

# JOSHUA 3-4

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## REVIEW...

- **BACKGROUND ON THE BOOK OF JOSHUA...**
  - The book picks up right at the end of the Book of Deuteronomy...
    - Israel is still camped across from Jericho - on the east side of the Jordan...
    - And with the death of Moses - Joshua was the one to lead Israel in...
  - The book is broken up into 3 sections...
    - Chapters 1-12 - The conquest of the Land of Canaan...
    - Chapters 13-22 - The division of the Land of Canaan...
    - Chapters 23-24 - Joshua's final words to the nation of Israel...
- **JOSHUA 1-2...**
  - God met with Joshua - told him to lead Israel into the Promised Land...
    - Every place he put his foot - God would give to Israel as their inheritance...
    - God would fight for Israel - Joshua just needed to be Strong and Courageous!
  - Sending out the two spies into Jericho - Rahab the Harlot...
    - Rahab lied when the King of Jericho demanded she bring the spies out - already gone...
    - Everyone in the city feared the God of Israel - heard about the Red Sea...
    - But Rahab agreed to save the spies - if they saved her and her family - scarlet thread...
    - Picture of faith - **Hebrews 11:31** - showed what faith should look like - **James 2:25**...
    - Rahab who was in the genealogy of Jesus - **Matthew 1:5** - because of her faith!

## CROSSING OVER... (4 THINGS)

- **1<sup>ST</sup> - FOLLOWING THE ARK...VS. 1-7 READ: JOSHUA 3:1-7**
  - Joshua and all of Israel broke camp - and came to the edge of the Jordan River...
    - The nation of Israel had been camped on the east side of the Jordan for many months...
      - They had been waiting for the Lord to give the command to go...
      - I am sure there were plenty of days when they wondered if they would ever go...
    - Waiting for the Lord to fulfill His promises can often leave us impatient...
      - We think that since the Lord has not done anything yet – He never will...
      - We quickly forget that God's timing is not our timing...
      - We think that waiting on the Lord means a couple of hours – maybe days...
      - **II Peter 3:8-9** – “But you must not forget, dear friends, that a day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day.”
      - Following Jesus means being patient – willing to wait on the Lord for His timing...
      - **Psalms 27:14** – “Wait patiently for the LORD. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the LORD.”
  - For three days the leaders went through the camp giving 3 instructions to the people...
    - 1<sup>st</sup> - Following the leaders...
      - The Priests would carry the Ark before the people leading the way...

- They would guide the people into the Promised Land - so follow them...
- Notice they did not just tell the people where to go - they showed them by example!
- A leader should not just be telling others what to do – but show them as well...
- A good leader does not tell you to serve – he serves as an example...
- A good leader does not tell you to give – he gives as an example - a Godly example!
- **I Corinthians 11:1** - “Follow me as I follow Christ...”
- We all follow someone’s example – they lead us either towards or away from God...
- We need to surround ourselves with godly men who encourage our walk in the Lord...
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Follow the Ark of God - to a new place...
  - They were to follow the Ark - they were going to a place they had never been...
  - Israel had been walking around in the wilderness for 40 years...
  - At some point I am sure it had become a routine - it was very familiar...
  - But now God was taking them someplace new - and they needed to look to Jesus!
  - The first time a taught a Bible study - I was so scared I was bathed in sweat...
  - But after enough time - it was not longer scary - it had become familiar...
  - When things become familiar to us - they no longer take faith...
  - So God will often ask us to step out and do things we have never done before...
  - Then we have no choice but to look and cling to Jesus!
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Do not get ahead of God...
  - Israel was not to get too close - they were to stay about 1km behind the Ark...
  - The concern was they would get excited - they were finally going into the Land...
  - They might run ahead of the Ark - and then would not know where to go...
  - Often in life when God begins to lead and direct us - we can get a head of God...
  - But God sometime takes unexpected turns - and if we are not watching closely...
  - We can assume we know where God is leading us - and end up getting lost...
  - Never get so far behind of the Lord you loose sight of where He is leading...
  - But also never get ahead of Him - thinking you know where He is taking you...
  - Instead step out in faith always keep our eyes firmly fixed on Jesus!
  - **Hebrews 12:2** - “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...”
- 2<sup>ND</sup> - PARTING THE JORDAN...VS. 8-17 READ: JOSHUA 3:7-13
  - o Making Joshua great in the eyes of the people...
    - It was inevitable for Israel to compare Joshua to Moses - and be critical...
    - It is easy for us to get our eyes on a man - and forget he is just a vessel God is using...
    - I love such and such a persons teaching - but that other guy - not so much...
    - It is the same God / Spirit - at work - no matter who the person is...
    - The danger in men looking to a person/pastor - is that they will fail...
    - And if we have put our faith in a flawed man - rather than in a perfect Lord...
    - When the man stumbles - makes a mistake - we will fall with him!
  - o God told Joshua to have the priest take a ‘few steps’ into the Jordan River...
    - Joshua knew exactly what God was planning - parting the Jordan!
      - The greatest miracle God ever did through Moses - the parting of the Red Sea...
      - God would perform a similar miracle with Joshua...

- It might not seem as impressive - Moses parted an ocean / this was just a river...
- But we are told it was during the rainy season - and the river was flooded...
- If God parted the Calasa River - not very impressive - you could walk across...
- But God parted the river at a high flood - bridge overflowed - impressive!
- What God can do in one man - He can do through any man...
  - We might read the stories about Joshua / Moses - and think that could never be us...
  - We might read about Peter preaching and thousands receiving Jesus...
  - Or we might read about Paul healing the sick - and think - only they could do that...
  - There are no special people - God is just as able to use us - as Joshua / Peter / Paul...
  - If we step out in faith we can part oceans / preach to thousands / raise the dead!
  - If we have the faith of a mustard seed - nothing is impossible - **Matthew 17:20**
  - Does that mean we go down to the river while everyone is doing laundry - part it...
  - It means if God asks us to do anything - then by His grace it can be done!
  - That might mean praying for someone who is sick - believing God can provide...
  - It might mean sharing Jesus with a friend - or teaching a Bible Study...
  - When God is the one who leading and directing us - nothing is impossible!
- o The moment the feet of the Priests touched the water...
  - The Jordan river backed up near the city of Adam - about 30 miles from the crossing...
    - The result was the river dried up - so that no water flowed into the Dead Sea...
    - Once the priests stood in the middle of the river - all of Israel passed by...
  - Once the river had stopped - it would have been easy to step out...
    - But I imagine the priests had a lot of reservation taking that first step...
    - One of the hardest things to do in life - is to be the first to take a step of faith...
    - We often hesitate because - we think we might fail - we might not be able to do it...
    - Or we hesitate because - what if we are wrong and this is not what God wants...
    - But with God nothing is impossible - it is not about our ability...
    - And we will never go wrong if we take a step of faith - God will direct our steps!
- **3<sup>RD</sup> - 12 STONES...VS. 1-9, 20-24** READ: JOSHUA 4:1-9
  - o God commanded Joshua to have 12 men - one from each tribe - gather 12 stones...
    - After all the people had safely passed over into the Promised Land...
      - They were to take the stones and set them up as a memorial on the other side...
      - Joshua also built another memorial in the middle of the river...
      - It was to be a reminder for the nation - of what God had done...
      - Not that Israel needed to be reminded on that day - but they would forget...
    - When God does something 'AMAZING' - it is easy for us to be excited about the Lord...
      - But how long does that last - we tend to quickly forget about what God did...
      - When we have no money - and cry out to the Lord to provide - and He does...
      - The next time we have no money - are we confident in the Lord - or do we panic...
      - The next time a difficulty arises - we need to remember what God has done for us...
    - Keep a record - a stone of remembrance - so we do not forget...
      - When God does something amazing in your life - when He answers a prayer...
      - Write it down - take a picture - pick up a stone - anything to help you remember...

- So the next time you are faced with a challenge - a raging river in front of you...
- You will have the confidence God parted it once before - He can do it again!
- o The memorial was also for their children...
  - Inevitably in the future kids would see a huge pile of rocks and be curious...
  - It gave the opportunity for the parents to teach their children about God...
  - That nothing was impossible for Him - He is the God who can part oceans!
  - It is incredibly important to take our kids to church – Bible studies...
  - Let them be Baptized / partake of Communion if they want to...
  - Not for the sake of the 'tradition' - but so they can ask why – why do we do it...
  - It give the opportunity for us to teach our kids about God ...
  - Communion - teaching how we were saved from sin/death – by the sacrifice of Jesus!
  - Baptist – teaching how we're no longer sinners – but new creations in Christ!
  - Going to church – not because we have to – but to learn about our Lord!
- 4<sup>TH</sup> - THE PROMISED LAND...VS. 10-19 READ: JOSHUA 4:15-19
  - o When all the people had crossed - the priests came out of the river...
    - Immediately the river flooded back and overflowed the banks...
      - I imagine when Israel first came to the flooded Jordan River...
      - Many might have doubted how they would be able to get the nation across...
      - It was not just soldiers - it was women / children / elderly / animals - everyone!
      - Many of them might have thought it would be impossible...
      - Too often we get caught up in our problems - and we forget the power of our God...
      - No circumstance is too difficult - no enemy too powerful - nothing is impossible...
      - The creator of heaven and earth - God almighty - can handle any problems we have!
    - But some remembered the Red Sea...
      - No one over 20 years who came out of Egypt was still alive - wilderness wandering
      - But there were some who had been children and saw God part an ocean...
      - They might have looked and thought - easy this is just a big stream!
      - The longer we walk with the Lord - the more we see Him do in our lives...
      - Our confidence in God grows as we see Him provide – heal – do the impossible...
      - If you saw God part an ocean - would you worry about food for tomorrow...
      - If you saw God raise the dead - would you worry if you caught a cold...
      - And we can encourage others who are not as confident...
      - Have them follow us as we have learned to step out in faith and follow Jesus!
  - o The nation of Israel crossed into the Promised Land on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month...
    - It was four days before the Passover celebration - the day the Lamb was chosen...
    - God set Israel free from the bondage of Egypt through the Passover...
    - Now 40 years later He brought them into the Promised Land on that same day...
    - God saved us from the world for a reason - He wants us to come to the Promised Land
    - He wants us to learn to step out in faith - realizing nothing with Him is impossible...
    - Remembering when we face challenges - our God does not change...
    - He has always taken care of us / delivered us - and He always will...
    - Leading - being an example - to others of how to follow Jesus!