## Joshua 3-4

## Review...

- Background on the book of Joshua…
  - o 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...
  - o 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...
  - o 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!
  - o 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 looks like James 2:25...
    - Rahab who was in the genealogy of Jesus **Matthew 1:5** because of her faith!

## Crossing over... (4 THINGS)

- $1^{st}$  Following the Ark...vs. 1-7 Read: Joshua 3:1-7
  - o 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...
      - **Psalm 27:14** "Wait patiently for the LORD. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the LORD."
  - o 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 to 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!
- The nation of Israel crossed into the Promised Land on the  $10^{
  m th}$  day of the  $1^{
  m st}$  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 and example to others of how to follow Jesus!