you will find in Ex. 15 that Moses, in his song after they had passed through the Red Sea, in faith goes on to the Jordan, just as Joshua in this explanation goes back to the Red Sea. Moses does not rest merely in the fact of their having passed through the sea, but he brings in everything; indeed, he goes on into the millennium in that song, "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever." His faith reaches out into the fulness of redemption. Not only does he say, "Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation" -- that was the present effect of their having crossed the sea -- but he says, "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance," that is going across Jordan; so that everything is accomplished in redemption. The whole purposes of God, both with regard to their being brought out and to their being brought in (because those are the two things) were made good in redemption -- no experience at all, remember. That is a great point. Experience has its place, of course; realization has its place, as we shall see presently, and

very important too; but the accomplishment of God's sovereign purpose and grace, through the singlehanded victory of our Lord Jesus Christ for us, laid the foundation for everything in the purpose of God. So that where there was faith to take it up, as there was in Moses in his song, he celebrates everything that properly speaking comes into that redemption -- the passage of the Jordan, the being brought into the inheritance, and not only that, but positively the millennium, "the Lord shall reign for ever and ever." It is a great help to our souls, to see the whole thing done there in redemption; and therefore redemption, of which the Red Sea is the figure, contemplates the entire completion of the purposes of God.

Joshua then, in this 4th chapter in his explanation to the people of how it was they had crossed over Jordan, goes back to redemption; he connects it with the Red Sea. And it is a very important thing to see where they are separated and where they are connected, because they are connected for redemption, but they are separated for experience. Where it is a question of our experience of the thing, that is Jordan alone. Where it is a question of the redemption being accomplished, Jordan and the Red Sea go together. That is the reason why it is linked in here, and that makes the thing complete. Moses looks on in faith, Joshua goes back in faith and puts them both together. Just as the Lord dried up the one, so He dried up the other. But it was God that did it, it was God that brought them out through the sea, it was God that brought them in through the Jordan. The same power that opened the sea opened the river. They passed through the sea upon dry land, and they passed through the river upon dry land. But when it was a question of their souls' experience, then the things are separated. And that is very important, and I will tell you why. If you put them together for experience, as some people do, you would have your experience coming into redemption. But it is entirely outside experience. Christ's redemption is a thing, assuredly for us, but we had no part in it at all, He did it all alone. It was done for us most fully and perfectly, so much so that when we come to Jordan and it is a question of our souls entering experimentally into the blessed fact of our having died and risen with Christ in order to enjoy our life beyond, there it is all experience; but no experience in the other.

Another point that makes that even more simple and clear is, there was no association in the Red Sea, and there was in the Jordan. The people stood still and saw the salvation of God, but in the Jordan the people followed the ark. There was separation between them and the ark, so as to give the ark its place of pre-eminence, but still they went down after it, they followed it through the river; whereas in the Red Sea they looked and saw God's salvation accomplished.

Now we have to look this evening at some of the great effects in this 5th chapter. And the first great effect is this, that the whole power of the enemy, and the whole spirit that was in the enemy, is entirely taken from him in connection with the victory which was accomplished at Jordan. As soon as ever all these enemies that were on the other side heard how the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan, which was in figure Christ's death and resurrection, and our death and resurrection with Him, the whole spirit of the enemy was broken. That is a very blessed thing, because the spirit being out of an enemy is a

wonderful comfort to our souls, it is a beaten enemy we have got to do with, there is no more spirit left in him. It was the passage of the Jordan, the wonderful victory which was achieved there by the ark, their being identified, no doubt, with it, but it was the drying up, so to speak, of the last source where the enemy had his power. And if a Christian has died and risen with Christ, and in one sense every Christian has, he is out of the reach of the enemy. You cannot charge a dead man with lust or with sin. It is not that he has got anything *in him* that is different, but he has died with Christ, there is where the secret is; the secret of the emancipation is in death, we have died with Christ. That is a wonderful thing, if faith enters into it, that is what we find in the Jordan, we have died with Christ. It was the end of human life, and of the power of the enemy where the enemy had power, because it is in human life, our life down here, that the enemy has power. But we have died with Christ, and therefore his power is gone. A dead man is out of his reach, it is a living man he can touch, not a dead man; a dead man has as well left the sphere where the whole power of the enemy was displayed. That is what makes the figure so blessed and wonderful for us, and that is what really affected the enemies on the other side. When the kings of the Amorites and the Canaanites heard that the waters of Jordan were dried up from before the children of Israel, there was no more spirit left in them because of the children of Israel. It is Christ's victory that breaks the spirit of the foe, it is not our victory. Of course we were associated, thank God, with it, but it was Christ's victory. And that is the reason of the distance between the ark and the people, they were identified with it, but still there was a space between them, so that the whole victory should be entirely that of the ark. And that is a great comfort, because we have to foot the way with the enemy, we meet the foe on the other side. It is not that the devil does not harass us as we go through the wilderness, because of course he does, but it is a very different kind of thing. He harasses us through circumstances, through various things that happen to us as we pass along, the ups and downs of the way, harasses us too through acting upon our flesh, no question of it. But now the tactics were all changed, and here we have that which led to the tactics being changed. You know the devil's tactics since the death of Jesus are quite different from what they were before. It is not like an open and above-board enemy we have to foot the way with; now the character of the thing is (and you will find it more particularly in the epistle to the Ephesians) wiles, pitfalls, snares, hidden deceits, delusions of different kinds, that is how he works now. He does not come like an open devil, but concealing himself, he comes under various wiles and snares, comes with baits, which, as I was saying last week, cover a hook. And if you consult the book of Joshua, you will find that was the character of the warfare, and that is the character of Satan's warfare with us now.

Now that gives rise to what immediately follows this. I suppose you could hardly find an injunction in scripture placed in a more remarkable position than what follows this verse.

When the kings of the Amorites and of the Canaanites 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 any spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel. *At that time* the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives.

If you and I were speaking of it, we should say that was the very time they did not want them. Yet that is the very time the Lord says that the sharp knife comes in. "Make you sharp knives," not blunt, not insufficient for the work, but sharp, keen-edged, knives that will cut. "Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise the children of Israel again the second time." Now what is the meaning of that?

It is very important for us to get clear with regard to the two aspects of circumcision in scripture. We must turn to the New Testament scripture to bring that clearly out -- (Col. 2:11) "In whom," that is, in Christ, "in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh" -- it is well known that "sins" here ought to be left out, it is not a question of sins at all, it is a question of the flesh as a whole, that is the meaning of the body of the flesh, the whole principle of the thing, you have put that off in the circumcision of Christ (the circumcision of Christ of course means the death of Christ), "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Now that is what took place in Jordan, and of that Gilgal was the witness; because there were stones taken up out of Jordan and placed at Gilgal, and those stones were the great evidence and token of this New Testament truth, that there in the death of Christ the whole principle of the flesh came to an end before God, that all that we were as children of Adam came to an end judicially in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ before God, of which Jordan was the figure.

Now that is the first great thing, as a Christian I have been circumcised with the circumcision of Christ, the fleshly principle is put off -- that is my position before God. I have got practically to put it off -- that is another thing; that is to say, in my practical ways I have got to be up to my position. But my position is the thing that defines my practical ways, not my practical ways my position. My position is in Christ risen in whose death God has got rid of the flesh. Now God says to me, as it were, I do not want to see one bit of that about you, because I have got rid of it. But it was in death God got rid of it; it was not patching it up, or making it better, or turning Ishmael into Isaac. You cannot do anything that will repair one thing about yourself. Reparation and all that sort of thing is short of Christianity. The whole principle of Christianity is this, that God has ended judicially in the death of Christ the old man, there the old man as a child of Adam is gone from His sight, and there is entirely a new thing; it is not part new but altogether new, a new man entirely in the risen Christ, the old is gone.

Jesus died and I died with Him,
Buried in His grave I lay.

There is an end of it. God says, as it were, I have got rid of that. That is the first meaning of circumcision, that is circumcision, as set forth in Col. 2.

What we are looking at in this 5th of Joshua is the second

aspect of circumcision, which you find in Col. 3; this is practical circumcision. There is where the sharp knife comes in. He says, "Take thee sharp knives, and circumcise the children of Israel again the second time." And the reason why this was done was that the males which came out of Egypt died because of their disobedience, the whole generation passed away, and the children that were born to them after they came out were not circumcised in the wilderness, because the wilderness was not the place for circumcision. The wilderness was the place where flesh was tested, looking at the second aspect of it, not the whole of it, but that second part from Ex. 20 onwards, from Mount Sinai until they came to Jordan, the whole principle of flesh came out there, and was tested under law. When you think of flesh you must always in your mind let in the idea of law; law and flesh always, I believe, go together. And I will tell you why. The law had to do with flesh, it had reference to flesh in the position in which man in the flesh placed himself, he put himself under restriction. And permit me to say this to you, the whole principle of restriction is the principle of law; there is not a vestige of Christianity in it; "touch not, taste not, handle not," that is the legal principle, and the strength of it is in that, "the strength of sin is the law." Oh, if we could only get people to believe that. Yet you can test it with your children. You say to your child, "Do not touch that," -- that is the very thing he will go and touch, the very restriction calls out the desire. If I put myself under a restriction, the whole power of my nature and flesh goes in the direction to break through that bond, because "it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" -- that is the principle. There is only one cure for that, and that is death, the obliteration of it entirely, judicially before God in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ -- there is no other cure for it. But now God says, I want you to be up to your position, and I want you practically to use the sharp knife to carry out in yourself down here in this world that which I see you judicially to be before my own mind; I do not want you to allow one single bit of flesh. Why? Because I have got rid of it. It is not that we circumcise in order to get rid of the flesh; we circumcise because God has got rid of it. He says, as it were, "I want you to be up to what I have done, I want you to take away all occasion from the foe." And you cannot fight with the devil now unless you are circumcised. "Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel" -- those who had been born while the people wandered about through the wilderness. These children now were all circumcised by Joshua, and as soon as ever they were circumcised you get this characteristic of Gilgal, God says, "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." The smallest bit of Egypt, that is, of the world, about a Christian, is a reproach to him; whether it is in religion, or domestically, or practically in your own ways, if you allow the principle of Egypt into anything, it is a reproach to you, and a denial of the position you have as a Christian. "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you; wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal," which means "rolling." I feel in my soul that what we want is this sharp knife. Are you using it, beloved brethren? Have you listened to this word, "Make you sharp knives?" Practically do we disallow everything of the flesh? What is it

sharpens the knife? The death of Jesus. What is it strengthens my arm to use that knife? The death of Jesus. I get my whole motive out of the position. It is not the good that comes to me, or the comfort or joy it is to me; that which strengthens my own heart and really puts me into this position is that God in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ has completely got rid of the flesh, that is the meaning of "the circumcision of Christ." Are we listening to this word, "Make you sharp knives?" There, I believe, beloved friends, is where the hitch is with many Christians -- the knife is not sharp; there are a great many things that escape, the knife is blunt, it does not cut clean or deep; it does not remove all these excrescences; the edge of it wants to be turned practically and really against every single thing, so that there may not be a loophole for the enemy to get an advantage.

Now the next thing that follows, which really puts a stamp upon Gilgal, is this, and very blessed it is too they kept the Passover. First of all they were circumcised, to this Col. 3 answers, where it says,

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.

That is very interesting, because there the apostle does not allow you a life at all; he says, "Mortify your members," members are not life, they are the moral members of the old man, not the members of your body -- that would make you ascetics -- but he defines the members, fornication, uncleanness, and so on. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," because, he says, you are dead, you have got a life in connection with Christ risen, but you have got no life here, but you have the moral members of your old man. Put to death practically your members, that is, "deadify" practically what is dead. Col. 3. answers to Josh. 5, and Col. 2 answers to Josh. 4. The circumcision of Christ in Col. 2. answers to Jordan in Josh. 4; and the sharp knives and the circumcision in Josh. 5 answer to Col. 3.

Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.

He does not allow that you have a life down here at all, so completely does he look at the old thing as being ended.

Now that opens the way for what follows this. We read that "the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal" -- the spot which got all its characteristic and definiteness from this -- "and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho." Now that is beautiful. When they were in the full results of redemption, in God's own land, the territory that God had purposed in His own heart for them -- He had brought them out of Egypt through the Red Sea and brought them into Canaan through the open waters of the Jordan -- and when they were there, circumcised, they sit down to celebrate the Passover. See what a wonderful thing this is. They kept the Passover on the fourteenth day at even in the plains of Jericho. They celebrated redemption when they were in God's own land. I know nothing more touching than that. What a different sort of celebration that was from the night of the Passover in Egypt, and from the time when they kept it in the wilderness. On the night of the Passover itself, in Ex. 12, there was the terror, and fear, and anguish that connected itself

with Egypt attaching to them. When they kept it in the desert, as we know they did, there were the circumstances of the wilderness attaching to them. But when they kept it in Canaan, in the plains of Jericho, I believe it answers exactly to God's normal thought to us in the Lord's supper. It is a heavenly remembrance of the once crucified Jesus, whose blood has settled everything for God and for us. That is what that keeping of the Passover here answered to, not the Passover in Egypt, not the Passover in the desert, very blessed, though they were in their place, but the Passover now, when they were in the full results of the redemption which God had accomplished, by His own power, and were brought into the land which His own heart had designed and purposed for them. Circumcision first, the celebration of the Passover next.

Then there is one thing more, and that is, that now God feeds them, the circumcision knife is most important, but it is not food. The knife will remove the excrescences and the practical manifestations of all that God has really got rid of before Himself, and I believe in my soul what Christians want is this knife. That is to say, it is this practical abnegation to death of all that judicially has been condemned. It is a grand thing to keep that clear in our souls, that God has got rid of it, and does not see one bit of it before Himself. But then, on that ground God says, I will not permit you to allow a bit of it. And therefore the apostle says, "Our old man has been crucified with him, that the body of sin," that is, the principle of sin, "might be annulled, that henceforth we should not be the servants of sin." We were sin's slaves before, we are not to be sin's slaves now, we are free. "Free" in scripture never means that the thing is not there, but that we are not under its dominion. There is the great mistake that many beloved people have made with regard to it; when they talk of being free from sin, they think that sin is not there. No; the meaning of it is I am no longer under its dominion: I have got the flesh in me, and always shall until I drop this poor vile body, but God has got rid of the whole principle of that as standing before Himself, He has judicially condemned and put it in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ out of His sight; and He says to me, as it were, "The flesh is in you, but I do not want you to allow one motion of it; on the contrary I insist on your practically accepting what is true reality of you." And this is where the sharp knife comes in. There would be no force in circumcision if the flesh was not there. If God says to me, "You must take a sharp knife and circumcise," it is as much as to say the flesh is there. And if people say they have got rid of it they are denying the word of God. You do not want a sharp knife if it is not there or if it is changed; it is there unaltered, and therefore you want the sharp knife to reduce it practically to silence as God has judicially condemned it. Now that is most important, and I believe in this lies the secret of the weakness in Christians, that they are not using the circumcision knife. Thank God, every Christian is in a sense circumcised, but they do not practically circumcise; the knife has got blunt somehow or other, they do not use the sharp knife in faith and liberty. There are those who try to bring the law in, but instead of the law it should be the knife. Beloved brother or sister, if you are trying the law, try the knife instead. Never forget this -- the

law allows the flesh; it is the flesh it puts under restriction. I suppose no one here to-night would say you would put the new life under restriction. You would not say to the new life, -- Do not touch this, or that, or the other thing. But then, if you say that to the flesh, you are giving the flesh a position, allowing it as a living thing, giving it a status. You see restriction is quite a different thing from the knife; the knife is that which disallows the thing, the law is that which allows it. The law allows it, but says, "I will not let you move"; but still there it is. I will tell you what it is -- handcuffs; I will allow you, but I will handcuff you. But the knife says, I disallow you, I abnegate you to death, I totally and completely refuse you; I do not put you under any restriction, but I totally disallow you. "Mortify your members"; putting them under restriction is the very opposite to "mortify," it is really giving them a life.

Now I want you to look at this a little further. That is the negative side of the truth -- the getting rid of practically all that God in His infinite wonderful grace has got rid of judicially. But now we come to what is positive. God says, as it were, "To fight you must be fed, and I have got food for you." And therefore we read,

And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day.

Now that was the food that was suited to the new position God had brought them into. It has been said, and I have no doubt truly, that the meaning of the old corn of the land was -- it was the food that grew there -- Christ in the new heavenly blessed place and circumstances He has gone into, a heavenly, victorious, triumphant Christ, who passed through everything and has gone into heaven; that is the old corn of the land, food suited to Canaan. It is very beautiful to see all these little points in the types of scripture with regard to the different ways in which the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us.

And now mark this -- the manna ceased. But then it is interesting to see that they had manna into Canaan, at any rate. I suppose that is the reason why some people think we do not want manna now, because it says here the manna ceased; indeed, that passage was brought up to me as supporting that objection. But it is a very stupid objection, because you know very well the people of Israel were not in the wilderness and in Canaan at the same period of their life as we are. They were in the wilderness one part of their life, and they were in Canaan another part of their life; whereas we Christians are passing through the desert and yet at the same time seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus during the same term of our natural life down here though the experiences of the two are distinct, and do not go on at the same moment. Our position is that we are seated in heavenly places in Christ, and yet we are down here in this world, and if we are according to God's mind it is a desert to us, and therefore we want manna. But the children of Israel did eat manna after they went into Canaan; no doubt it ceased, *but still they had it in the land*. And you will find, as a matter of fact, if it is a question of our heavenly joys, or conflict, or place, if it is a question of what we have to meet in heaven, we want the heavenly food for that; nothing will nourish our souls but that; we want the heavenly Christ to

sustain us, we want the heavenly food to strengthen our hearts. If I have to contend against this awful foe, this wily enemy, I want the heavenly food. And therefore God says, you cannot fight if you are not fed; you must have the knife to take away the power from the enemy, you must have food to strengthen yourselves to fight the foe. The circumcision knife disallows what the enemy would profit by; the food is the strength of the new life to enable me to meet the foe. But then I am going through this world here, and I find sorrows in it and trials -- I have got a sick wife, or a sick child, or a weak body, or trying circumstances, do not I want manna for that? I have got the lowly Christ for the circumstances here, that lowly sweetness and gentleness that characterized Him, that manna, like the small hoar-frost, that was, as has been beautifully said, on every rose and every thorn, and they gathered it, and it was sweet, and they fed on it. You and I want that as we pass through this desert scene. I say, thank God I have got Christ in both, I have got Him in Canaan and I have got Him in the desert; I want manna as my food as I go through the desert of this world; I want the old corn of the land to sustain me in my true position in heaven.

Now I have noticed with persons who have said they do not want manna that there was a tendency to be hard, perhaps clear, correct, but too cold; as has been said, "As clear as the moon, and as cold as the moon." But the manna is the tenderness, grace, softness, and gentleness of the humbled Christ. And the difference between the manna and the old corn of the land is exactly the difference between Phil. 2 and 3. Chapter 3 is the Man in glory, chapter 2 is the Man in humiliation. Do you mean to tell me I do not want the Man in humiliation because I have the Man in glory? I see some with much energy and power, and they press on, yet often I am compelled to say -- If they had a little more of Phil. 2 they would be a little more tender, and considerate, and softened, a little more of that beautiful grace of Christ -- "Let this mind be in you." I want the energy that presses on, that is the heavenly Christ, but I want both. And you will find that it fits in wonderfully. I want the one with regard to my passage through this desert scene and the circumstances that belong to me here; I want the other with regard to the position God has set me in in heaven; for I have got to meet the foe, and he disputes the territory with me. The Lord in His grace give us to feed on Christ both as the old corn and the manna; do not let us be cheated by any wile of Satan with regard to that; we want Him as the manna for the desert and as the old corn for the land.

Now there is another thing in Josh. 5:12,

And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

Now mark -- they were circumcised, they kept the Passover, and they ate the old corn of the land before ever they fought a battle. And mark what follows,

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for

us, or for our adversaries?

Now there is a very important principle. It is perfectly evident that the form which this mysterious person assumed, with his drawn sword in his hand, told now that it was conflict. They are going to fight now -- not a fight to get possession but to keep possession, and to enjoy possession. God gave them possession, He brought them across Jordan and placed them in Canaan. It was God who opened the river for them, and says, I have given you every spot that the sole of your feet shall tread upon. They were to put the sole of their foot on the territory, and thus they were to *take possession*. I quite admit they did not take possession of *all*, but still that was their title. God says, I will put you there, and the enemy will try to thrust you out, but you must hold your own. That shows the character of the thing.

And then there is another thing that is very important, and that is, it is such an intensely direct warfare there is no neutrality in it, you must be either on one side or the other, you cannot find a halfway house as it were in this warfare, you cannot be a little bit here and a little bit there; heavenly warfare allows of no neutrality, "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" That is Joshua's own word; he saw this man with drawn sword, and he clearly understood the meaning of it -- there is nothing before us but fighting. Now the question is, whose side are you on? See how clearly he apprehended that. He answers, No, but I am come as captain of the Lord's host. Joshua did not know who the wonderful person was that he spoke to; he says, I am the leader, "as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." And Joshua says, "What saith my Lord?" And now I want to point out to you a very important thing, and exceedingly beautiful too. Here is evidently the picture of our Lord Jesus Christ placing Himself at the head of His people, to conduct them as the leader in all their victories; as captain of the Lord's host He has come to take command. Joshua must have felt very small indeed. It is not an ordinary common soldier that Joshua challenges with regard to neutrality -- and all right enough too -- but he says, I am the leader, I am placing myself at the head of My people whom I have redeemed, brought through the open waters of the Jordan and brought into this territory, "as captain of the Lord's host am I now come." And then Joshua's eyes got opened at once as to who this wonderful person was, and he says, "What saith my lord unto his servant?" He recognizes now the dignity of the person,

and the captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Now that was the very same word that was spoken when Moses drew near to look at the burning bush before redemption was accomplished, when God made known His purposes to him, and told him what was in His heart, that He had seen the affliction of His people, and heard their cry, and knew their sorrows, and said, "I am come down myself to do it, you might think you do a great deal, but I am come to deliver them, they are dear to me; I will send you, but I am the doer." O would to God the Lord's servants only remembered that a little more: we make ourselves so much agents and actors, and I do

not know what, instead of vessels. It is God that does the work, "the work that is done on the earth He doeth it Himself" -- "I am come down, I am going to effect this extrication, I am going to bring out and I am going to bring in," and He says to Moses, "Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet" -- the very same thing he says to Joshua. And what does that say to us? Where it is a question of God's accomplishing redemption, God insists on the holiness that is due to His person, and where it is a question of fighting the Lord's battles, He insists on the holiness due to Himself. The holiness that was needed in order to listen to the communications of His heart with regard to redemption is the holiness that is needed in order to listen to the communications of His heart with regard to the conflicts in Canaan. You have got to do with God, and it is the very presentation the Lord Jesus Christ makes of Himself in Philadelphia. You remember what He says when He addresses the church there. These things saith the One in whom everything is summed up, the Amen -- you never get the Amen in anybody else -- you will get breakdown, and failure, and departure, and inconsistency, in everybody else -- these things saith the One that ratifies everything in His own person, "He that is holy, he that is true." Now think of that. You and I have got to do with our Lord Jesus Christ, with God, with one who is holy and true, of whom holiness and truth are the characteristics. And may I say this other little word -- personal holiness of course, but, if you please, corporate holiness too. I thank God with all my heart and soul where there is the desire for holiness amongst God's own beloved people; the Lord in His infinite grace impel our hearts more strongly on the Divine lines with regard to it! But, beloved friends, the holiness (which means the separation to God) that He must have with us personally must characterize us collectively, else you will have, I say it without irreverence, an unequal Christ. Do you think that Christ insists upon practical personal holiness in you and me, and that He will not have that in our collective associations? It is most dreadful to think of it. Insist upon it personally, but the more you do you must insist upon it collectively. I say we must have it corporately as well as personally, in the collective as in the individual. Whatever is affirmed of the individual is equally affirmed of the collective. And there is the terrible danger of the present moment. People will put up with any sort of corporate association. Now if there is anything important, it is what is due to His name. This was the thought of Jehovah when He had a people upon earth, He says, "I am going to dwell amongst you"; and the moment you get that thought before your soul you get the right thought of separation. Do you remember how Jacob got it? Jacob was wandering in Laban's country, and I do not know what kind of things got attached to him, but at last God said to him, I want you to turn your face toward the house of God, "Arise and go to Bethel." And the moment Jacob got to the house of God before Him, he says, We have got idols here, dirty garments here -- he never thought of it before, not even when he was putting up that beautiful altar that he called El-elohe-Israel -- very sentimental and very selfish. But the moment he got the house of God before his thoughts, he says, as it were, "We must be clean, put away the filthy garments and idols, we are going to the house of God, and we must be suitable to it." Do

not forget those words the captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. And Joshua did so."

The Lord in His grace give our hearts to enter in to it, and take in the blessedness of those things that characterize Gilgal.; that which really puts us in practical possession is circumcision, then we keep the Passover, the remembrance of redemption, in God's country, we feed upon the old corn of the land, and we listen to this claim of absolute holiness.