

Joshua: Chapter 3-4

Chapter 3

- 1- Then Joshua rose early in the morning (key word there is, rose early); and he and all (SC: keyword, “all”) the sons of Israel set out from Shittim and came to the Jordan, and they lodged there before they crossed.
- 2- And it came about at the end of three days that the officers (SC: The leadership) went through the midst of the camp;
- 3- and they commanded the people, saying, “When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God with the Levitical priests carrying it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.
 - SC: That is, “following it”.
- 4- “However, there shall be between you and it a distance of about 2,000 cubits (SC: 1 cubit = 18 inches. What’s 1.8 x 2000? It’s 3,000 feet. So, to put that in perspective, a football field is 300 feet. So this is about 10 football fields.) by measure. Do not come near it...
 - SC: That’s an **action**. Don’t do it. It can’t be more clear. Do they stop and say, “Why?” Think about that! The **rebellious heart** always says, “Why?” But they say, “Okay.”
 - And the “why” makes them **hesitate** and / or not act. It leads to doubt or procrastination. Which means they don’t act.
 - An obedient heart says, “Okay” and just continues. That’s *huge*.
 - And then you multiply each of those two paths by 1,000’s of decisions, and that’s a fork in the road, right there.
 - So the path of obedience: multiply it by 1000 of times
 - Multiply the one where the people ask “why” by 1,000 times
 - Then look at the difference between the two paths years down the road.
 - Look at the habits created by the path you chose to walk when you hit the fork in the road.
 - And he continues: “...that you may know the way by which you shall go, for you have not passed this way before.”
- 5- Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves (SC: To the left margin, it says, “preparation before meeting God”), for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.”
 - SC: Not “with” you, not “in front” of you. “**Among**” you, right in the middle!
- 6- And Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, “Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over **(1)** ahead of the people.” So they took up the ark of the covenant and went **(2)** ahead of the people.
 - SC: So take your pen and write #1 and #2.
 - Look ahead to Joshua 6:7 - “Then he said to the people, “Go forward, and march around the city, and let the armed men go on before the ark of the LORD.”
 - SC: It says, “before” the ark of the Lord versus “behind” it. So back in Joshua 3:6, where we are, and 3:11, they are to walk *behind* it the Ark of the Covenant. *Here*, in 6:7, the men are to go *before* the Ark of the Covenant. And that is reiterated in the next verse, verse 8, “the Ark of the Lord followed them...”

- SC: “Behind” them. So In Joshua 6: 7 and 8, the Ark of the Covenant is *behind them*. The Ark in 3:6 and 7 is *ahead* of them. Now why is that? I’ll leave that to you to figure out why.
- 7- Now the LORD said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you.”
 - SC: **That’s a promise. That’s a principle. It’s a tool. “...just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you.”**
- 8- “You shall, moreover, command the priests (SC: plural) who are carrying the ark of the covenant
 - SC: They bear the *burden*
 - “...saying, ‘When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.’”
- 9- Then Joshua said to the sons of Israel, “Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God.”
 - SC: Key words, “Come here...”
- 10- And Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you (SC: Key word, “dispossess”. What does that mean? That means they possess this land. It was their home.) the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite.
 - **SC: Think about that. 7 different countries, if you will. That’s like telling a group of people that have been slaves for 400 years that you’re going to enter eastern Europe or western Europe and you’re going to dispossess the Portuguese, the Spanish, the French, the Germans, the Italians. You see the picture? Think about that. Think of the ones that responded with *fear* like, “This is *crazy*!”**
- 11- “Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over ahead of you into the Jordan.
 - SC: In front of, before. And they are 3,000 feet *behind* it. So the *priests* have the burden of carrying the Ark of the Covenant. It’d be for us today like carrying the Bible. It is for *me*.
- 12- “Now then, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe.
- 13- “And it shall come about when the soles of the feet of the priests who carry 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, and the waters which are flowing down from above shall stand in one heap.”
- For the life if me, I don’t know what that means.
- 14- So it came about when the people set out from their tents to cross the Jordan with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people,
- 15- and when (SC: Catch all the times it says “when.” “When” in v.14 and “when” in v.15.) those who carried the ark came into the Jordan, and the feet of the priests carrying the ark were dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest (SC: That is, during the fall and the summer.),
- 16- that the waters which were flowing down from above stood and rose up in one heap, a great distance away at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those which were flowing down toward the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. So the people crossed opposite Jericho.
- 17- And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan.
 - SC: What is this symbolic of? Crossing the red sea.

Chapter 4

- 1- Now it came about when all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua (SC: He didn’t speak to the *nation*, He spoke to Joshua), saying,
- 2- “Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe,
 - SC: That was in 3:12. So why is He repeating it? Think about it.

- 3- and command them (SC: Don't just *tell* them), saying, 'Take up for yourselves twelve stones (SC: Key words) from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the lodging place where you will lodge tonight.'
 - SC: Remember this. **This is a huge verse, a principle here.**
- 4- So Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel, one man from each tribe;
- 5- and Joshua said to them, "Cross again to the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder (SC: Those are pretty heavy stones), according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel.
- 6- (SC: **This is the key**) "Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?'
- 7- then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever."
- SC: So concepts here **(1)** Tools, that's what tools are. **(2)** Remember & Reflect. **(3)** This goes back to Deuteronomy 6:8, "...they shall be as frontals on your forehead and on your doorposts and on your gates"
- 8- And thus the sons of Israel did, as Joshua commanded (SC: So they **acted**. They did what they were told), and took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, **just as the LORD spoke to Joshua** (SC: Y'all see the thread of **obedience** and **action**?), according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel; and they carried them over with them to the lodging place, and put them down there.
- 9- Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan at the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant were standing, and they are there to this day.
- 10- For the priests who carried the ark were standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything was completed that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. And the people hurried and crossed;
- SC: There's tones of **repetition** in here.
- 11- and it came about when all the people had finished crossing, that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed before the people.
- 12- And the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over in battle array (SC: Notice that. In other words, they were *ready*.) before the sons of Israel, just as Moses had spoken to them;
- SC: Not as "Joshua", "as Moses had spoken to them". But, again, obedience. **They were doing what they were told to do.**
- 13- about 40,000, equipped for war, crossed for battle before the LORD to the desert plains of Jericho.
- 14- On that day (SC: That is, on that day the 40,000 crossed the river ready for battle) the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of **all** Israel; so that they **revered** him (SC: Or respected, or feared Joshua), just as they had revered Moses all the days of his life.
- 15- Now the LORD said to Joshua, 16"Command the priests who carry the ark of the testimony that they come up from the Jordan." 17So Joshua commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan." 18And it came about when the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come up from the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up to the dry ground, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place, and went over all its banks as before.
- SC: Again, the Red Sea.
- 19- Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth of the first month (SC: And I just write out to the side "precision") and camped at Gilgal on the eastern edge of Jericho.
- 20- And those twelve stones which they had taken from the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal.

- 21- And he said to the sons of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What are these stones?’
- 22- then you shall inform your children, saying, ‘Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.’
 - SC: Memorials.
- 23- “For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed, just as the LORD your God had done to the Red Sea (SC: Look at that!), which He dried up before us until we had crossed;
 - SC: And remember, the Red Sea happened 40 years before this with the generation that was now dead.
Okay, these guys were not even *born* back then. This was a new generation, the next generation.
- 24- that all the peoples of the earth (SC: Not Israel) may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty (SC: How many times have you heard me tell you God’s hand is on your life? Right there tells you an attribute of God’s hand.), so that you may [reverence, respect] the LORD your God forever.”