Joshua 3 Part 2

**Description**

**WHERE ARE THEY GOING?**

You will remember the original call that God gave to Moses when He appeared to him from a burning bush deep within the desert or wilderness, where he was looking after the flocks of his Father-in-law Jethro. Let us remind ourselves of the words that God spoke to Moses in Exodus 3:7-10. God said to Moses â??*I have seen their oppression*â?•, â??*I have heard their cry*â?•, so â??*I have come down to rescue them*â?•. What a great God we have, a God who sees, hears and acts.

God said I will bring them out from the land of Egypt, away from their oppression and their oppressors, away from a land of continual struggle, away from a land of slavery and bondage, away from wandering around in circles in the wilderness, to a land that is free and â??flowing with milk and honeyâ?• a land of plenty, a land of freedom and space. This land is the Promised Land that God wants you and I to posses by Faith. He will equip and enable us to do this because He is Faithful who promised.

As you know it wasnâ??t straight forward, the Egyptians were not going to let their slaves go that easily, and you know the story well I am sure so we wonâ??t go into that story now except to say that God fulfilled His promise because Moses was obedient to the word of God. Each one of us needs to hear and then to act on Godâ??s word to us individually and in our congregations or church related groups.

The command of God to move forward came from Joshua to the officers of the camp. Letâ??s look at how Joshua motivates this vast number of people. Joshua 3:10-18

Joshua calls together the leaders of the nation to give them a command, I want you to notice that he wasnâ??t asking their advice. Moses had organized the leaders of the nation and so if we look back to his farewell speech to the nation in Deuteronomy 1:15, Moses says to the people, **â??So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them heads over you, leaders of thousands, and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and officers for your tribes.â?•** Moses organized the nation this way so that he could communicate quickly with the people through the officers. But here Joshua assembles the leaders to give them Godâ??s orders. There are times when spiritual leaders must consult with the people they lead, whether itâ??s in the home arena, Christian ministry or service, or the life of the church, in order to build

consensus. But this isnâ??t one of those times, this is a time when the Spirit filled man of God, the man who had sought Godâ??s face, the man who had received, by faith, the word of God and the man who delivered it unequivocally to the people. God needs decisive spiritual leaders who are prepared to stand in the gap and be counted. We eventually get to the point, where after countless events from Egypt to the edge of the Jordan the people are prepared to listen and act upon the word of God.

**HOW ARE THEY GOING TO GET THERE?**

There was a great air of optimism in the camp; the people knew that something was going on. They would have also known that now Moses was dead, (he was the last of the old generation to die) and the fact that God had said Joshua and Caleb would be the only two that had left Egypt who would enter the promised land (Numbers 14:30) , that the time to move forward had come. The command from Joshua was carried out in Joshua 3:2-6. God has spoken, His will is very clear, and the nation must be ready to obey. I want us to notice what he says first to the officers or the leaders of the congregation in Joshua 1:11 **â??Go through the camp and tell the people, Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan River and take the land the Lord your God is giving youâ?•.** And then to the people in Joshua 3:5 Joshua says **â??Sanctify or Purify yourselves, because tomorrow the Lord will do great things among youâ?•**. The word Sanctify or Purify literally means to make yourself holy or acceptable to God.

What Joshua is saying to the people before they cross the river is:-

- that it is important for them to change their mindset
- to plan for physical sustenance in order for them to keep up their strength
- to start thinking about living off the land.

In other words prepare your heart because you will need to be able to listen to the still small voice of God, you need to be in a place in your heart where you can listen and obey the voice of the one who is calling you forward. If you donâ??t do this then you will miss out on all that God has promised you through His son Jesus. Oh yes you might be saved but will you be victorious, will you overcome, as the apostle John records the words of Jesus in the letter that Jesus sent to the seven churches **â??To him who overcomes I will giveâ?•.** God gives in response to our obedience. So you see we need to listen and act on what God is calling us to do.

Do you know that you have a choice? Letâ??s look back at Joshua 1:10-18. We see in this section that Joshua speaks to the tribes of Reuben, Gad and a remnant of the tribe of Manasseh that decided to stay on the east side of the Jordan, refered to as the 2 Â½ tribes. The command to them is that they are to go with the rest of the congregation as

Moses had instructed them and help conquer the Promised Land with the rest of the tribes. We know that about 40000 men crossed prepared for war, my guess is that this was only a small part of the 2 Â½ tribes. These tribes promised Moses that they would fight with their brethren (you can read this account in Numbers 32). These people settled for second best, yes they had been saved from Egypt, they had freely taken of Gods Mercies by way of the quails and the manna for 40 years yet they had really become complacent, in short the 2 Â½ tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh represent many borderline believers, people who have a relationship with Christ, who get close to the full and joyful inheritance, those who experience some spiritual victory in their lives, but who are determined to go back to the perceived comfort across the Jordan. The land to the east of the Jordan, where they wanted to stay, is really still the wilderness. Itâ??s a place of indulgence to people for whom the quality of material life is more important than life eternal. Are we going to be like the 2 Â½ tribes or are we going to take control and by Godâ??s grace and mercy move forward in obedience to His word.

Things will be different in the Promised Land. It wonâ??t necessarily be easy but we need to go forward knowing that God goes in front of us (Joshua 3: 3-5). If we are to conquer the enemies in our lives, our own struggles with fleshly rebellion and sin, our own resistance to what God wants, the enemies out there that oppose us, the world system, and satanic evil itself; and if weâ??re going to claim our inheritance in Christ, we must have courage and strength. Ephesians 6:10-11, 17-18 tells us the source of that kind of courage and strength: **â??â?¦Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armour of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devilâ?¦And takeâ?¦the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saintsâ?¦.â?•** Weâ??re called to warfare, but not in our own strength, not based on our own courage, and not in isolation. We live in community, so we are to pray for one another and with one another, to encourage one another. We need to remember that it is not only our battle, fighting sin and the evils of this world, it is Godâ??s as well. We are His workmanship equipped and enabled by Him through our obedience to His word both spoken and written.

Letâ??s look at what happened through the obedience of these people who adhered to the word of God. We know that the waters of the Jordan were overflowing their banks Joshua 3:15 yet as soon as the feet of the priests touched the water the river stopped flowing from a place called Adam some 15 miles up river. God dealt with sin at its root He bleed and died on a cross in order to cut out the problem of sin right back to Adam. Romans 5:18-19 â??**So as one sin of Adam brought the punishment of death to all people, one good act that Christ did makes all people right with God. And that**

**brings true life for all. One man disobeyed God, and many became sinners. In the same way one man obeyed God, and many will be made rightâ?•.** It is only when we recognise that God means what He says and when we are prepared to follow the Lord our God wholly as Joshua and Caleb did will we see and taste of the abundant blessings that God wants to bestow upon us by His Mercy.

**So to conclude**

- **Where are you now?**
- **Where are you going?**
- **How are you going to get there?**

Are you still in the wilderness wandering about picking up quails and manna 6 days a week, experiencing some of Gods blessing for you yet at times wishing that you were back in Egypt where although in slavery you at least knew what you were doing where eventually you would die never having been freed?

Or have you made up your mind and set your heart, like Caleb, to wholly follow the Lord your God, the one true God, who by Grace brought you out of Egypt who kept you and sustained you during those wilderness years and is now calling you on to posses your inheritance, a land of plenty, a place where life is not always predictable but one where God is at the heart of all that you do. It is for His glory and His good pleasure that He chose to sacrifice Himself so that you and I could inherit all that He has for us. To live the victorious life, OK one that will require action on our part, but one that brings peace and satisfaction because it is no longer I that live but Christ who lives in me and through me. So letâ??s listen to the voice of God, letâ??s keep God in sight, letâ??s prepare our hearts and minds, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among us.

May God bless His word and apply it to our hearts.

// Required code

**Category**

1. Lessons from Joshua

**Date Created**
December 18, 2018
**Author**
cowmansteve