

Come Follow Me
An Elo Viz production
Week 22
Joshua 1-24

“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’ minister, saying, 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.”

That is the opening message in the book of Joshua. The Lord had been preparing him for this role for quite some time now. Joshua was the leader of the Lord army as they conquered and went to battle with many cities and nations. Now that Moses is gone it is the task of Joshua to take his people into the promised land.

This is not by coincidence that it is Joshua. It has great meaning when we look a little closer at it. Moses was the prophet that prepared to people for the promised land, But it was Joshua that actually took them there. The name Joshua is an English rendering of the Hebrew name Yeshua. Not ironically is the same name that Jesus had when he was born of the Virgin Mary. We call Him Jesus, but as he walked on this mortal earth his friends and family called him Yeshua.

So when we look at the parallels of the children of Israel being led into the promised land by Yeshua our eyes can be open to seeing how God is so constantly woven through our lives. And though there are many that we can study about this week I point out just one more. The people had to cross the Jordan river to get the promised land. And the spot where they crossed near to the land of Jericho is believed to be the exact same place that Jesus was baptized at the hand of John the Baptist. Also, a great symbol of what we are asked to do in order for us to enter into God's rest or His promised land.

In any case. I love the book of Joshua and all the amazing stories that can teach us so much. I'd like to focus on 2 main ones this week. The first is in Chapter 3: As Joshua is not the prophet and leader among this chosen people he is preparing them to do what they have been looking forward to for over 40 years; to finally enter into the promised land. Verse 3 says:

“And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the **ark** of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the **way** by which ye must go: for ye have not passed *this* way heretofore.”

Then this great command to them of old and to us today;
“**Sanctify yourselves**: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.”

What is interesting to me is what the Lord was asking them to sanctify themselves for. First they are to Cross the Jordan river, Symbolizing baptism. And also the first miracle we see

Joshua parting the Jordan river, just as Moses did with the Red Sea. and then they are to conquer the very powerful city of Jericho with nothing but faith in God. What God was teaching them at that time and what he is teaching us today is that: We are focusing too much on our own efforts and abilities. God was and is the most powerful being in the universe. He created all of this and controls every element that exists. Every atom and molecule that holds our existence together is under his control and command. And He is ready and willing to use those elements to show us His power and Glory! Do you believe that? If you don't then do as Joshua commands; "Sanctify yourself, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

God is not dead, nor doth he sleep, he is waiting on you and your faith in order for him to have that presents in your life. If you are constantly distracted by the world and its media you will never get to the place that will prepare you to meet God. And the adversary will have conquered in your life. On the other hand, if we can follow after the things of God, (think of the ark and the covenant that the children of Israel were led by), then we too can be a witness to God's mighty hand in our lives.

"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* I will be with thee."

"And Joshua said [to the children of Israel}, Hereby ye shall know that the **living God** *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you [your enemies]"

So the people cross the Jordan river and the inhabitants of Canaan fear Israel. Could you imagine what they must have been thinking? I'm sure the tales of this people have traveled to every city and land around this area. But to see the Jordan river part, and millions of people crossing it on dry ground, I'm sure they were scared and perhaps terrified of them.

Chapter 5 verse 1 says:

"And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which *were* on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which *were* by the sea, **heard** that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their **heart** melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel."

Then again the Lord commands them to Sanctify themselves and all the males are Circumcised "again" it says. This doesn't mean that they were circumcised a second time but rather that this is a new generation, they didn't do this ritual in the wilderness with their children and grandchildren so God is saying if you have not been cleansed now is the time to do it.

So they did as they were commanded. In our day these things are similar to the covenants that we make. God is asking us to Cleanse ourselves and make sacred covenants. But it is important to understand that he is asking that we make covenants not just go through the motions of making covenants. He asks that we take them seriously. Because what is about to come next is huge for the children of Israel. In chapter 5 verse 10-12

“And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the [passover](#) on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the [old corn](#) of the land on the morrow after the passover, [unleavened](#) cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day.

And the [manna](#) ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.”

No more manna...I'm sure they all had mixed feelings about this, on one hand they were grateful to have something else besides manna to eat, and on the other hand how would you feel if that 40 year dependence suddenly ended...?

But they were progressing and getting better and having faith, so it was time.

Now they are camping at Gilgal and preparing to take the city of Jericho. I'd like to end with this short story which can be life changing if we understand it. Joshua was now not only their prophet but as he was before he is still the captain of their army, their leader in every battle. So, as they are preparing for battle, Joshua looks over and sees a Man, apparently someone he didn't recognize. He is a bit stunned because he has a sword drawn. But Joshua wasn't scared because he is a man of War, It wasn't the first time he faced a man with a sword.

So, Joshua approaches the man and asks him “Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?” That seems like an important question. Whose side are you on? He asks, our side or their side? You'd probably want to know the same thing if you were in Joshua's shoes.

Listen carefully to the Man's response. Verse 14: “And he said, Nay” What kind of answer is that? Whose side are you on, our side or thiers? “No”, or we would probably say “Neither”. Then he explains,

*“As captain of the [host](#) of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy [shoe](#) from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* [holy](#). And Joshua did so.”*

Now Joshua understands. He was standing face to face with the Lord. And he was asking the wrong question. What God was teaching him is that he is neither on our side or on our enemies' side. He is asking us to be on His side! Jesus flipped Joshua's question when he answered with “neither” and He asks us the true question of salvation; “Are you on My side?”

At times we may get caught up in the worldly way of thinking. We pray to an all powerful God and ask for a list of things that we want, and when we don't get them we say, “where are you God? Why didn't you answer me or give me what I asked for?” To which God will respond, “Dear child, Why didn't you listen, why didn't you obey”. “I have all the gifts you need, and I want to give them to you so badly. I just need you to be on my side and do as I ask you. Keep yourself clean and follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit and I will bless you beyond anything that you could ever imagine.”

Of this truth I testify, In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, Amen.