

**“The Motivation – Crossing the Jordan”**

**Joshua chapter 3**

**Scripture Ref:** *Mark 8:34-35; James 4:10; Matt 7:7-9; Eph 2:10*

1. This chapter we will look at the crossing of the Jordan River –
  - a. On the one hand – a fairly mundane act – people cross rivers all the time
  - b. But this crossing has greater significance to you and I - Because God recorded it in His word – it has spiritual and practical meaning to us.

**Mark 8:34** *"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.*

**2. What does this scripture have to do with the crossing?**

3:1 Then Joshua rose early in the morning; (**leadership principle – rise early!**) and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over. 2 So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; 3 and they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. 4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before."

5 And Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." 6 Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people."

So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. 8 You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.'"

***Preparation... of the People***

3. Took the people from the grove to the edge of the river and set up camp – three days – SEE IT!
4. Officers went through the camp communicating to the people...
  - a. When you SEE the ark, set out!
  - b. Keep your distance

- c. But – FOLLOW THE ARK!
- 5. Joshua – “Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you”
  - a. IOW – God is about to do a great work – prepare yourselves – WHY?
  - b. If God is going to do it – why do I need to do anything?
- 6. We know – God does not do things “just to do it” – there is a purpose in everything that God does.
  - a. His will
  - b. Kingdom objective
  - c. FOR US - Reveal Himself
  - d. FOR US - Grow your faith
  - e. We need to be prepared to SEE IT and to RECEIVE IT...
  - f. So that – we can *fully experience and receive* what God has FOR US

### ***Preparation ...of Joshua***

- 7. God states – “*I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you*”
  - a. ...Joshua is going to be exalted – GREAT???!!!
  - b. Too often we want to exalt ourselves – we want to make sure we get noticed, get rewarded, we want people to see us for what we really are....!!!
  - c. And – there is truth in that if you are leading people, they need to see you as the leader.
  - d. But – it is best to leave that job of ‘exalting’ to God

*James 4:10* Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

- e. Our job is to humble ourselves before God – let Him shape and mold us – and let God take care of exalting us before others
- f. Because – just like we talked about in Rev that God’s judgment is righteous and true – so He will also exalt in appropriate fashion.
- g. EX: Nortel – we wrote our own reviews – hard to be humble! Next thing you know – you are walking on water!

### ***Motivation...***

- 8. Next Joshua get to the “motivation” – “Here is what God has said”

9 So Joshua said to the children of Israel, "Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God." 10 And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: 11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan.

**9. Motivation is a powerful thing – but it is at its height of effectiveness when it comes from the Lord – not from our own thoughts.**

12 Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. 13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap."

**10. What powerful statements of faith –**

- a. **Joshua is saying “God is going to drive out all these people”**
- b. **God is going to drive UP the river**
- c. **And – they have not even taken the first step!**

**11. This makes you think – if I were Joshua, would I make that bold of a statement?**

- a. **Maybe we personalize it – Could I make that type of statement about anything in my life today?**
- b. **We have a tendency to think “that was Joshua – that was back in “OT God did great miracles” times – that’s not now.”**
- c. **TRUE – none of us are Joshua – BUT – God is still God. HE has not changed.**
- d. **Are the things that God has called us to do any less important? Are we any less important?**

**12. Maybe we are not leading the children of Israel into the promised land...**

- a. **But we are leading our families into the promised land**
- b. **We are leading others into a saving faith in Jesus**
- c. **We have been assigned a part of the kingdom of God – right here in Wilmington**
- d. **Some of us are priests, some officers, some youth leaders, childrens teachers, greeters, etc etc**
- e. **The KEY is – WHAT IS MY MOTIVATION??**

**13. We look at Joshua and see God gave him a task – has God not given us a task? Has He not given each one of us tasks?**

- a. **“But I don’t know what it is!!”**
- b. **Maybe its time you found out!**

- c. I firmly believe that if one of God’s people seeks HIM – and comes to Him with “Lord, what would you have me to do?”
- d. God WILL ANSWER that prayer
- e. The problem is that not many people ask – so of course they don’t know.

**Matt 7:7-9**

*"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

**(we have a purpose...)**

**Eph 2:10** *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

- f. But sometimes we can get caught up in “what I want”

**Mark 8:34** *"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.*

**14. We sometimes can get so focused on ‘saving my life’ – translated – “doing what I want to do”**

- a. That we do not ask God what HE has for us
- b. Thing is – if we “lose” our life – translated “give ourselves to the Lord fully” – WE WILL GAIN IT
- c. There is no better place to be – no more fulfilling place to exist – than being in God’s perfect will.
- d. And THAT is where God will do great things....

**15. REMEMBER - God is not doing stuff just to do it – there is a purpose in everything that God does**

- a. Reveal Himself
- b. Grow your faith
- c. We need to be prepared to SEE IT and to RECEIVE IT

**16. Our MOTIVATION is that God has a plan for your life – a purpose – a TERRITORY for YOU – a MINISTRY for you**

- a. God wants to do great and mighty things THROUGH YOU
- b. The question we have to ask is this...
- c. ***Am I willing to take hold of God’s purpose in my life – and step out INTO IT?***

**Action ... step out**

14 So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, 15 and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), 16 that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. 17 Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

**17. Crossing the Jordan**

- a. **Crossing the Jordan was a “ship burning” event.**
- b. **You *could not cross* without divine intervention – which meant that once you crossed – you could not go back.**
- c. **One thing for a few men to make their way across – quite another for several million people, all their possessions,**
- d. **Especially if they are being chased by another army – they would be penned in and be slaughtered.**

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**18. You see – the moment that they put their feet in the water – God moved.**

- a. **We can look at this some 3800 years later and say “cool”**
- b. **But guess what – God is the same now as then**
- c. **I can say to you – just like Joshua said to the Israelites –**
- d. **“Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you”**
- e. **Are you prepared to SEE IT and to RECEIVE IT and WALK IN IT?**