



A Systematic Expository Study on the book of JOSHUA

Study 8: THE MIRACLE OF PASSING THROUGH THE IMPASSABLE Joshua 3:6-17

This new generation of Israel began their career with faith, obedience and miracles. These children of Israel were so different from the past generation who left Egypt. This is why the record in the book of Joshua is that of victory, breakthrough, miracles and wonders. Our consecration to walk by faith, walk in obedience to God's Word and to follow Jesus - (our Joshua) without murmuring, or hesitation will begin a series of miracles and wonders.

Joshua had said to the people, "sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you (Joshua 3: 5). He gave them the condition of God's wonders and the outcome in chapters three and four shows that Israel (young and old, men and women) did not find it difficult to meet the condition. "God's commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3); If we are willing, His grace is sufficient for us. Reading through Joshua, we see a catalogue of God's wonders. While they continued in faith and obedience, God continued in working wonders among them. The book and Joshua's life ended with the testimony of the consummation of God's wonders. "Ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done" "For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day". "Behold, not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof" (Joshua 23:3,9,14). It was a great beginning and a glorious ending.

MAGNIFYING A DIVINELY APPOINTED LEADER, JOSHUA AT JORDAN

Joshua 3:6-8; Exodus 19:9; Joshua 4:14; 6:27; 1 Chronicles 29:23-25; 2 Chronicles I:1,7-12; Matthew 3:13,16,17; Philipians 2:9-11.

Joshua had promptly obeyed the LORD and now he was to be rewarded. He had exalted the LORD and now the LORD was to magnify him. He had set before the people a noble example by acting in faith on God's Word. He had confidently expressed his assurance that God would make good His Word of promise. Now God would honour the one who had honoured Him. Obedience and devotedness to God, even in the least of things and in few things, never passes unrecognised by Him. He honoured Moses by the Red Sea, now He would honour Joshua and magnify him, by river Jordan. When God appoints a man or a woman to a task, He honours and magnifies such a minister to attest and confirm His appointment. If we continue to honour, obey, and magnify God, He will confirm His Word, work with us, and magnify the ministry and the man He has appointed.

By what took place at Jordan, Israel knew that Joshua was their divinely appointed leader and therefore they "feared him all the days of his life" (Joshua 4:14). They did not fear him with slavish fear but they rendered implicit and undeviating obedience to the Word of God which he spoke to them. "And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua" (Joshua 24:31). Joshua was a humble and meek character. He never spoke a word about God planning to magnify him. He simply kept on in his ministry of exalting and magnifying the Lord. Immediately after God's promise given to him, he said unto the children of Israel. "Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God ... Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you" (Joshua 3:9, 10). Let us humble ourselves so that God may exalt us in due time (1 Peter 5 :6).

THE MESSAGE AND MINISTRY OF JOSHUA AT JORDAN

Joshua 3:9-13; Deuteronomy 4:1,2; 12:8,9,28,32; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Deuteronomy 7:1; Jeremiah 10:7,10; Psalm 97:5; Isaiah 54:5.

Joshua's message was that of faith and implicit obedience to God's Word. And his ministry led God's people to conquer and possess the land of promise. The minister's message and ministry go hand in hand. If the message is God-honouring, and faith-building, so will the ministry be. Joshua spoke with confidence because he had unwavering faith in his heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). He was so committed to God and His Word, so he called the people and

said "Come hither, and hear the WORDS OF THE LORD YOUR GOD." If we too are so committed to the Word of God, the God of the Word will be committed to us, too.

The titles he uses for God are both instructive and inspiring. "Hereby ye shall know that the LIVING GOD is among you" (Joshua 3:10). In contrast to the dead god of the Canaanites, the LORD your God is the living God. They are dead, He is alive; they are nothing, He is Almighty; they are powerless, He is Omnipotent; they are deaf, dumb and blind, He is all-seeing, the Omniscient One who speaks to His people and hears their prayers. They are wood or stone, without feeling, He is the living, compassionate God who is touched and concerned about His people. Joshua also refers to the LORD your God as "The Lord of all the earth" (Joshua 3:11,13; Psalm 97:5; Micah 4:13; Zechariah 6:5; 4:14; Isaiah 54:5). This title, used by Joshua, does not appear in the Pentateuch (Genesis to Deuteronomy). Joshua used it for the first time. And the title occurs in the Scriptures seven times! Our God is the God of all the earth, the God of the whole earth. Our God has universal, unlimited dominion, unparalleled, unequalled, unchallenged authority, absolute sovereignty over the whole earth and everyone dwelling on earth. This God of the whole earth with all-mighty power and unlimited dominion is our God. Think about it and throw your doubt to the wind!

Knowing Who our God is, Joshua assured the people of God "that he will without fail drive out" all the enemies "from before you" These "seven nations in the land of Canaan" (Act 13:19) were "greater and mightier than" the nation of Israel, (Deuteronomy 7:1) but God would, without fail, make the small and the weak to defeat the mighty and the strong.

Then Joshua instructed the children of Israel, and the priest and the people moved in unquestioning obedience, in preparation for a breakthrough – ready to pass over and pass through the impassable! First, Israel was required to act with implicit confidence in God; so must we, if we are to see formidable obstacles removed before us. Second, Israel must render complete, unquestioning obedience to God's revealed will; so must we if we are to pass through, prevail and possess our possession. Third, Israel had to fix their eyes upon the ark of the covenant; so must we fix our eyes on Christ if the overflowing Jordan of hindrances is not to prevent our entrance into the Promised Land. Fourth, Israel must know and view God as "the LORD of all the earth"; so must we in order to conquer the seven mighty enemies sitting on and holding our possession.

THE MIRACLE OF DIVING AND PASSING THROUGH JORDAN

Joshua 3:14-17; Psalms 33:6-11; 66:5,6; 78:12,13; 114:1-3,7; 2 Kings 2:8,13-15.

Our God cannot fail. If you are serving the same God. "the LORD of all the earth" your God cannot fail. He did it before and He can do it again. He divided the Red Sea at the time of Moses, and now at the time of Joshua He divided Jordan.

- (1) The miracle was to remove a great barrier before His people.
- (2) It had the design of authenticating Israel's leader.
- (3) It came in recognition of the faith and obedience of God's people.
- (4) It was a great display of God's power which brought confusion and consternation in the midst of the enemies.

There are some points of contrast between what occurred at the Red Sea and at Jordan.

- (1) The first terminated Israel's bondage while the second initiated their entrance into freedom and the land of promise.
- (2) The former miracle was wrought for Israel to escape from the Egyptians while the latter was to enable them approach and conquer the Canaanites.
- (3) At the Red Sea, multitudes of the Egyptians died, whereas at Jordan, not a single soul perished.
- (4) With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, all the adults who benefited by the former miracle perished in the wilderness, while not a single one of those who were favoured to share in the latter failed to "possess their possession"
- (5) Before the former miracle, Israel was commanded to "stand still and see" but before the latter miracle they were commanded to "sanctify yourselves".

The priest faithfully obeyed Joshua, carried the Ark and dipped their feet on "the brim of the water". As the priest did what God had commanded through Joshua, their leader, the miracle took place. God always honours faith and obedience. And the priest stood firm, remaining in their post of duty "until all the people were passed clean over Jordan". May God give us the same faithfulness and steadfastness so that through our ministry, God's people will pass over until they all enter into the promised land-the heavenly city.

*If you are blessed by these bible study outlines, we'd like to hear from you.
You can email the pastor@deeperlife-liverpool.org.uk with your comments.*