



“Trusting God in Flood Season”

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I. Keep Moving _____

(2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Psalm 23:4)

Deuteronomy 6:23a “And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in”

Joshua 13:1 “... there remains yet very much land to possess”

Philippians 3:13-14 “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Hebrews 12:1 “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.”

II. The Crossing of the Rubicon

Joshua 3:1 “Then Joshua rose early in the morning and they set out from Shittim. And they came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.”

A. See the _____

Joshua 3:15b “the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest”

B. Hear the _____ of God

Romans 10:17 “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

1. Look to God’s _____ and Not at the River

Joshua 3:2-3 “At the end of three days the officers went through the camp and commanded the people, ‘As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God being carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place and follow it.’”

Joshua 3:4 “Yet there shall be a distance between you and it, about 2,000 cubits in length. Do not come near it, in order that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before.”

2. _____ Yourself to the Lord

Joshua 3:5-6 “Then Joshua said to the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.’ And Joshua said to the priests, ‘Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on before the people.’ So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.”

Joshua 3:7 “The Lord said to Joshua, ‘Today 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.’”

Joshua 1:5b “Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you”

3. Be _____ and Know that He is God

Joshua 3:8 “And as for you, command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, ‘When you come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.’”

Exodus 14:14 “The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

a. God is _____ You

(Joshua 3:10)

b. God Keeps His _____

(Romans 8:32; Joshua 21:45)

4. You Still Need to Get Your _____

Joshua 3:11-12 “Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan. Now therefore take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man.”

Joshua 3:13 “And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap.”

C. Walk Forward in _____

(Joshua 3:17)

James 2:26 “For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”

Joshua 3:14-15 “So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest) ...”

Joshua 3:16 “the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho.”

D. _____ to God’s Promises!



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1. Familiarize yourself with the Passage and the Gospels

- a. Read Joshua 3:1-17
- b. Read the book of Joshua several times (get to know the big story of the book)
- c. Identify the plot, setting, characters, and viewpoint of the narrator
- d. Identify positive or negative comments about people in the story
- e. Identify the narrator's remarks about God
- f. Notice comparison of characters

2. Introduction to the Passage

(Feel free to use this as a reference guide as you discuss the passage)

a. Literary Context: Chapter 3 is the beginning of the Israelite's conquest as they transition from outside the promised land to inside the promised land, the land of Canaan. Chapter 3 fulfills the command in *Joshua 1:2*. It also begins the fulfillment of the promise delivered to Abraham some 500 years earlier in *Genesis 13:14-18*. The ark of the covenant is a symbol of God's rule and kingship over Israel. As it crosses over the Jordan river, it is a sign that God's rule is entering the promised and the conquest has begun (*Joshua 3:3, 6*). The ark proceeds ahead of the people signaling that the Israelites are "following" God's lead as they enter the land, giving them sure confidence that God is present with them (*Joshua 3:3, 6*). The miracle of the Jordan waters receding further bolsters the confidence of the people that God will overcome any obstacle they may face in the land (*Joshua 3:10*). It is also a miracle that solidifies Joshua's leadership as the next Moses to lead Israel (*Joshua 3:7*).

b. Historical/Cultural Context: The march across the Jordan river functions as a military procession.¹ This is not a casual march into the land. The is an intentional march that is designed to make a statement as to their purpose in entering the land, namely to go to war against the nations in Canaan. Further, present day dams in the area have decreased the flow of the Jordan river.² Prior to man-made dams, flooding from the Jordan river was very common. This affirms that the river in Joshua's days was probably not all that small and posed a threat to the people, which speaks to the greatness of the miracle.

3. Questions about the Passage

- a. Why would Joshua tell the people to consecrate themselves prior to crossing the river? Why would they need to consecrate themselves? What does the reason given in *Joshua 3:5* mean?
- b. Why does God put so much distance between the ark of the covenant and the people (i.e. 2,000 cubits; *Joshua 3:4*)?
- c. Why does God deem it necessary to exalt Joshua among the people (*Joshua 3:7*)?

4. From the Passage to Life

- a. God declared himself to be the "living God" in *Joshua 3:10* in comparison to the dead false gods of the other nations. How has God proved himself to be alive and active in your life? How has he shown his power?
- b. God showed himself trustworthy as they crossed the Jordan, "stood firmly on dry ground" (*Joshua 3:17*). Are there any situations in your life where God is calling you to stand firmly on one of his promises or on his character?
- c. The ark was a symbol of God's rule among the Israelite people. However, we know that God rules the world and rules over all nations (*Psalms 2:4-6; Daniel 4:35; 7:14*). How is God's sovereign rule an encouragement to you in specific situations and generally in the world?
- d. It is clear that *Joshua 3:7* emphasizes the importance of spiritual leadership in the life of God's people. God has given pastors and elders to lead his church in our day. I encourage you to take time and pray for your church leaders (pastor's, elders, ministry leaders) that God would give them wisdom to lead His people.

¹ John H. Walton, ed. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, ZIBBC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 21.

² Walton, ed. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, 21.