

STEPPING OUT IN FAITH

PART # 1
1-26-25

JOSHUA 3: 1 – 17 – SERMON TEXT

JOSHUA 3: 1 – 8 – TODAY’S TEXT – “YOU HAVE NOT PASSED THIS WAY BEFORE”

ROMANS 10: 17 – “SO THEN FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD”.

* GOD SAYS TO THE PEOPLE OF FAITH – YOU'RE ENTERING INTO A NEW “SEASON” OF FAITH – THAT THEY HAD NEVER BEFORE HAD WENT.

* FAITH IN GOD REQUIRES A BOLD AND STEADFAST STANCE – ON THE WORD OF GOD

JOSHUA 1:1 – “Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’s minister, saying”,

JOSHUA 1:2 – “MOSES MY SERVANT IS DEAD; now therefore arise, GO OVER THIS JORDAN, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel”.

JOSHUA 1:3 – “EVERY PLACE THAT THE SOUL OF YOUR FOOT SHALL TREAD UPON, I HAVE GIVEN UNTO YOU, as I said unto Moses.”

JOSHUA 1:4 – “From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast”.

JOSHUA 1:5 – “There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I WILL NOT FAIL THEE NOR FORSAKE THEE”.

JOSHUA 1:6 – “BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them”.

JOSHUA 1:7 – “ONLY BE STRONG AND VERY COURAGEOUS, THAT THOU MAYEST OBSERVE TO DO ACCORDING TO ALL THE LAW, WHICH MOSES MY SERVANT COMMANDED THEE: TURN NOT FROM IT TO THE RIGHT HAND OR TO THE LEFT, THAT THOU MAYEST PROSPER WHITHERSOEVER THOU GOEST”.

JOSHUA 1:8 – “THE BOOK OF THE LAW (THE WORD OF GOD) SHALL NOT DEPART OUT OF THY MOUTH; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: FOR THEN THOU SHALT MAKE THY WAY PROSPEROUS, AND THEN THOU SHALT HAVE GOOD SUCCESS”.

* FAITH MAY REQUIRE YOU TO WAIT

JOSHUA 3:1 – “And JOSHUA ROSE EARLY IN THE MORNING; and they removed from SHITTIM, and came to Jordan, he in all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over”.

The Hebrew people have been waiting for this moment, to enter the “Promised Land” and take possession of it for some 500 years, since God promised the land to Abraham and his covenant descendants (GENESIS 15: 18 - 21). Joshua and Caleb were more than 80 years old and waited for this moment. All of the next generation had been waiting for the older generation of “UNBELIEF” to die off in the wilderness and a new generation of “FAITH” to take the land, as they trusted God and His Word.

“JOSHUA ROSE EARLY IN THE MORNING – EARLY IN THE MORNING SEEMS TO BE THE BEST TIME FOR A LOT OF GOD’S PEOPLE:

ABRAHAM (GENESIS 19:27); JACOB (GENESIS 28:18); MOSES (EXODUS 8:20); JOSHUA (JOSHUA 6:12); SAMUEL (1 SAMUEL 15:12); DAVID (1 SAMUEL 17:20); JOB (JOB 1:5).

God told the Hebrew people, to prepare themselves for THREE DAYS, at the shore of the Jordan River (JOSHUA 1: 11). All that time, that the Hebrew people were “LODGED”, there, all they saw there, was a view of a rushing river, swollen with spring rains and THEY WERE FACED WITH THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE CROSSING!

JOSHUA 3:2 – “And it came to pass after THREE DAYS, that the officers went through the host”;

* FAITH RECOGNIZES THAT SOMETIMES GOD CHOOSES TO WORK IN NEW WAYS

JOSHUA 3:3 – “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 he shall remove from your place, and go after it”.

JOSHA 3:4 – “Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it that you may know the way by which you must go: FOR YOU HAVE NOT PASSED THIS WAY HERETOFORE”.

God required that His people keep some 2,000 cubits (1,000 yards) behind the “Ark of the Covenant”. God gave the Hebrew people this space between them and the “Ark of the Covenant”. This was both to respect the holy nature of the “Ark of the Covenant” and for all of Israel to see the “Ark”. The “Ark of the Covenant” would show the way they must go, leading the way. The Hebrew people would accomplish this impossible task as they set their eyes upon God’s presence and follow the representation of His presence, and move forward on the promises and commandments of God.

* “FOR YOU HAVE NOT PASSED THIS WAY HERETOFORE” – TECHNICALLY, THE HEBREW PEOPLE HAD “WENT THIS WAY” AND HAD ABODE IN “SHITTIM” – BUT THIS WAY BEFORE, WAS NOT THE WAY OF “FAITH”, PROSPERITY AND GOOD SUCCESS” BUT OF “UNBELIEF”, RESULTING IN A LIFE OF WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS OF LIFE AND JUDGMENT!

NUMBERS 25:1 – “And Israel abode in SHITTIM, and THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO COMMIT WHOREDOM WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF MOAB”.

NUMBERS 25:2 – “And they called the people UNTO THE SACRIFICES OF THEIR GODS: AND THE PEOPLE DID EAT, AND BOW DOWN TO THEIR GODS”.

NUMBERS 25:3 – “And Israel joined himself unto BAAL-PEOR: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel”.

NUMBERS 25:4 – “And the Lord said unto Moses, take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel”.

NUMBERS 25:5 – “And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, SLAY YE EVERYONE HIS MAN THAT WERE JOINED UNTO BAAL-PEOR”.

NUMBERS 24:9 – “AND THOSE THAT DIED IN THE PLAGUE (OF UNBELIEF) WERE TWENTY AND FOUR THOUSAND”.

THE LAST MENTION OF “BAAL-PEOR” IN THE BIBLE IS IN HOSEA 9: 10:

HOSEA 9: 10 – “I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your father’s as the first ripe in the fig tree at her first time: BUT THEY WENT TO BAAL-PEOR, AND SEPERATED (SANCTIFIED - DEDICATED) THEMSELVES TO THAT SHAME; AND THEIR ABOMINATIONS WERE ACCORDING AS THEY LOVED”.

* THERE ARE ONLY TWO CHOICES IN THIS LIFE – WHICH WAY IN THIS LIFE

DO WE CHOOSE?

PSALMS 1:1 – “Blessed is the man that walketh NOT in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor siteth in the seat of the scornful”.

PSALMS 1:2 – “BUT HIS DELIGHT IS IN THE LAW OF THE LORD; AND IN HIS LAW DOTH HE MEDITATE DAY AND NIGHT”.

PSALMS 1:3 – “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper”.

PSALMS 1:4 – “The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away”.

PSALMS 1:5 – “Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous”.

PSALMS 1:6 – “FOR THE LORD KNOWETH THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS; BUT THE WAY OF THE UNGODLY SHALL PERISH”.

* PERHAPS RIGHT NOW YOU ARE ANXIOUS ABOUT SOME NEW PATHWAY ON WHICH THE LORD IS LEADING YOU. THEN LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD AND TAKE COURAGE: “I WILL INSTRUCT THEE AND TEACH THEE IN THE WAY WHICH THOU SHALT GO: I WILL GUIDE THEE WITH MINE EYE”.

JOSHUA 3:5 – “And Joshua said unto the people, SANCTIFY YOURSELVES: FOR TOMORROW THE LORD WILL DO WONDERS AMONG YOU”.

* I BELIEVE THAT IS WHAT GOD IS SPEAKING TO “THE BODY OF CHRIST” TODAY, IN THE UNITED STATES - IT IS TIME TO “DIP” OUR FEET IN THE “OVERFLOWING WATERS” OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR LIFE – THE “RIVER JORDAN” IN OUR LIVES – AT WHAT SEEMS TO BE AN “UNTIMELY OCCURANCE” – AND SEE WHAT WONDERS OF THE LORD WILL DO!

“SANCTIFY YOURSELVES” – Because this would be a “Spiritual Battle”, Joshua required Israel to make “Spiritual preparations”. “Sanctify yourselves” means they were to separate themselves from the focus of the common things, of circumstances, and to focus on the Lord, and see that the Lord would do wonders among them.

What was implied in this command to “Sanctify yourself”, we're not informed, but it is likely the same that was given by Moses in EXODUS 19:10-14. They were to wash themselves with water and their garments and abstain from everything that might dispose their minds to unbelief.

JOSHUA 3:6 – “And Joshua spake unto the PRIESTS, saying, take up the Ark of the Covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the Ark of the Covenant,

and went before the people”.

God told Joshua to take this radical step of faith. Joshua didn’t do this because of foolish presumption. Joshua acted as a man led by the Lord, and by His Word of God, and remembered that a similar work was done by God, in the crossing of the Red Sea (EXODUS 14).

Joshua’s success depended on and grew out of the promise of God to him: “This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate therein day and night, that you mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: For then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (JOSHUA 1: 8).

*** JOSHUA HAD THE WORD OF GOD ON HIS LIPS, ON HIS MIND, AND IT GUIDED HIS ACTIONS!**

JOSHUA 3:7 – “And the Lord said unto Joshua, this day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so will I be with you”.

JOSHUA 3:8 – “And thou shalt command the priest that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, when ye are come to the BRINK OF THE WATER OF JORDAN, YE SHALL STAND STILL IN THE JORDAN”.

*** GOD ILLUSTRATES FOR US THREE ESSENTIALS FOR MOVING AHEAD BY FAITH AND CLAIMING ALL THAT HE HAS FOR US, AND THIS IS WHAT GOD DESIRED FOR ISRAEL AND IS ALSO WHAT HE DESIRES FOR US:**

(1). The Israelites were willing to wait on the Lord, even when it was difficult to wait.

(2). The Israelites were willing to follow the Lord unconditionally.

(3). The Israelites were willing to consecrate (dedicate, sanctify, separate) themselves before the Lord – the only way to go is by “Faith”. “Faithlessness or Unbelief”, says, no let’s go back to where it’s safe. BUT “FAITH” SAYS LET’S GO FORWARD TO WHERE GOD IS WORKING.

About forty years before, Joshua and Caleb had assured the Jewish people with these words, “Let us go at once, and occupy it (The Promised Land): For we are well able to overcome it”. That’s faith. But the people said that they weren’t able to. That’s faithlessness. That unbelief cost the Jewish people forty years of discipline and judgment in the wilderness.

1 JOHN 5:4 – “FOR WHATSOEVER IS BORN OF GOD OVERCOMETH THE WORLD: AND THIS IS THE VICTORY THAT OVERCOMETH THE WORLD EVEN OUR FAITH”.

*** FAITH MEANS THAT WE ARE WILLING TO STEP OUT**

