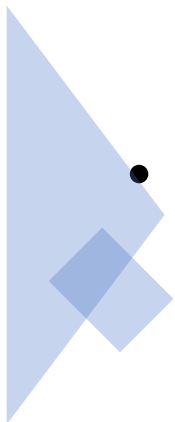


“Ye Have Not Passed This
Way Before”
Joshua 3:1-5

Observations

- **At this time in the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to “the promised land,” they had already undergone a variety of trials and tribulations**
- **While under Egyptian slavery, they had endured the separation of families and the crushing of the human spirit**
- **They were delivered from Egypt after that country was inflicted with tremendous plagues that brought Egypt to its knees**
- **They had marched out of Egypt to the very formidable Red Sea and crossed it on dry land by the miraculous hand of God**
- **But this deliverance was no pledge of freedom from future trials (No water in the wilderness; bitter water; no food)**

- **In the story for today, they had arrived in their journey, at the Jordan River**
- **The “promised land” was stretched out before them, but it was on the other side of the river**
- **The Bible tells us at this time of year, the waters of the river overflowed its banks (at flood stage, vs. 15), making this part of their journey difficult and dangerous**
- **How would they all get across?**
- **Think about this: In Joshua chapter 2, when spying out “the promised land,” only a few spies from the Israelite camp had gone over and made it back.**
- **Now, we are talking about a nation of millions of people and their possessions. How will they make it?**



Observations

- Joshua, their leader, who had faced all of their previous challenges with them, notes the newness of this next challenge by saying to them in Joshua 3:4

YOU HAVE NOT PASSED THIS WAY BEFORE!

- You are about to experience some unfamiliar challenges with this next set of circumstances
- Your journey with God is now going to lead you into an arena in which you have had no previous exposure



“You Have Not Passed This Way Before!” (This Is Us)

Our “Individual Journey” With God Will Cause Us To Traverse Unfamiliar Territory

- **High School Graduation, College, Graduate and Professional School, Career Employment**
- **Single Christian Life, Marriage**
- **Children, Grandchildren**
- **Divorce, Remarriage, Single Parenting**
- **Chronic Illnesses, Surgeries, Cancers, Chemotherapy**
- **Aging and Retirement**

How Do We Successfully Follow God's Will When Life's Experiences Become Unfamiliar To Us?

- We follow the same principles that Joshua gave these Israelites in this story in Joshua 3:5,

“Sanctify Yourselves”

“And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.”

- To Sanctify yourself means to set yourself apart or consecrate yourself for a higher purpose, like God's will in your life
- It makes sense that when you are experiencing a new arena in life, to validate your obedience to God; 2 Corinthians 13:5,

“Examine (test yourselves) whether you are in the faith....”

Do You Talk the Talk AND Walk the Walk?

#1 Set Yourself Apart in Your Focus

Don't Lose Sight of God in Your Journey

- Remember that the dangerous, treacherous task of navigating well over a million people across the Jordan River, was their challenge
- Listen to what Joshua says to them in Joshua 3:3-4

“When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God being borne by the Levitical priests, set out from where you are and follow it.

Yet a space must be kept between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure; come not near unto it, that you may be able to see the ark, and know the way you must go, for you have not passed this way before.”

- Don't focus on the waters (dangers, difficulties, people)

We Too Must Keep Our Eyes On God's Direction

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:1-2

- In the words of the song, “Yes Lord” sung by Brother Robert Tellis: ***“This life you gave, is not my own,***

I’m trusting you to hear my yes and lead me on.” Yes Lord, Yes Lord, my life is Yours.” (Don’t focus on the dangers, difficulties, temptations, other people, the rocks and the eagles)

#2 Set Yourself Apart In Your Faith

In Verse 13, Joshua told the people... “And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priest that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap.” Do you believe God enough to trust His word?

- **Joshua 3:14-17 says that’s exactly what happened:**

“And the priest that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.”

Our Faith Is Not a Blind Leap!

“Now faith is the substance (confidence) of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen.” For by it the elders obtained a good report (our ancestors were set above the crowd).

- **Through our faith our lives speak to the invisible, or what is seemingly impossible; to what we have never done before**
- **Through our faith the evidence of His deliverance in our past helps us to navigate our future**
- **Remember that God already had an evidentiary history with the Israelites (like He already has with us)**
- ***“The life of faith is like a blank canvas... You get to fill in the blank by the way you choose to live”***
- ***“Your faith works through your love?” Galatians 5:6***
- ***“If Ye love me keep my commandments” John 14:15***

“Ye Have Not Passed This Way Before” Also Applies To Our Inevitable Appointment!

With Death

- **Religious Writers Have Written About Our “Crossing the Jordan,” as a “transition to our promised land.”**

Songs like: “I am Bound for the Promised Land”

**“On Jordan’s stormy banks I stand to cast a wishful eye
to Canaan fair and happy land where my possessions lie”**

Songs Like: “I Won’t Have to Cross Jordan Alone”

I won’t have to cross Jordan alone

Jesus died for my sins to atone

In the darkness I see, He’ll be waiting for me.....

How Do We Get Ready For This New Experience? (We've never passed this way before)

By the same way the Israelites were told to prepare for their new experience in crossing their Jordan

“Sanctify Yourselves!”

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it;

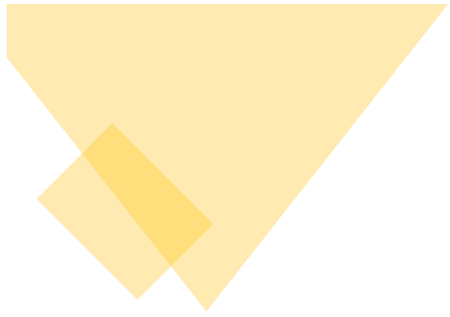
That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word...Ephesians 5:25-27

Applying God's Principles to Your Life "Purifies" Your Soul

Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love (sincere love) of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

2 Peter 1:22-23



The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38

