**Joshua 3: The Crossing of the Jordan**

Joshua 3:1-8; Preparations for Crossing the Jordan

***“When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD, your God, which the Levitical priests will carry, you must break camp and follow it,”***

* The ark of the covenant begins to play its role in guiding the people as it had already done at some points on their trek through the Sinai.
* It is God Himself who is leading his people and will show them how to accomplish the conquest of Canaan.
* *The central theme of the book of Joshua is that God was the principle player in the Israelites conquest of Canaan. The Israelites cooperation and participation were necessary, but it was God who had given the Israelites the land of Canaan.*
* *In our own lives, pride leads us to take credit for our accomplishments as though we were able to accomplish these things on our own.*
* *God is the principle player in our accomplishments in that He has give us the talents and abilities to perform them. It is only through humility that we come to understand this.*

***“Joshua also said to the people, ‘Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform wonders among you.’”***

* That Joshua instructs the people to *“sanctify”* themselves prior to the crossing of the Jordan reveals the continuity between Moses and Joshua as mediators.
* Moses had instructed the people to sanctify themselves in the presence of God’s revelation on Sinai.
* Sanctify means to purify; to be free from sin; to be holy.
* Joshua is telling the people to *“sanctify”* themselves for they are going to witness a great manifestation of God’s power – the division of the Jordan waters to let them pass.
* The Israelites crossing of the Jordan is not merely a repeat of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea.
* The crossing of the Jordan is a new event. God shows that He continues to work with and for His people in a new historical situation.
* The similarity of the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan was a source of hope that God would lead them in the promised land as he had led them through the wilderness of Sinai.

***“Then 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.”***

* In the Sinai desert, God had worked many miracles through Moses. In working miracles through Moses, it was clear that Moses had been chosen by God to be a prophet and mediator.
* God is advising Joshua that He will exalt him in the eyes of the people through works.
* The message will be clear. God has chosen Joshua to be His instrument to lead the Israelites into the promised land. To be His mediator.

Joshua 3:9-17; The Jordan is Parted

***“By this you will know that there is a living God in your midst: he will certainly dispossess before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites.”***

* Joshua advises the people that the ark of the covenant is to be carried in front. One man is chosen from each tribe to for a total of twelve men.
* The twelve men represent the twelve tribes and God’s covenant with His chosen people that He will give them the promised land.
* The crossing of the Jordan foreshadows *Baptism*.
* With the crossing of the Jordan the Israelites received the gift of the land promised to Abraham’s descendants.
* With the waters of Baptism and the covenant of Jesus Christ the people receive the promised land, eternal life.
* Once the feet of the Levite priests who were carrying the ark of the covenant touch the brink of the water the waters stood and rose up creating a dry passageway for the people to pass through.
* The Levites stood in the midst of the Jordan river while all Israel were passing the Jordan on dry ground.

The Navarre Bible; Joshua – Kings; Joshua; Scepter Publishers; New York; 1986

David Guzik, “The Enduring Word Bible Commentary”, Santa Barbara, Ca; https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/joshua-3/

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