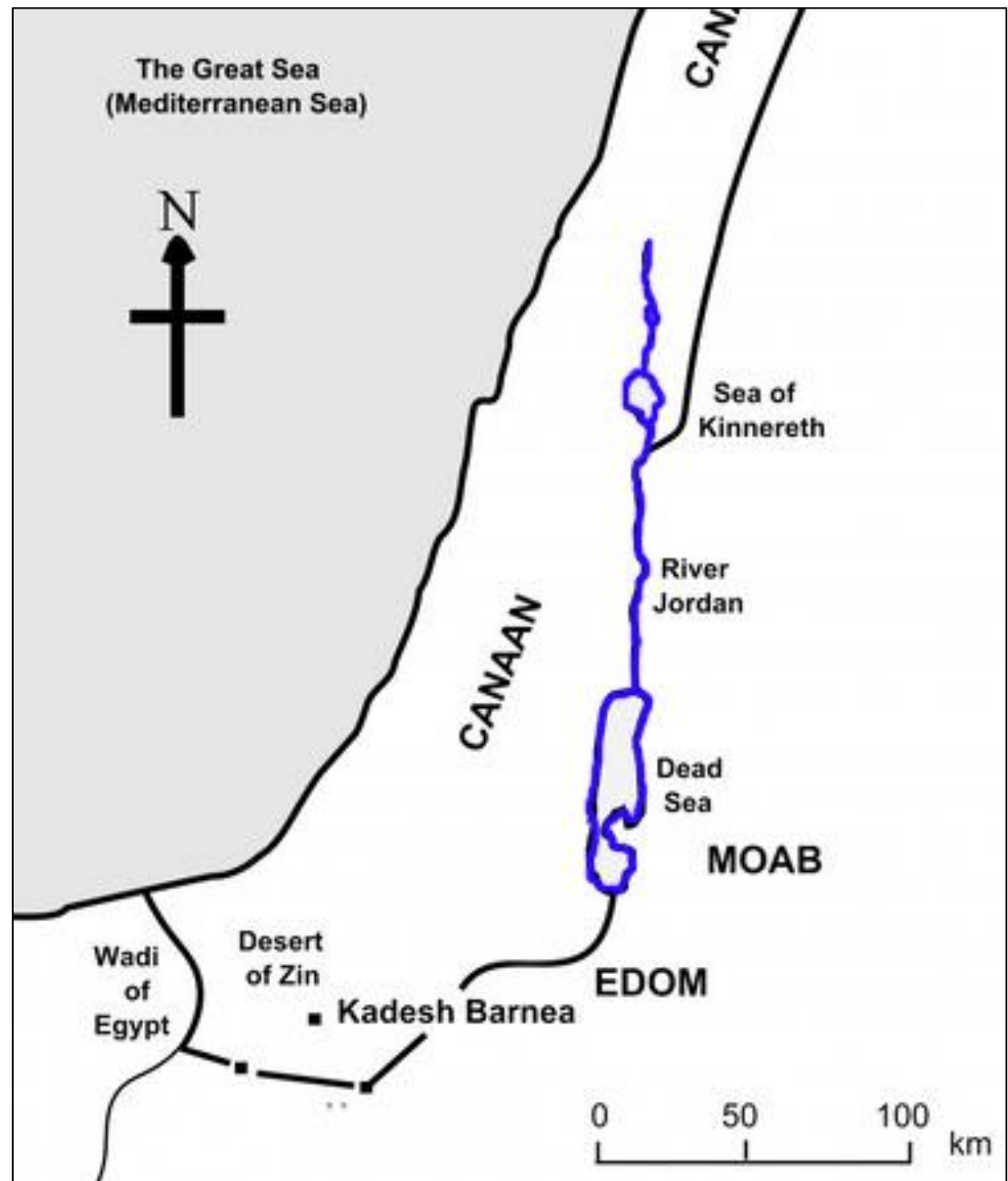




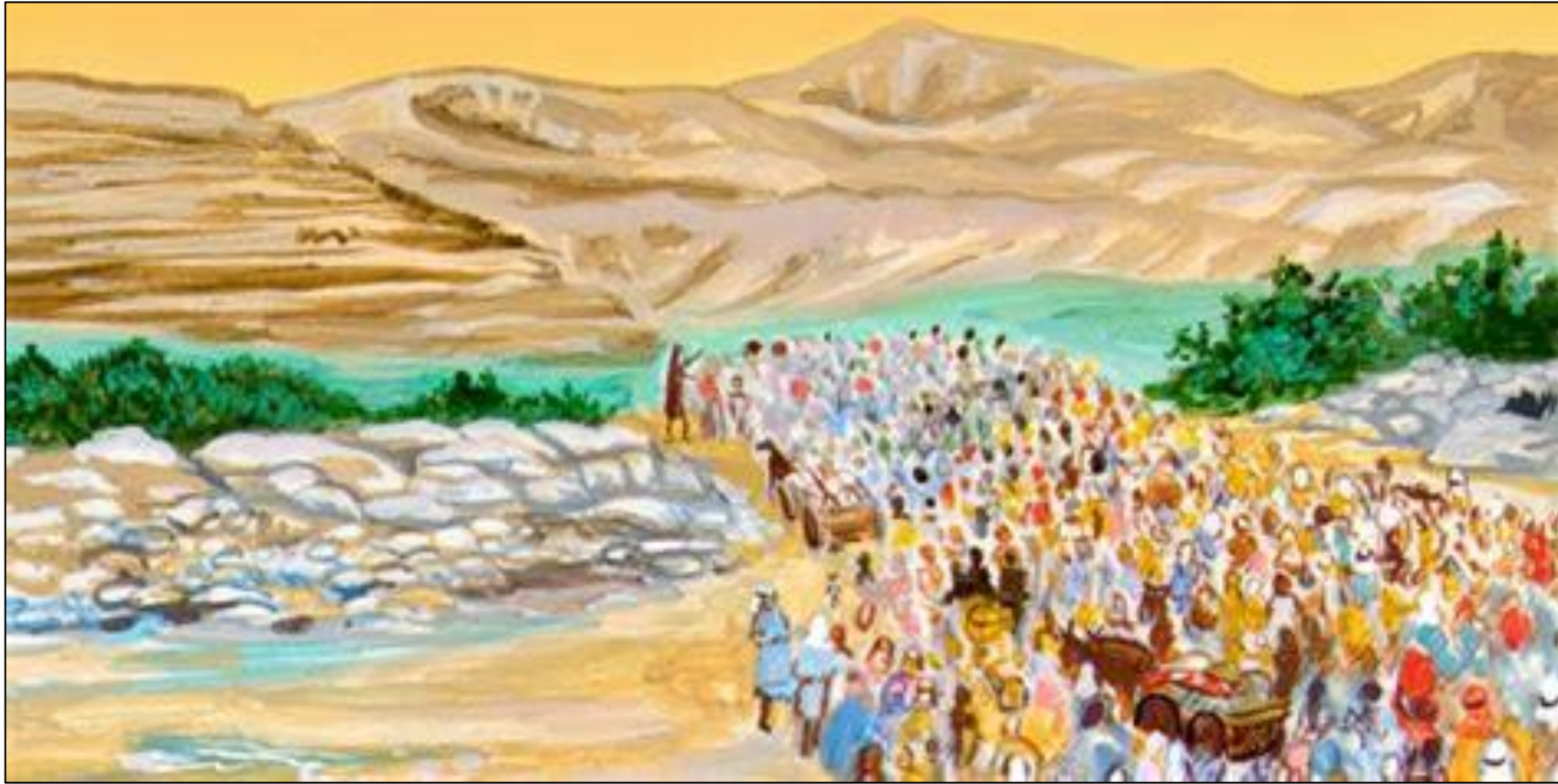
Joshua: chapter 5:1- 9

This section raises 2 very big issues for today

Now when all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the coast heard how the LORD had dried up the Jordan

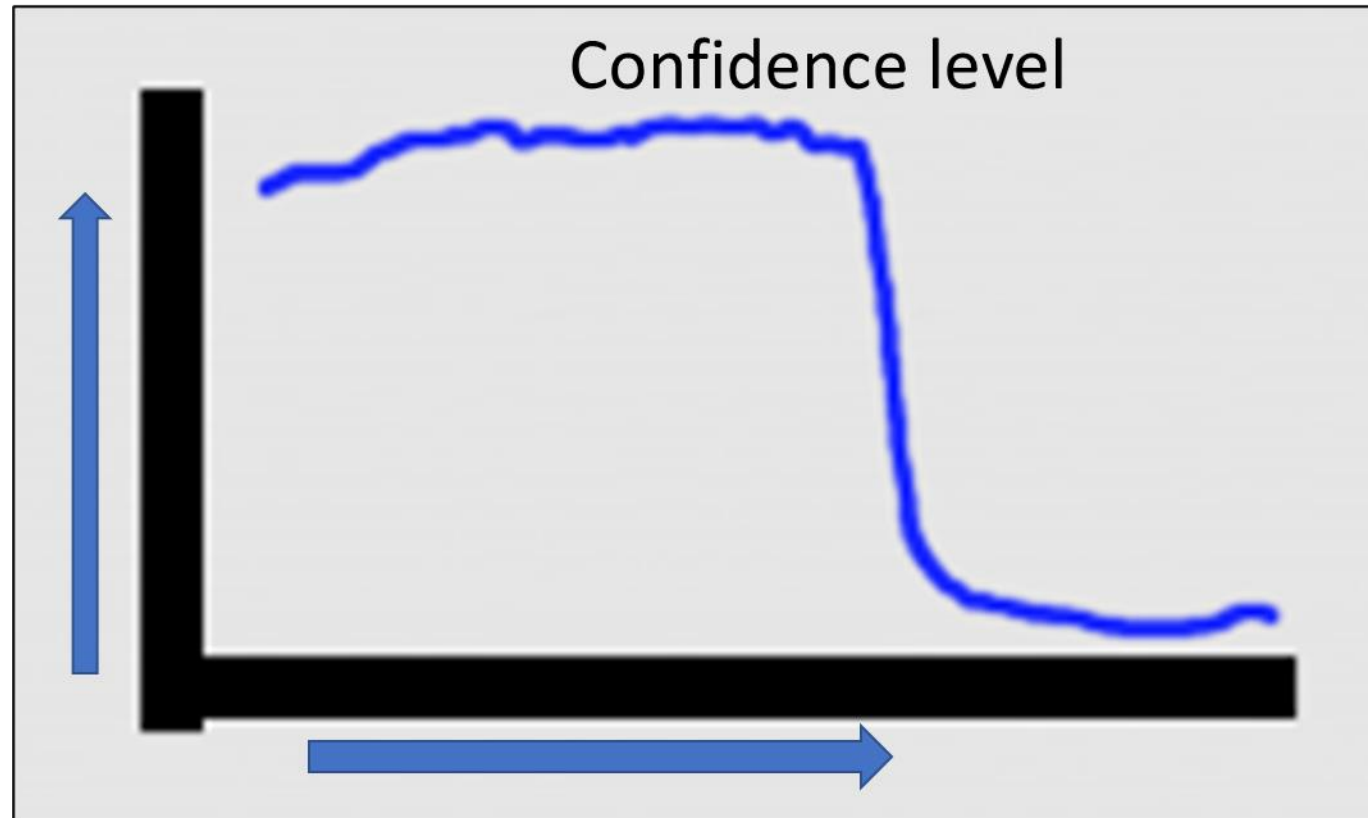


They heard how the LORD had dried up the Jordan before the Israelites until we had crossed over,



Who told them ?

their hearts melted and they no longer had the courage to face the Israelites.



It was God they were afraid of.

At that time the LORD said to Joshua,
"Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites again."

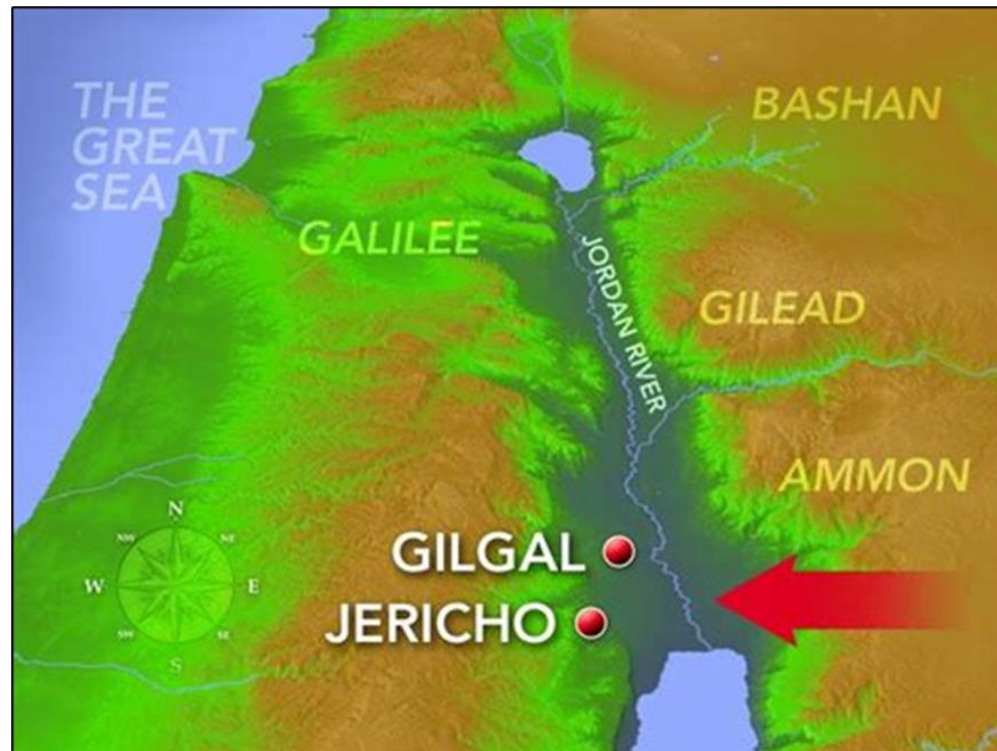


The word "again" is explained later.
God sees the community as a single people across the generations

So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites at Gibeath Haaraloth (Gilgal).

Flint was the original material used to make knives taking them back to the beginning of the nation

All the men submitted to this



Now this is why he did so..

All those who came out of Egypt--all the men of military age--died in the desert on the way after leaving Egypt.



All but two of the adults that left Egypt had died.

All the people that came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the desert during the journey from Egypt had not.



Why had the adults abandoned the required custom?

The Israelites had moved about in the desert forty years until all the men who were of military age when they left Egypt had died, since they had not obeyed the LORD.



1. Leaving Egypt
- 2a. Spies report back
- 2b. Defeat at the border
3. Going round in circles

Because they had refused to enter when they should have.

For the LORD had sworn to them that they would not see the land that he had solemnly promised their fathers to give us,

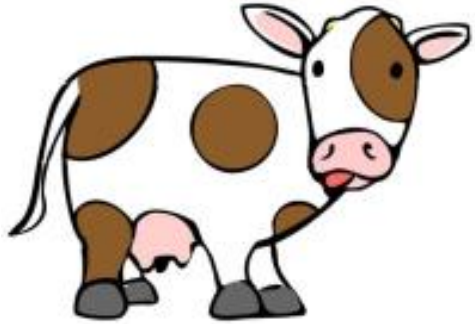
A Double oath!

- 1, They won't get there
- 2, Some will enter the land

“Us” Notice that the writer is enjoying promise No. 2



a land flowing with milk and honey.



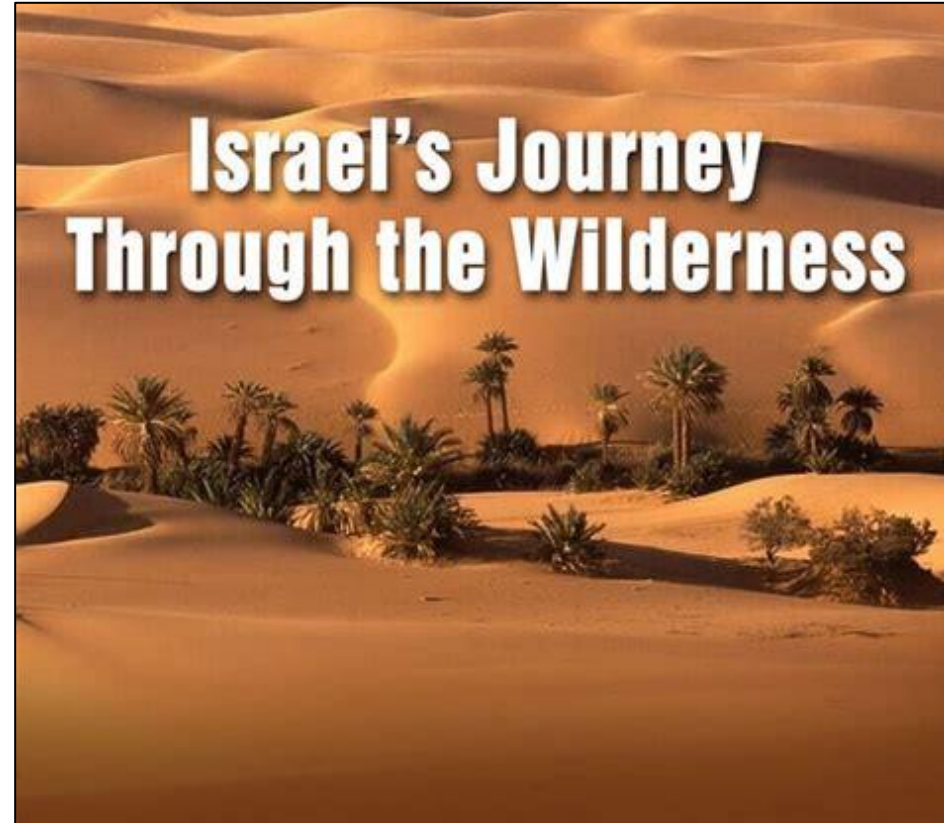
Grass and flowers are plentiful

So he raised up their sons in their place,
and these were the ones Joshua circumcised.



“He raised up their sons” – God’s purposes continue

They were still uncircumcised
because they had not been circumcised on the way.



They weren't ready to enter the promised land in this state

And after the whole nation had been circumcised, they remained where they were in camp until they were healed.

God protected them while they were vulnerable

BUT it seems like a big risk for them to take

1, military men out of action

2, dangerous position near the heavily fortified city of Jericho

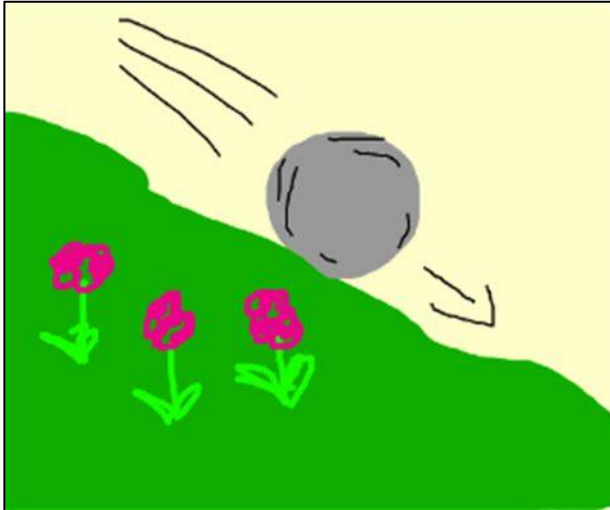
Ultimately it was the fear of God that kept the enemies at bay,
and the fear of God that led the Israelites to obey.

Then the LORD said to Joshua,
"Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you."



No longer slaves and despised

So the place has been called Gilgal to this day.



Gilgal means
'circle of stones'
or 'rolling'



Archaeology suggests this was a temporary site and they later moved further north to a more permanent site (now called Tel Gilgal)

What was going on?

Israel is going back to its foundation

The sign of covenant with Abraham

Genesis 17:10-13 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised... My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant.



**This is also dealing with the consequences
of the Exodus generation's act of disobedience**

All the people that came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the desert during the journey from Egypt had not.

In God's plans, what was wrong has to be put right.

CORRECTION

It also offers an explanation of what happened with Moses on his way to Egypt

Exodus 4:20 So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started back to Egypt. And he took the staff of God in his hand.

Exodus 4:24-26 At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses and was about to kill him. But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

First things have to be first. No service without full commitment.

Allegiance to the covenant is linked to possession of the land

Genesis 17:7-8 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."



Big issue No.1 Jews and Gentiles

Act 15:1-2 Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.



The Essential Heart matter:

Deuteronomy 30:5-6 He will bring you to the land that belonged to your ancestors, and you will take possession of it. He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors. The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.



Circumcision had an important spiritual component

The Essential Heart matter: Faith

Circumcised men died in the desert because of their unbelief. So faith in God was so important to the next generation in order to fulfil God's purposes for them.



The issue for the early church was :-

“Can someone be a truly saved believer without becoming a Jew first?”

The Apostles’ answer was **“Yes!”**

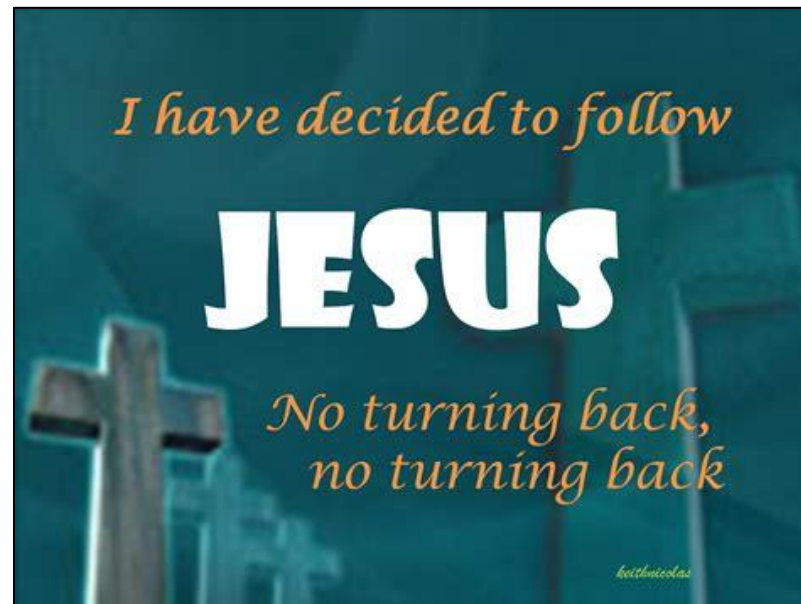
Today the related question is relevant.

“Can a Jew become a saved believer in Jesus the Messiah without having to renounce his Jewishness?”

Since all of the early believers were Jewish, the answer again is **“Yes!”**

Paul warns Gentiles against substituting outward ritual for faith

Galatian 5:2,6 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. .. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.



Big issue No.2 Infant or Believer's Baptism

Since Abraham was commanded that subsequent generations were required to circumcise their boys in order to be part of the covenant people of Israel, because of this, some argue that infants should be baptised to be part of the church family of believers.

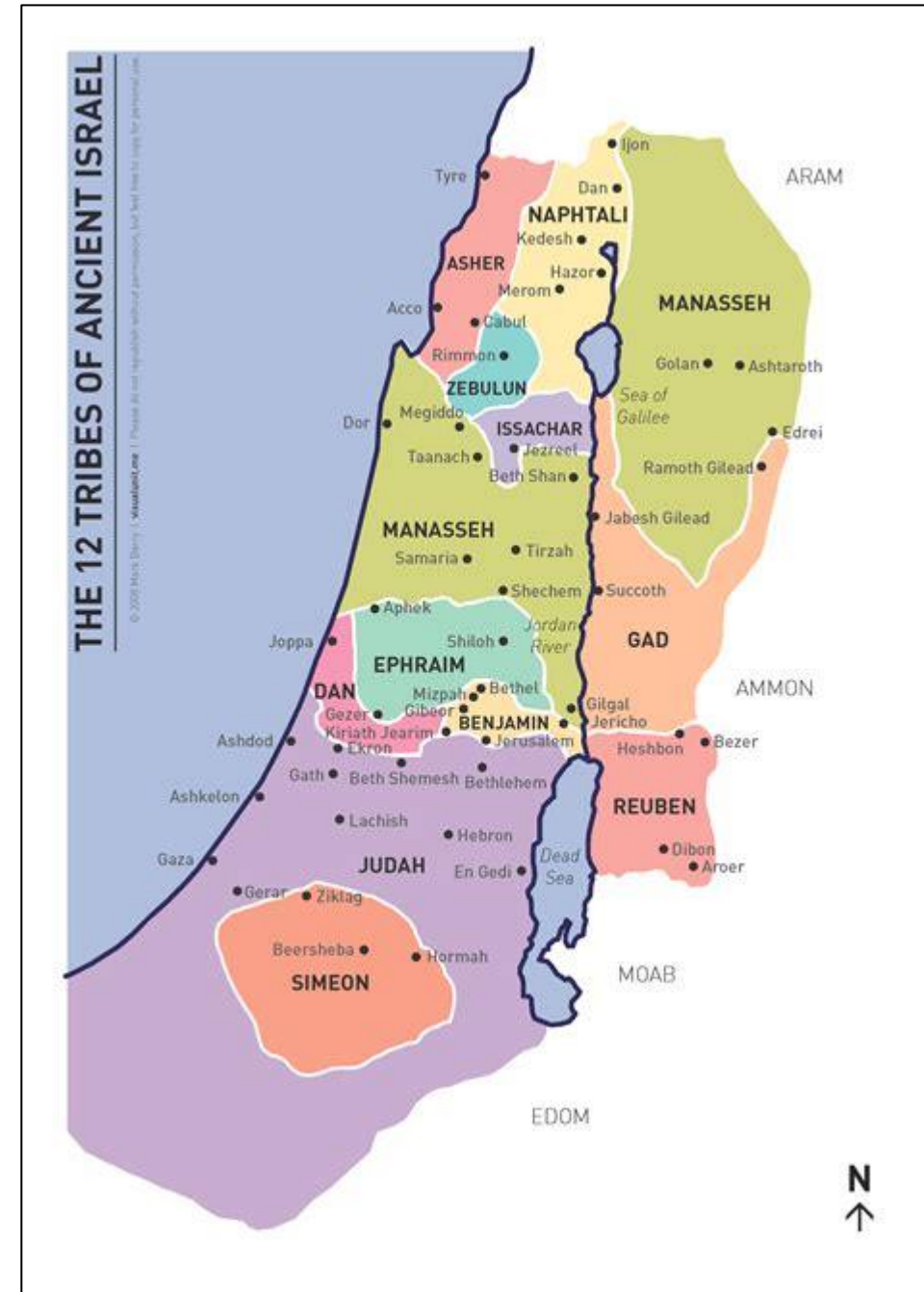


Claim: Infant Baptism is the NT. EQUIVALENT of OT circumcision

Abraham was the founder under God of a NATION that as history showed consisted of both believers and non-believers. Paul puts it this way about Jewish unbelievers:-

Romans 9:6 It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.

Circumcision has a national component that is not part of baptism.



Big issue No.2 Infant or Believer's Baptism

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and *(THEN)* be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Baptism is meant to be an outward confession of an inner change through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

Back to Abraham

Romans 4:8-12 Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them." Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. And he is then also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

So the NT EQUIVALENT of circumcision (of the heart)
is REGENERATION



John 3:5,7 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ... You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'