

GILGAL

The Beginning

Oh, Gilgal, we look to you to open the Book and to share with us your mysteries. Gilgal, you are the beginning of our journey, so reveal to us all that is within your realm: the mystery of your Memorial Stones; yes, those glorious Stones taken from the Jordan at the Crossing of the Children of Israel under the command of Joshua. Tell us of the cutting away, the rolling away of reproach (for that is your name) and the great cleansing of the people of God who have entered your domain. Disclose to us the true meaning of your Altars of Sacrifice in the Plains of Jericho. Speak to us of Joshua, Samuel, King Saul, David, Elijah and Elisha who made you their abode. Tell us of your battles, your camps, and campaigns as Joshua subdued the Land of Canaan. You were the perfect host to greet those coming up from Egypt and out from the Wilderness. Your rolling hills, meadows and streams welcomed those who first entered your fertile fields. Your embrace was a welcome sign to the warriors who were marching onward to Jericho, the mighty fortress, whose walls towered over the land.

Do you know your significance to our understanding and revelation of the One to come? Take your place in our hearts and rejoice with a shout of victory as you were witness to the great triumph of Israel in the day of battle. We honor you, Gilgal, for your significance is great, not only in the beginnings of possession, but unto the full inheritance through allotment to Israel's Tribes of all the Land.

What Do These Stones Mean?

Your Memorial Stones speak to us to answer the great question of every child who beheld them, "What do these stones mean?" They are a "sign among you. . .the waters of Jordan were

cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord. . .these stones shall be a memorial forever” (Joshua 4:6-7). They tell all peoples of the earth that the hand of the Lord is mighty, and the Lord our God is to be revered forever (cf. Joshua 4:19-24). We honor those twelve glorious Stones as a Memorial to the Lord who brought the Twelve Tribes of Israel through the great waters of death that were cut off and all the people passed through on dry ground (cf. Joshua 3:15-17).

The waters of death could not forbid the triumph of the Mighty One. We memorialize this witness of the Stones to the Living One, our Faithful High Priest, Who, with the Ark of His Presence passed through death; Who is now alive and Who lives forevermore (Revelation 1:18). Oh, Jordan, where is your sting, Oh, watery grave, where is your victory? Thanks be unto God Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:55, 57).

Gilgal, you are home to the Stones that witness to triumph and victory over Jordan’s waters that fall down, and descend to the depths of earth, the Dead Sea. Your Stones came out from the midst of death and stand as a true testament to the Resurrection of the true Living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. Yes, even to us, the Living Stones who offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Peter 2:4-5). Even to us, who were raised from death with Him, the Risen One, through faith in the operation of God; Who raised Him from the dead (cf. Colossians 2:12).

Confirming the Covenant--Circumcision

Oh, Gilgal speak to us once again of the rolling away of the reproach for the uncircumcised ones, born in the wilderness under Moses; who must needs be circumcised as the children of God to take possession of the Land from the uncircumcised who did dwell there. Yes, even as

the LORD commanded Abraham when He gave him the Covenant of Circumcision and said unto him:

I will establish My Covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a stranger, all the Land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep My Covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is My Covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised (Genesis 17:7-10).

Gilgal, in you Joshua has reaffirmed the Covenant made with Abraham and commanded by Moses to all the Tribes. Yes, even to all those who have crossed Jordan from the Wilderness and have entered not only the Land of Canaan to take possession, but also to roll away the reproach of Egypt from off all the seed for whom the Covenant was made. And now Joshua has named that place of the great rolling away by your name, Gilgal (Joshua 5:9). The people then did remain there after the great removal until they were made whole (Joshua 5:8).

Oh, Gilgal, you speak to us of the wholeness and completeness we share also in the Circumcised One, Christ Jesus. Yes, the Lamb Who was cut off from the land of the living for us (Isaiah 53:8) and by His Cross has carried away our sins and the uncleanness of our flesh through His death (cf. Colossians 2:11). We embrace with you, Gilgal, the circumcision of our hearts; not with the flinty knives of Joshua, but in the spirit; and now our praise is not by men, but of God (cf. Romans 2:29; Jeremiah 4:4;9:26). Yes, we do embrace the cutting away of the Cross, and the Crucified, by Whose vicarious death we have been enjoined; and by Whom our reproach has been removed; as it is written, “the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me” (Romans 15:3; Psalms 69:9).

Altars for Sacrifice and Fellowship—the Shelem

Oh, Gilgal, speak to us of your Altars for they are the first in the Land for Joshua and the Tribes. The place of sacrifice and prayers at the Tabernacle there. The beginnings of consecration to the Lord for the cleansing of the Land. On your Altars the *Shelem*, the offerings of peace in fellowship together with the One Who is Peace are shared. We return to Thee, Gilgal, for consultations with the Almighty and repair to your Altars for sacrifice. We worship the Almighty by the giving of ourselves in the Land of the living; and by the mercies of God we offer our bodies in holiness, acceptable to Him Who receives us by His Grace, and by Whom our reproach has been rolled away (cf. Romans 12:2).

With you, Gilgal, we celebrate the Passover (cf. Joshua 5:10). Our Pascal Lamb is sacrificed for us and we share in the pain of the offering in knowing fellowship in suffering with Him (cf. Philippians 3:10); being made conformable unto His death; even that One spoken of by the Prophet John who cried out, “Behold, the Lamb of God; Who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Yes, worthy is the Lamb! Oh, blessed Gilgal, first to share in the Passover meal of the Tribes in the new Land on that first month of the year, on the fourteenth day, with loins girded, shoes on your feet, staff in your hand, eaten in haste; it was the Passover of our Lord (cf. Exodus 12:11).

On that glorious day, Gilgal, the last vestige of the wilderness journey ceased. The manna stopped! (cp. Exodus 16:35) The reproach of Egypt was over, and the mentality of wanderings in the wilderness came to an end. The people did eat of the Land “the old corn, unleavened cakes and parched corn. . . the fruit of the land of Canaan that year” (Joshua 5:11-12). Gilgal,

entrance to the Land flowing with milk and honey, we enjoy your bounty and your nourishment for our souls.

Joshua, Son of Nun

Gilgal tell us more, of Joshua, son of Nun, of the Tribe of Ephraim. Joshua, chosen of God to succeed Moses, servant of the Most High, the Lawgiver and great prophet of God. You, Joshua, received your charge by the hand of Moses (Deuteronomy 31:23) to “Be strong and of a good courage for you shall bring the children of Israel into the Land which the Lord swore to them.” Joshua, you who fell not in the wilderness as the others because your faith was strong and gave a good report when you spied out the Land (cf. Number 14). Yes, even from the Lord you received the promise, “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you. . .there shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life” (Joshua 1:3, 5). Joshua (Savior), it is you who pre-figure the One with Whom you share a Name and all that was said to you finds completion in Him.

Gilgal, your campfires fill the night, with Joshua, son of Nun, your leader going in and out of the Camp and headquarters there (Joshua 9:6; 10:6, 15). In you Gilgal, Joshua returned for Rest and refreshment and to take counsel from the Most High. In your tents great battle plans were made; in you campaigns and strategies were formed for the advance of the armies of God, to fulfill the promises made; and to secure the complete possession of the Land. From you Gilgal, where the reproach was rolled away; yes, from you, the place of removal, the Sons of the Almighty went forth to possess their inheritance from the LORD.

From the Place of Removal to the Place of Weeping

Gilgal, place of removal, may you always send forth your messengers to remind and exhort us as you did in the days of Joshua, in his old age when the people became slack and delinquent in their faithfulness to the commands of the LORD. Yes, even as you did. . .

"when an angel of the LORD came up from you, Gilgal, to Bochim (the place of weeping), and said, 'I made you to go up from Egypt, and have brought you unto the Land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And you shall make no league with the inhabitants of this Land; you shall throw down their altars: but you have not obeyed My voice: why have you done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you: but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you'. And It came to pass when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept. And they called the name of that place, Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the LORD. And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the Land. And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD that He did for Israel" (Judges 2:1-7).

Yes, Gilgal, may we continuously weep before the LORD, even as our LORD, "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared: though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:7-9).

Prophets Within the Gates

Oh Gilgal, continue to raise up your sons, the prophets within your Gates, even as it was in the days of Samuel, that great Prophet, Priest and Judge in Israel. It was you Gilgal, who were chosen by the Nazarite and Seer after the great day of battle with the Ammonites to be the place of renewal for the Kingdom and the Confirmation of Saul as King (cf. 1 Samuel 11:14). In

you, Gilgal, were offered the sacrifices of the *Shelem*, the peace and fellowship offerings before the Lord on your Altars there; along with all the great rejoicing, and the shouts of all the people gathered there. Yes, with the Anointed King confirmed and the Kingdom renewed, we behold the unfolding fullness of the Gospel in the Son, our King. We see this by the Holy Ghost, the renewing Spirit. For even as the great Apostle wrote, “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His Mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and *renewing* of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5). For the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (cf. Romans 14:17). Lord, may we ever become that New Man; Who has become to us our renewal in the Spirit; and is by Nature the very image of the One after Whom we were created (cf. Colossians 3:10).

Gilgal, it was to you, along with Bethel, Mizpah and Ramah that Samuel in his Circuits came to administer his duties as Ruler and Judge. It was within your realm that the Judgment Seat was set ((1 Samuel 7:16-17). It was at your Altars, and in your Sanctuary he did minister there. You were favored and blessed to receive such a one, the Prophet of the Lord. Within your Gates, Samuel established the School of the Prophets (cp. II Kings 4:38); and the "sons of the prophets" attended daily to the word of the Lord. May our hearts also daily attend to the One Who ministers as Prophet, Priest, and King/Judge—the Beloved Son, of Whom you, Samuel, were the arch-type. May our fellowship with Him be sweet, a fragrant offering, a sweet savor to the Most High.

Saul, Son of Kish

Gilgal, tell us more of Saul, first King of Israel, whose beginnings were humble from the smallest Tribe, Benjamin (cf. 1 Samuel 9:10-11). Saul, to whom “Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, ‘Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over His inheritance?’” (1 Samuel 10:1). Yes, Saul, did accompany Samuel to your Gates, Gilgal, for the offering up of burnt offerings, sacrifices and the *Shelem*, peace offerings to the Lord (1 Samuel 10:8). Oh, Saul, you had such promise when “the Spirit of the LORD came upon you, and you did prophesy with the prophets, and you were turned into another man” (cp. 1 Samuel 10:6). In that day when Samuel conversed with you and “God gave you another heart” (cp. 1 Samuel 10:9). In that day when all the people did marvel and say, “What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” (1 Samuel 10:12).

But lo, how you did change and fell from that grace given to you from the LORD when iniquity was found in you: jealousy of David, pride from your high position as King, disobedience to the commands of the Lord. Oh, what opportunities were lost; there could have been a casting out of these corruptions from you, and a “hewing of Agag to pieces” (cf. 1 Samuel 15:8-9) which would have been a new expression of humility and obedience to the Lord; then your Kingdom would have been established forever. But lo, you were found out in Gilgal, the place of Removal; and alas, it was not the reproach of sin that was removed from you, but it was you who were to be removed; even as Samuel said unto you in that day: *"Thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD has sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be captain over His people, because you have not kept that which the LORD commanded you"* (1 Samuel 13:13-14; see also 1 Samuel 15:26-28).

Saul, the word of the LORD shall come to pass concerning you. The Philistines shall war against you all your days (1 Samuel 14:52) and you shall fall before them in battle in Mount Gilboa (1 Samuel 31:3-4). Then shall the word of the LORD be fulfilled when He shall raise up David, son of Jesse, a man after God own heart to rule His people, Israel.

Oh, Saul how Samuel and David did grieve for you. The anguish and lament of the faithful and Beloved ones finds full expression in David's Song concerning you:

*The Beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: How are the Mighty Fallen!
Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines
rejoice, the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of
offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though it
had not been anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back,
and the sword of Saul returned not empty.
Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not
divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put
on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O, Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high
places.
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to
me was wonderful, passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!
(II Samuel 1:19-27)*

David, Son of Jesse

Yes, to David was the Kingdom given by the hand of Samuel who first anointed him in Bethlehem (cf. 1 Samuel 16:13). But it was you, Gilgal, who when the usurper Absalom, son of David's own flesh, rose to challenge for the Kingdom and caused David to flee to Mahanaim in Gad (II Samuel 17:24); you welcomed the return of the King when the men of Judah came to you to receive him from East of the Jordan, the river of death (cf. II Samuel 19:14-15). Gilgal

teach us to receive our Beloved One, Resurrected One, Living One, when our own flesh rises to challenge Him, to cause Him to remove from His throne in our hearts. May He ever reign in His holy hill, Mount Zion, Eternal City of the King, the New Jerusalem. May He ever reign in us, the Israel of God, the Bride of Christ, and Body of Christ; the holy habitation of God in the Spirit.

Elijah, the Tishbite

Gilgal, speak to us more of others, even Elijah and Elisha who stayed within your bounds, with the sons of the prophets who abode under the covering and protection of your domain. Elijah, great prophet of God was with you, Gilgal, on his last day, before his removal from earth, and his glorious ascension in the chariot of fire. “Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord has sent me to Bethel” he said to Elisha (II Kings 2:2). But Elisha would not leave Elijah’s side and saw him depart and received the double portion of his anointing and his mantel. How could Elisha tarry more when his destiny lay beyond.

Gilgal, Only the Beginning

Gilgal, you are the Beginning of Days in the Land. But, you will be our guide to the final Conquest and the great cutting off of sin and uncleanness; the removal of idolatry’s scourge that was deeply rooted there. From you, Gilgal, Joshua and the great Army of the Lord went forth for the Righteous Cause, to remove the uncircumcised from the Chosen Place, the Promised Land to Abraham and the Righteous Seed, the LORD.

Gilgal, you may give way to others of more notable fame; and we would tarry with you longer still, but we must move on to discover those “others” and the mysteries they will unveil. But may we always in our hearts stay within your embrace in the Beloved. May we always be as

you were, first to welcome Him Who passed through death; the One in Whom the reproach of Egypt is removed; even in Him, in Whom we live and move and have our Eternal Being.

Thank you, Gilgal, you have taught us well the mysteries you held within and have now released to all who will hear.