

**Message:** “JOSHUA: CIRCUMCISION” by Pastor Jon Whisner, 1/23/22

**Description:** As soon as the children of Israel crossed the Jordan River, God’s next step for Joshua to take was unusual to say the least. God’s instruction to circumcise all of the males before their invasion of Jericho must surely have caused Joshua pause. And pause they did for many days before their advancement into enemy territory.

**Key Scripture:** Joshua 5:1-12

**Takeaway / Application:** God’s ways are higher than our ways. God thoughts are higher than our thoughts (read Isaiah 55:8-9 to your group). Even when the Lord’s plan and His timing don’t make sense to us, we must obey anyway. God’s blessings and favor follows our surrender to His will.

- If we were headed into battle, Joshua 5:1 is a prime time and setting to take advantage of a fearful, vulnerable adversary. Yet, instead, God calls all of the males to be circumcised before they engage the enemy. Now the script flips because with such a surgery, all of these warriors will need to heal for many days—so now Israel becomes vulnerable to their enemies. This just doesn’t make sense to us—but God always knows what’s best. **Before conquest there had to be consecration.** Israel had not been circumcising their sons for all of their years wandering in the desert—thus, God had something against them because they had broken this sacred covenant act of obedience. Are there any areas of your life that are in direct disobedience to God’s will for you? You must restore your relationship before you can expect advancement.
- Why did God require all of the males of Israel to be circumcised again?
  1. **To Restore The Lord’s Covenant with Israel** (Gen. 12:1-3; 15; 17:9-27).
  2. **To Remove Israel’s Reproach** (Numbers 13-14; Deut. 2:14).
  3. **To Qualify them to eat the Passover** (Exodus 12).God takes His promises and His covenants very seriously. If Israel had gone against Jericho without God’s anointing and power on them, they would have failed miserably. Before we do God’s work, we must obey God’s will. Share an example in your life where you were stunted or stopped until the light bulb came on that you were doing things out of order.
- How do we apply circumcision to our lives today? Warren Wiersbe wrote, *“The Christian’s circumcision is in contrast to that of the Jews. They had an external physical surgery on their bodies, while believers have an internal spiritual surgery on their hearts.”* Philippians 3:3 says, **“We (Christ followers) are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”** Discuss.
- Circumcision physically is **Personal, Private, Painful**. So it is with *spiritual* circumcision (read Deut. 10:16). The cutting away of our will, our flesh, our stubbornness hurts! But Joshua 5:10-12 shows the outcome of obedience.