

(Covenant Series) 8. What Stands Between You and the Life of Victory

by Al Whittinghill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of overcoming unbelief and trusting in God's promises in order to experience the abundant life and victory in our Christian walk.

Duration: 1:02:35

Topics: "Covenant Series"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of appreciating God's mercy and grace. He highlights the need for believers to act in faith and trust God, rather than relying on gimmicks or human understanding. The sermon draws parallels between the journey of the Israelites out of Egypt and the Christian life, emphasizing the need to move from bondage to experiencing the fullness of God's promises. The preacher also references specific scriptures, such as Deuteronomy chapter four, to support his points and encourage believers to enter into the victorious life of abundance and warfare against the enemies of God.

Transcript

Father, we thank you for the Word of God, we thank you for the privilege of having been together these days, studying eternal truth. We want you to plant the heavens, lay the foundations of the earth in our life, the foundation of Jesus, and the building up of the house of God in your people. Lord, we know that you've done many things in many hearts together in these hours, and we give you total glory and total praise, no man, only God.

We thank you. We ask you that we will hear your voice and live and obey, and that over these next months you will keep your people in that way of holiness and the way of righteousness and the way of peace and the way that is Jesus. We trust you for this.

We ask you now to take your Word and show us there's no such thing as an end, really, when we're in Jesus, because it's eternal. We go on and on in that way. Show us tonight is really the beginning of the rest of our life.

We pray it in Jesus' name, asking you to bind the devil from obscuring truth tonight. In Jesus' name, amen. In the Old Testament, the children of Israel give us a wonderful picture in their journey out of Egypt

through the wilderness and into Canaan of much truth for our Christian life.

In fact, the New Testament tells us without any doubt that the things that were written before time were written for our instruction, for our learning, those of us upon whom the ends of the earth have come, that there are types, there are figures. We see very clearly of the Israelite nation in Egypt as God's people under bondage, brought out by the blood of the Lamb and then wandering, brought out from Egypt, out from bondage, but yet in a period of time, moving into a time of real blessing and fullness in the fullness of the inheritance. This inheritance, being Canaan, is certainly not a picture of heaven for us because there's warfare in Canaan, and it's a picture then of the victorious life, a life of abundance, experiencing all the promises of God and living a life in warfare against the enemies of God.

Well, Israel was brought out of bondage and darkness and called to enter into God's promises, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, led by the Holy Spirit, and God wanted them to come right on into all that he had for them. They come to Kadesh Barnea. After 40 years of being in the wilderness, they come back to the same place, and God speaks to them in Deuteronomy chapter 4. If we should turn there, and we want to look at a few scriptures there, and we've got a lot of scriptures to cover tonight, so we're going to be zipping through.

Because of our preliminaries, we'll be through a little later than nine o'clock tonight. We'll take our full time in the Word. If you need to leave early, don't feel badly that you need to.

Deuteronomy chapter 4, verse 36. Out of heaven he has made you, Israel, to hear his voice, in order that he might instruct you. And upon earth he showed you his great fire, and you have heard his word out of the midst of the fire.

And because he loved your fathers, he chose thy seed after them, and brought thee out in his presence with his mighty power out of Egypt. He brought thee out, that phrase, in order to drive out the nations from in front of you to a greater and mightier than you are, to bring you in. You see those two phrases? He brought you out that he might bring you in.

It's not just bringing us out of darkness. God never does a one-sided thing. He brings us out of darkness to put us into light.

He brings us out of pain to put us into peace. He brings us out of the kingdom of the devil to put us into the kingdom of his dear Son. He turns us away from dead idols to serve the living God.

It's always a from to salvation. And so he says, know therefore this day, consider in your heart that the Lord, he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath there is nothing else. Well, God redeemed us for his purposes.

Look in chapter 6, and you see the word of God to God's people as they're at a crucial point in their history. They're facing a new day, and God reminds them, verse 3, chapter 6, hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it, that it might be well with thee, and that you might increase mightily as the Lord God of your fathers has promised to you in the land that flows with milk and honey. You're about to begin a new chapter, he's saying.

You're going to enter into the promises of God. Hear this, O Israel, verse 4, the Lord, our God, he is one God. Jehovah Elohim is one Jehovah.

You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your soul, with all of your mind. These words that I command you this day shall be in your head. No, in your heart, it says.

And you teach them diligently to your children. Talk of them when you sit in your house, when you're walking, and when you're lying down, and when you're rising up. Bind them continually for a sign upon your hand, and there'll be frontlets between your eyes.

Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Verse 20, and when your son asks you in time to come, saying, what do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgment which the Lord, our God, hath commanded you? What do they mean? Then you say to your son, we were Pharaoh's bondmen, servants in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong, mighty hand. And the Lord showed us signs and wonders great and terrible upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh and all his house before our very eyes.

And he brought us out from there in order that he might bring us in. You see the reason? He brought us out, not just so that we'd be free from Pharaoh, but he brought us out with a purpose in mind. What? To bring us in, to give us the land that he swore to our fathers.

He brought us out from bondage so that he might bring us into blessing, the fullness of his covenant. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord, our God, for our good always, not for our trouble, not to be grievous, but for our good, so that he might preserve us alive as it is this day. Disobedience is insanity.

It shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments in the presence of the Lord, our God, as he has commanded us. So we have a from to salvation. And these Jewish people now are standing right where they stood 40 years before.

They've taken an 11 day journey. That's what it took to go from Egypt to Canaan. Deuteronomy 1 tells us that it took 11 days walking.

It would take 11 days had they gone, but they turned an 11 day journey into 40 years. And you know something, a lot of us can take a process time of sanctification that God intends to take time, but not a length and length of time and turn it into 40 or 50 years for the same reason that they did. What was it? Unbelief kept them in a low state and in wilderness living for 40 years.

And it took Israel 40 years because of unbelief. Now look at Hebrews chapter three, and you see this picture again is used as a warning for us. Those that have taken Hebrews will see this scripture as we've studied it before.

Hebrews chapter three, verse seven. Wherefore, as the Holy ghost keeps on saying today, if you choose here, his voice do not go on hardening your hearts, like in the provocation in the day of testing in the wilderness, when your fathers tested me, says God proved me and they saw my mighty works for 40 years. Wherefore, I was grieved with that generation and said, they're always airing in their hearts.

They haven't known my ways. Ah, they knew his miracles, his acts, but they didn't know his character or his ways. How many people today know all that God can do, but don't know who he is.

Well, that's the problem. So I swore in my wrath. They'll not enter into my rest or victory in this case, verse 12, take heed brothers, lest there be in any of you in the same way.

It's implying a heart of unbelief in departing, falling away from the living God, exhort one another every day while it's still called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. And the sin that it's speaking about is the one that is down. Look at verse 17 with whom was he grieved for 40 years.

Was it not with those that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness and to whom he swore that they wouldn't enter into his wrath, but was it not to those who did not believe. And so we see that they could not enter in to the full promises of God because of unbelief. Chapter four, verse one, forget the chapter division.

Let us therefore fear less a promise being left to us of entering into his rest. Any of you should seem to come short of it for unto us. It was, was the gospel preached as well as unto them.

Yes, Israel, the gospel, but the word preached did not profit them because it wasn't mixed with faith in those that heard it. Look over at verse nine. There remains therefore a resting to the people of God.

Here's the rest. The one who has entered into God's rest has ceased from his own independent works. Just like God ceased from his Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest.

Lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. And then it talks about the word because the word is the way we enter into the rest by believing the word of God. We labor to believe we wrestle to lay hold of.

We labor not to do. We labor to cease. It's a labor of putting aside our own ideas and our own imaginations and our own thoughts and letting this mind of Jesus through the scriptures become our very mind.

Well, for those people, then unbelief kept them away from victory. And in our day, I just talked to a dear person today who was letting unbelief keep them from a life of victory. They know so much, but they just have to go through the pain of it, I suppose.

But they were, they just could not believe in their hearts that they have victory in Jesus. It's as if they had to struggle some more or see some things or they couldn't just lay hold by faith of everything Jesus died to make them at this particular moment where God was grieved with them. You know, only love can be grieved.

Policemen aren't grieved with people that make the, they're just mad perhaps, or they're upset, but lovers are grieved when something is hurt. And God is grieved when we don't take him at his word. God did everything to exhort them to enter into his promised rest and out of bondage, but they weren't yet into blessing.

And so we're warned here. Don't make Israel's mistake. Don't let unbelief turn a process into a lengthy, lengthy, lengthy thing.

Certainly it takes forever until we go to heaven to be complete in experience and the things of God. But there are things that take a lot longer than God wants them to take. I believe because of our dullness and because of our unbelief and because of our selfishness, these people existed in a self-imposed poverty.

That's what it was. They, but the sad thing was, I mean, the amazing thing is that they were out of Egypt, but they weren't into Canaan and they couldn't enjoy the flesh pots of Egypt and they couldn't experience the blessings of Canaan. It's like so many people, I call them wilderness Christians, wilderness homes.

They've been delivered out of the bondage of the world and they can't go back to the bars and the brothels and all those things. They can't enjoy those things, but yet they're not experiencing the abundant life. And they're lost in some desolate place and they're wondering why they aren't experiencing victory.

And they circle around in circles like those people did in the wilderness. And they look back across the river, back into Egypt, like it says they did. And it says that these people, they remembered, they remembered the flesh pots of Egypt and they longed for the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlics.

Well, I bet they had awful breath. But anyway, but they longed for those things, but they couldn't have them. Just like some Christians, they began because of the wilderness to long for the way that used to be in the world.

I remember how happy I used to be when I was out with all my buddies and all that. And why can't I have that now? But they can't get back and they wouldn't if they really could. And then they go around and go to a Bible study and they look across the River Jordan into the promises of God.

And they say, oh, I want to go there so badly. But they don't cross the River Jordan in their experience. And they're going in circular living, self-imposed poverty, saved but stuck, I call it, saved but stuck.

And these people in the wilderness now, they ended up unconsciously dishonoring the very name of God. They dishonored the name of God because for 40 years, God waited for them to take him simply at his word. Well, a lot of Christians begin well, like we heard earlier, but they come to a standstill.

And if they come to a standstill, sometimes they might go back to Egypt or even go away. And they're content with just the thought perhaps of being converted. Or maybe even they believe the satanic lie that they could never have victory.

And so how often the church huddles in unbelief, in wilderness experience and can't go to the world. The world's laughing at us and we can't experience Canaan and they're laughing at us across the river. But yet the promise to us is still like the promise to them.

Go up and possess the land. I have already given it to you. Everything that you need to be all that I've called you to be.

I have already given it to you. Well, unbelief in this sense is not non-belief. Unbelief is wrong belief.

And actually this too, unbelief is not a failure to understand. These people understood. Unbelief is rather to fail to obey the clear command of the Holy Spirit.

In this case, when he says, trust God, despite what your better sense tells you on your fleshy level. And you know what carnality is? Carnality is that which constantly begs God to give all he's already given, but yet doesn't have the courage to take it. Isn't that amazing? We beg God for all he's promised that has already been given to us in Jesus, but yet we don't really have the will to lay hold of it.

It can be quite sincere carnality and quite emotional, but yet it misses that missing link, which is faith. As we'll see tonight, how to enter in to all this glorious, wonderful promises of God. Wilderness living.

It describes what it was all about. In Deuteronomy 12, eight, it said that these people in the wilderness did what was right in their own eyes. By their own estimation, their life was just a nice life.

Deuteronomy 12, eight, they did what was right in their own eyes, not what was wrong. Oh no, they wouldn't compromise. They just did what they thought was right.

They lived within their own conscience instead of the word of God. Like so many people do today, they just live by their own situational ethics as Christians or by their own denomination or something instead of what God's word says. Listen, business ethic is not nearly as, as godly as it's not at all godly, but it's not even coming close to, to God's ethic.

He says a lot of different there and a businessman can satisfy the business community and totally let God be grieved. They did what was right in their own eyes. They kept looking back to Egypt, envying all the fish and cucumbers and melons and leeks and onions and garlics saying, our soul is famishing.

We have to eat this manna, this provision. This is not enough. And they wanted more.

And thirdly, when they were dealing with Thirdly, they said perverse things. Number 16, three, we are holy when they weren't. Let me tell you something.

Everybody's always holy by their own standards. Look around. And I saw the tube the other night on the John Ankerberg show this group that he was questioning that said, you have to be baptized in our church and do it this way, or you aren't part of the body of Christ.

Well, of course, I mean, we're always holy by our own standards. It's great. We set the standards.

If you don't live up to them, you're out of it. You say that's wilderness living, total wilderness. Well, he brought me out so he could bring me in.

God's mercy was not giving me what I deserve. He brought me out. That's mercy, not giving me what I deserve.

Now he'll bring me in. That's his grace. That's giving me what I don't deserve.

See, mercy doesn't give me what I do deserve. Grace gives me what I don't deserve. That's the beauty of those two things.

And I'm afraid in America we don't appreciate God's mercy. We may understand some of his grace, but we don't realize what we deserve. Therefore, we're not thankful.

After 40 years of hard lessons, it came time to act in faith. And so tonight we come to our text. That's my introduction, believe it or not, in the book of Joshua.

We come to the book of Joshua and we've seen now that they've been exhorted by God. That's all the book of Deuteronomy is an exhortation for 40 years. You've blown it now.

Act on what you know. Some of you have thought that something lies between you and victory. What is it that lies between you and victory in your Christian experience? Maybe you've been struggling with one thing for 30 years.

And let me tell you something, unless you deal with what God says, you'll die as a Christian in the wilderness. There are a lot of people as Christians that have laid their head on the pillow and gone to be with the Lord from the wilderness. There are look around who would deny it? Well, so we come to Joshua

and that's a book about possessing our possessions.

Every New Testament truth has a counterpart in the old. And I would say that the book of Ephesians and the book of Joshua go hand in hand. I mean, it's about warfare.

One is a visual representation of warfare. That's Joshua, where Ephesians talks about. We also fight, but not against flesh and blood like Joshua.

It's against what Joshua was a picture of. And so Moses has to die. You know why? Because the law can never take you into Canaan.

The full promises of God. It can't ever bring you into the promised rest principles and do it this way. And what your pastor says, it's going to have to be one on one.

It's going to have to be following Jesus. And that's why Yeshua, Joshua, it's the Old Testament word for Jesus. Jehovah is salvation.

He's the one that's got to bring us in. He's the captain of the Lord's army. Did you hear how the Methodist church has just decided to take onward Christian soldiers just yesterday out of the hymn book because it's too radical? It sounds too militant.

Oh, my backward chocolate soldiers running from the fight. I can't believe it. Well, anyway, that's just an aside.

The captain of our faith leading us into the full promises of our possessions. So Canaan is the abundant life and it takes Jesus to lead the redeemed into it. You're not just saved from the world or from hell or from your sin.

You're saved from those. Yes, but to Jesus, to the abundant life, to Christ in you, the hope of glory. And it's not complete, friends, until right now you're experiencing both.

Don't content yourself with just the idea of, well, at least I'm going to heaven. Don't settle for that satanic halfway. That may be wonderful, but I tell you, God has more.

Look at Joshua chapter one, verse one. The first word is actually and because it's built right on Deuteronomy instead of now it's and and after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua, the son of none, Moses's servant, saying, Moses, my servant is dead now, therefore, arise and go over this Jordan. You and all this people into the land, which I give them even to the children of Israel and every place that the sole of your foot will walk upon that have I given unto you, just like I said to Moses.

What do you see here? You see that the sole of your foot is required. I've already given it to you, but to experience it, you're going to have to walk on it. You're going to have to walk this out.

And as you walk it out, you will experience it step by step. It's a walk of faith. You see it right here.

And it's so clear in Hebrews 13, five, the Lord said, I am with you. So look at look at verse five. There shall not any man be able to stand before you all the days of your life as I was with Moses.

So I will be with you and will not fail thee or forsake thee. That's the verse that's quoted in Hebrews 13, five for us. I will never, never, never, never, never five never's there, leave you or forsake you.

It's really there in the Greek five negatives in Hebrews 13, five and in English, double negatives wrong. But in Greek, the more negatives you put, the stronger it gets. That's one of the strongest in the whole Bible.

I will never, never, never, never, never leave you or forsake you. Really, Lord, be with me. I mean, do you see? Be with us, after he said, I'll never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never leave you or forsake you.

Lord, would you please be with us? Can you imagine that? You see what I mean? Unbelief. We don't have the mind of God and see his heart in this. And then he goes on verse six, be strong and of a good courage for unto this people, you will divide for inheritance, this land, which I've sworn to their fathers to give to them.

God's words behind it only be strong and very courageous that you may observe to do according to all the law. Now that's not performance. That's fulfillment.

You see, God has already given them grace. They're walking in it. He says, now follow the word of God, which Moses, your servant commanded.

Don't turn from it to the right or to the left so that you can prosper wherever you're going. This book of the law will not depart out of your mouth. You will meditate there in a day and night so you can observe to do according to everything written in it.

For then you'll make your way prosperous and then you'll have good success. Haven't I commanded you? It's God saying that. Be strong, be of good courage, which means they were weak and they were afraid.

Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed for the Lord, your God is with you wherever you are going. Three times, God says, be strong and be of good courage. You know why I said it three times? Because we needed to hear it that many times.

It's easy to be weak and of little faith. And he says, once be not afraid. He says, once be not dismayed.

In other words, don't do what comes naturally at a time like this. It's natural to be afraid. It's natural to lose heart.

All those things are natural, but don't do it. You're going to have to go by God's word. Just like Hebrews 4.12 said, it's God's word.

You're going to have to be strong enough by God's grace to believe the word of God and to meditate in it. And so in verse nine, you see God speaking to Joshua. In verse 10, you see Joshua commanding the leaders.

Joshua commanded the officers of the people. And then in the next verse, the officers go through the host and command the people. So you have the preacher and the leaders and the people, all of those people saying here, prepare food for within three days, you'll pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land, which the Lord, your God has given you to possess it.

It's a picture of getting ready to move in by faith into the full promises of God that Jesus died, not just to bring us out of Egypt, but into Canaan. In the Christian experience, the rest that's remaining for the children of God. In that verse 17, we see unity and prayer in God's people.

They're saying, according as we hearken to Moses in all things, we will hearken to you. Only the Lord, thy God be with thee as he was with Moses. The people are saying that unity and prayer.

Am I losing you? You're looking at me funny. Uh, I don't know. It just makes me wonder why you're looking at me like that for, uh, they, they came, they came to the edge of the Jordan river and over in chapter three, 15, three, verse 15.

It's you don't see it later. But it says that Jordan was overflowing its banks at this time. Once a year when Mount Lebanon's, uh, when Lebanon's mountains melt the snow, Jordan fills up and it overflows its banks and it becomes a mile wide right at this point.

It's a, it's a, it's a big river before it might be a little finger that you could have no big problem, but now it's a mile wide. It's the most difficult time of the year to cross the Jordan river. And that's when God brings them there.

It's just as easy for God to walk on still water as raging water. No big deal for God. It's all his work.

Anyway. Well, they come to the Jordan river and Joshua verse two, chapter two, verse one, the son of none sent out of Chitim two men to spy secretly saying, go look at the land, even Jericho. That's the biggie.

That's the mainstay. That's the stronghold. That's the main defense of the devil.

Go inside it out. And they went and came to an harlot's house named Rahab. And they stayed there.

And it was told to the King of Jericho saying, they're coming man here tonight of the children of Israel to search out the country. And the King of Jericho sent to Rahab saying, bring out the man that have come to you that are entered to your house. They've come to spy out all the country.

Well, she'd hidden them beneath the cotton on the roof. And then the, the people looking for them left. And we see as they come out and they say a final word to Rahab.

I want you to look at verse eight and I want you to see what they, when she spoke to them after their pursuers were gone, she says, verse eight, before they were laid down, she came up to them upon the roof. And she said to the men, I know that the Lord, she confesses his sovereignty, that the Lord has given you this land and that your fear has fallen upon us. And that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the red sea. That's 40 years before we've heard how the Lord did that. And what you did to the two Kings of the Amorites, Og and Bashan on the other side of Jordan, Sihon and Og.

I mean, you were utterly destroyed. As soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted. There wasn't any more courage in any man because of you, because the Lord, your God, he is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

Do you see that, that the Canaanites had heard about it 40 years before and that they could have come in 40 years before? God's fear had already fallen on the enemy. The way had been open. And I'll tell you something tonight.

The fear of God has already fallen on the devil and his hosts. That you will take God at his word and enter in fully to the abundant life by grace as a victory gift, not as a effort growth. Take it from God.

You see the way we're going to see here. Take it from God. And the devils are trembling.

The fear of God is on them because the way is absolutely open. Well, the spies go back verse 23 of chapter two. They give a good report.

The two men return and descend from the mountain, passing over and come to Joshua, the son of none, telling him all the things that fell on them. And they said to Joshua, truly, the Lord has delivered into our hands all the land because all the inhabitants of the country are fainting. They're scared, silly because of us.

Now they're preparing to enter in. How do you do it? Verse one, chapter three, Joshua rose up early in the morning. See, that's the leadership hearing from God.

He got up to meet with God. Joshua rose up early in the morning and they removed from Chitim and came to Jordan. And he and all the children of Israel and lodged there before they passed over time with God.

It came to pass after three days. You see, don't be in a hurry. Don't rush.

Wait on the Lord. The officers went through the host and they commanded the people saying, when you see the arc of the covenant of the Lord, your God and the priests, the preachers bearing it, you shall remove from your place and follow after it. Wait on the Lord.

When you see the presence of God, that's the arc. You follow the presence of God. You follow the leading of the spirit.

Look at verse four. Yet leave a space between you and it about two thousand cubits by measure. Don't come near it so that you can know the way by which you must go because you have not been this way before.

This is a new experience for you. Victory by the power of another. Don't crowd God.

Give yourself time to see what he's doing. See, instead of getting up right around the arc and saying, yeah, yeah, yeah, let's go. Let God go out about two thousand cubits out there so you can see and you can learn.

Don't crowd. Don't push, but wait and go patiently following God step by step. Is that clear? And then you'd find out later that the arc would go three days ahead, three days ahead of God's people.

Why? To seek out a resting place in the land, just like Jesus, the spiritual arc of the covenant, the one in whom God kept his law, the one where the blood was sprinkled, the one upon whom the presence of God should kind of rest. He went ahead of us three days and three nights into the grave to look for a resting place. And God raised him from the dead.

If you want a real study, study the journeys of the arc of the covenant and study the journeys of Jesus and you'll find their parallel. I mean, it's a visual picture of the word made flesh walking around. They even wrapped the arc of the covenant in the same colors of cloth that Jesus wore for his clothes.

I'll tell you, if you study this book carefully, it'll blow your gourds out of your head or whatever. If you don't have gourds, the reason I said that is because I was at this retreat this weekend and we'd get in line and get in and we're going to have lunch. And I'd say, go ahead.

And they'd all say, oh no, you gourd head. They always call me gourd head all weekend. I couldn't figure out why they call me gourd head.

Anyway, there's nothing in it. He didn't catch that. There's nothing in my gourd head.

Uh, verse five anyway. And Joshua said to the people, sanctify yourselves because tomorrow, tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. You see, you're getting ready to cross over into new territory, a new experience of life, sanctify yourselves, set your heart on one purpose.

That's what sanctifying yourself is just for one thing. You exist and that's to obey God. You get your heart right.

Get before God and sanctify yourselves. Be clean, be set apart. Well, verse nine, Joshua said to the children of Israel, come here and listen to the words of the Lord, your God.

And Joshua said by this, you will know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Gergesites, the Amorites and you'll know it by this, the Ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth. He'll pass over before you into Jordan. God is always previous.

Wherever you go as a Christian, he's always previous and he's gone before you. And this is how you'll know he's gone first. This is the symbol for the presence of God.

That's what the Ark was. That's why it was in the holiest of all. You couldn't touch it.

You'd die. It was a symbol for holy God. And so here they come to Jordan.

Jordan means spreading or rolling judgment. It's a picture of death. It's an amazing thing because the Ark goes first.

It represents Calvary. It represents death to self. It represents the identification with Jesus.

They come here to the place called Beth-Aborah. If you went to Israel today and looked on a tour, they'd point you out down by the Dead Sea over a ways. You'd see kind of a grassy spot and they'd say, that's Beth-Aborah.

Beth means house and Aborah means of the passage. It means the place where they came across from over on the other side into the promised land. It's the place where they passed over.

Well, in the New Testament, in John chapter one, it says that John the Baptist was out preaching at a place called Beth-Aborah and all the people came out and they said, we need to be baptized. And there it was at Beth-Aborah that Jesus came, the New Testament Joshua. And he says, I have need to be

baptized of thee because he had to go first.

And he, behold the Lamb of God that's taking away the sin of the world. It's all perfect. I'll tell you, it's all perfect.

Even down to the day that they went into the river and came out. You'll see that in just a moment. But it's the place where Jesus was baptized.

And it's the place where he entered into conflict with the devil. Right after he was baptized, he was led off to the stronghold of Jericho, the place of the curse, the mouth there of temptation, where he faced the devil himself. Isn't that amazing? The same parallel right there.

And then we see in verse 12, look what God says. Now, therefore, take 12 men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every man, a tribe, a representative number, 12, 12. And it shall come to pass as soon as the souls of the feet of the priests that bear the presence of the Lord, the Ark, the Lord of all the earth, as soon as they shall rest in the waters of Jordan, as soon as you get your feet wet, the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above, and they will stand up in a bunch or a heap.

And it came to pass when the people removed from their tents to pass over Jordan, that the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant in front of the people, as they bore the Ark, they came to the Jordan, the feet of the priests that bore the Ark, they came to that mile wide swell and how foolish they must have felt as they started to walk out into it. As soon as they got there, I'm sure they might've gone like this, you know, like you're going to get in a bath or something. And that was just, you know, an inch away and nothing happened.

Half an inch away and nothing happened a millimeter away and nothing happened. They touch it like this, you know, and they got their feet wet. And, uh, it says, Jordan was overflowing there in verse 15.

It says the waters, which came down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far all the way back to the city. Adam in the Psalms, it implies in Psalm 114 and another Psalm as well. It says, what ails you a water? Why were you afraid? You see, it says you saw the presence of the Lord of all the earth.

It's like the priest with the presence of the Lord stepped in the water. And the figure in the Hebrew is that the water went back like this all the way back to a place called Adam. Archaeologists can't find that place.

You know why it's called Adam? Because it's a picture there of that spreading judgment for sin, rolling back all the way to a place called Adam. The word is perfect. I'll tell you.

And the water down beneath it just went and went right on down and flowed out like an old bathtub and just emptied out. And so here's a big empty river. And it's just amazing.

And it says that those that came down toward the sea of the plain, the salt sea failed and were cut off and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priest that bore the ark of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of Jordan. And all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, dry shod until the people were all passed over Jordan.

The word pass clean Passover is repeated over and over and over again. The ark went first. Well, look, the priest had to get their feet wet.

In other words, they had to trust God's word and not the visible. Don't say it's just the preachers because we've been made priests unto our God. And we're the ones who bear the presence of God.

We are the temple of God. We are the covenant people of God. Remember in Isaiah 43, 2, it says, when you pass through the waters, I will be with you.

And when you go through the rivers, they won't overflow you. It's that covenant language. You see, it would take hours standing firm in the middle of that riverbed with that covenant ark on your shoulders.

And it's hard work because it's made of wood and gold. It's heavy. It's pure gold, the mercy seat above it.

And in the sight of the waiting water way up there, you're standing in the place of judgment. Three million people. It take a while.

Yeah, ladies, old ladies and kids. And you can't just hurry them along. Come on.

You can't just do that. They have to take their time. And so they had to have leading the way in courage and faith.

And they had to believe the invisible. You see, that's what faith does. Faith reckons God's word is true.

It risks getting its feet wet in the face of impossible circumstances. And then it rests once it's in the place of impossibility in the sovereign trustworthiness of God. Don't be afraid of the visible.

Believe the invisible and trust in God. So you've got to face the impossibilities and you've got to get your feet wet. If you're going to live the abundant life, if you're going to experience where the waters fled back to Adam, a picture of the removal of the covenant heads act of sin all the way back since staying all the way back to Adam.

See, Christ vanquished death. And so we've got to be free from fearing it. And all who will follow the ark and experience that day passed through dry shod.

See, that's why it says to us back in the New Testament, in First Corinthians, Chapter 15. Listen to this verse 55. It says, Oh, death, where is your sting? Oh, grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin.

The strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He carried the whole church with him, Jesus did, at Calvary.

And he was the first to go into the real judgment of the cross so that all the people of God might follow. You see the picture here. It's such a clear picture.

And once in the riverbed, the ark didn't come out until everyone was totally passed over. Look at Chapter 4, Verse 10. We'll come back to Chapter 4, the first part, but it says for the priest which bore the ark stood in the middle of the Jordan until everything was finished.

It is finished. Oh, the language of the Holy Spirit, comparing spiritual with spiritual. It is finished.

And that the Lord's commanded Joshua to speak to the people. Jesus, our high priest, the priest stood in the riverbed of death, dark waters. He crossed over Kidron and he stood there with his feet firm, didn't he, as he was there and he said it is finished.

Is that beautiful? It is so beautiful. God's word is so beautiful. And it says that that it says that Joshua spoke to the people according to all the Moses commanded Joshua, all that the law said, he filled it up and all the people hurried and passed over.

Make haste. It's the Lord's Passover. Well, to cross over into this life, there is no bridge.

There's no bridge over the River Kwai. There's no natural way. There's no alternate route.

There's no way at all. There's no human understanding. You see, only faith, believing God can take you into this experience.

And God leaves us without any gimmicks, without any props. And you see, if we insist on gimmicks and if we insist on our own understanding and if we insist on props and if we insist on absolute guaranteed proof before we get our feet wet, we'll never enter in. We'll never.

We've got to trust God. Well, we see another beautiful lesson here of covenant. And I just want you to hold on to your socks on this one, because I'll tell you, it gets so good it's almost unbearable.

In chapter four, verse one, you see that it came to pass when all the people were clean, passed over Jordan, that the Lord spoke to Joshua, take twelve men out of the people, out of every man, a tribe, out of every tribe, a man. You see, now that all the people had already gone over and then he gives them a command to take twelve more men. Back in chapter three, verse twelve, while they were on the other side, the wilderness side, he had twelve men picked and they did something.

And now when they're all the way over on the other side, he picks another twelve men. And then he says, verse three, command these men saying, take out of the middle of Jordan, out of the place where the priest's feet stood firm, take twelve stones, carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you'll spend the night this night. They went to Gilgal, the place of circumcision, the place of obedience.

And then Joshua, then Joshua called the twelve that he had prepared. I'm thinking of Jesus calling his twelve men now. He called the twelve he'd prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe, a man.

And Joshua said to them, pass over before the ark of the Lord, your God into the midst of Jordan and take up every man of you a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, one for every tribe. And this will be a token or a sign among you that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, what do you mean by these stones? Then you'll answer them. This means the waters of Jordan were cut off in the presence of the ark of the covenant of the Lord when he passed over Jordan and the waters of Jordan were cut off.

These stones shall be for a reminder, for a memorial to the children of Israel forever. And the children of Israel did like Joshua commanded and took up twelve stones out of the middle of Jordan as the Lord spoke to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel. And they carried them over with them to the place where they lodged and they laid them down there.

We'll see how they laid them in just a moment. Look at verse 20. They took those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, and Joshua did pitch them in Gilgal.

The word pitch means to cause to stand as a memorial. It's a covenant word. It's the same thing that that Jacob and Laban did with rocks.

They pitched them as a covenant memorial. Moses did the same word at the foot of Sinai when they sprinkle blood on. It was a covenant memorial.

These rocks were set up at Gilgal, the place of obedience, as a covenant memorial. Are you still able to follow me? Is the picture still good in your mind? Because you see here you have twelve men and they, verse two and three, they take river rocks, river rocks out of the place where the priest's foot stood firm. They lifted from the very place of judgment and death beneath the waters of Jordan.

It's a monument, you see, to God's faithfulness. They're making it up. And this represents, as they take these river rocks over into the promised land, they set up these rocks as a covenant pillar, a memorial, a proof that God has brought them through Jordan because they came from the place of death.

They came from right there. And you see, river rocks are different than all the other rocks around because if you've ever been to Israel, you know that the river rocks are beautiful. They're like polished.

They're round and they're smooth. You know why? Because they've been washed by the washing of the water of the Word. And they've been made smooth and there's no rough edges.

And so they take them out. And the only place you'll find these kind of rocks are in the middle of the river. What are they doing here? Ah, well, someone brought them through.

Someone brought them through. They passed over. Well, that's those rocks that they took from the middle of the river and set them over in Canaan.

But did you know there were twelve other rocks? Oh, no doubt about it, because you see, back in chapter three, we saw how that those twelve men, they picked in the wilderness. Look at verse nine. Here's another in chapter four, chapter four, verse nine.

Here's another twelve stones. Look at these. It's just very subtle, but you can see it.

Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priest, which bore the Ark of the Covenant, stood. And they're there to this day. They're buried.

They're beneath the Jordan. Somewhere today, they're there. They're out of sight.

You see, they took wilderness rocks into the middle of the river and left them at the place where the new rocks came out. And they took the new rocks into Canaan and made them for a washed memorial to newness. And the old, what happened to it? Well, these were rough rocks.

They were exposed. They were brittle. They had rough edges and they were left ugly down beneath Jordan.

You see, this represents the death and the judgment of the cross, of the old way of the flesh, the life that we had in the wilderness. And it's out of sight. It's out of mind.

It's buried with him. Do you see that? Do you doubt that? It's so clear, at least to me. Forever behind us, it ends my relationship with Adam.

Why is Adam there? You see, it's types, it's metaphors, it's mystery, but it's clear as a bell to those who long to be changed. Well, this is precisely the truth of Romans six. It's precisely the truth that we are to enter in by a choice, by getting our feet wet in Romans chapter six, verse three.

It says, don't you know that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus were baptized into his death. Therefore, as we are buried with him by baptism into his death and friends, this is where Jesus was baptized right here in Joshua, the same place he was baptized. The picture is good there.

Same place, Bethabara, the place where he was baptized by John the Baptist, where they crossed over. As we come to the same place, as we are baptized with him, just like Christ was raised from the dead by the faithful glory of the father, even so we should also walk in newness of life. Gilgal is the place of obedience.

It's the place where the reproaches rolled away. They circumcised themselves. They hadn't been circumcised in 40 years.

They were circumcised earlier, but the whole wilderness generation wasn't circumcised when they came. We'll see that in just a moment. If we've been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be together in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be made powerless.

And from now on, we shouldn't serve sin. See, this is a position that not only has happened to us, but we've got to take it by faith. You see, that's the problem with so many people's experience.

Resurrection life comes to who? Dead men only. Dead men only. And I've got to take by faith this position.

Colossians 3.3 says you are dead and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Colossians 3.3. Now, let's just go back to Joshua and finish this and look at this verse 15. And the Lord spoke to Joshua saying, command the priest that bear the ark of the testimony that they come up out of Jordan.

And Joshua therefore commanded the priest saying, come up out of Jordan. And it came to pass from the priest that bore the ark of the covenant will come up out of the midst of Jordan. And the souls of the priests were lifted on the dry land that the waters of the Jordan returned to their places.

And it overflowed the banks as they did before. You talk about a mind blower, you know, the scientists that say, oh, it's just an earthquake that emptied out the river. Well, was it an unearquake when they came up out of the river? You know, and, uh, because when they stepped out, here comes the water again.

It's just like the spigots been cut on and off. It's great. It's really great.

And so we see that, uh, the people came up out of Jordan. Look at verse 19 on the 10th day of the first month. And they camped in Gilgal.

Do you know what that day, the 10th day of the first month is? And I give you a hint. It's an Exodus chapter 12. It's the same day that God says, take a lamb, take a lamb.

And for three days, you examine this. It's the same day that the ark touchdown on Ararat. It's the same.

It's one of those days that God sets aside as holy. It's the beginning of Passover when they take the lamb in their house to examine it. And so they, they came there and they, they were there, uh, on the border of

Jericho.

And they took those 12 stones and set them up for Memorial. And then again, it says that, uh, when your children ask you what happened, you tell them it means you came out and God brought you through, you know, God used these very scriptures right here. I'm just going to read them, uh, in verse 21.

Then he spoke to the children of Israel saying, when your children ask your father in the time to come, what are these stones mean? Then shall you tell your children saying Israel came over Jordan on dry land. It's a miracle for the Lord. Your God dried the waters of Jordan from before you until you were passed over as the Lord, your God did to the red sea, which he dried from in front of us till we were gone over so that the people of the earth, all of them might know that the hand of the Lord, it's mighty.

And you can fear the larger God forever. God gave me that scripture. You know, the, the night that I knew I was to marry Mary Madeline and I knew that God wasn't poor or stingy and I didn't have enough money for diamonds.

I said, Lord, I just, if you want me to give a diamond ring to Mary Madeline, you let me know without any shadow of a doubt. It's 10 o'clock one night, next morning at 10 o'clock, my phone rings and it's this lady in the church. And she says, Al, the Lord woke me up at five o'clock this morning.

And you're going to really think I'm silly, but I'm just trying to obey God. And I don't think I'm silly, please. I'll go over and over.

She said it. I said, lady, just tell me. And she said, well, the Lord told me to ask you, do you need three diamonds that I have? And I wanted to say, oh, you know, I don't need diamonds.

I got a closet full of diamonds, but I just began to rejoice and praise God. You know, that week I taught about six little Bible studies and some honorariums came in and I told my roommate, wouldn't it be something if the setting was exactly what the diamonds, you know, if it was just what it would. I took, I went out looking for the setting, couldn't find anything.

Then I went to get Mary Madeline, let her pick it out. And she found this thing she liked, you know, setting here and the odd one there, modest set. And I sent her out of the store and the man said, this is what it'll cost you.

And it was right down to the dollar, exactly what come in. And I was beginning to tremble. And I, and the Lord took me to this scripture.

When I saw that ring on my wife's, on my fiance's finger. And he says, listen, the day will come that you'll face giants, just like these people are going to face giants. And when, when you're doubting and your children say, Hey dad, what are those stones mean on mommy's finger? You say, it means this, that God brought us into this.

And he, these are, these stones are a reminder that God has brought us clean over into the promises of God. And he that brought us in will never forsake us or leave us. He brought this home to me with such power.

Well, now deeply buried in Jordan, I've died to sin. My whole life's behind me. I'm dead to the world.

I'm dead to the flesh. Some of you here are aching over your past and you can't drop it. You can't forget it.

But let me tell you something. Your Jordan stands between you and your past. It does.

And now I've graduated out of the wilderness by faith. I've got my feet wet. I've dared to touch the waters of death.

And I see, oh, death, there is no sting. They'll part. I'd reach out and slap death in the face and say, I'm not afraid of you anymore.

And he'll, he'll move aside. I'm a, I'm a conqueror, more than a conqueror. And I meant to dislodge the enemy from every place that he is usurping God's authority and God's promise.

And my Jordan stands between me and my past. And I reckon my past is gone. And faith rests upon facts, not on feelings.

The rocks are a picture of that. You can't move rocks in the middle of Jordan. They're out of sight forever.

Not only am I dead to sin, buried in Jordan, but I'm alive to God. There's a new memorial at the place of obedience as the water of the word washes off the rough edges. And I take my place, taking the Passover.

Did you know that right here, they had the third Passover they'd ever had the first one in 40 years. The last one was back in the book of numbers, but they celebrated the Passover and they ate the corn of the new land and, and they celebrated. And when they came into Jordan, when they came into Canaan, all the enemies were expecting them rather than get their fortresses up and their carnal weapons.

You know what they did? They circumcised themselves to the Lord. That's stupid because two men that were Jews had done that back in the book of Genesis to a city of men as a trick. And two men had come in and slain a whole city of men because you just can't swing a sword after you've just been circumcised.

And so here they are facing the most formidable foe in the whole land of Canaan. And to honor God, they say not by power, not by might, but by your spirit, we will trust in the God and the living God we will trust. And we will put our battle in his hands and they circumcised themselves to the Lord.

And we're just like lambs to the slaughter and God kept them back. And until they amended and they ate the Passover and they kept the Passover like we are Christ, our Passover is sacrifice for us. Let us, therefore, keep the feast.

Oh, that's beautiful. So dead to sin, alive to God. That's what we are.

We are alive to God. But see, you got to get your feet wet. It won't roll back that that impossibility.

You're facing a victory that stands between you and victory. You're going to just have to walk right through it. When you get a promise from God, you say, step aside, visible, the invisible is coming through.

You just step right on through it. Forward march. I'm going to possess what Jesus has given to me.

Now you can walk in presumption, but if you don't have a promise from God, but we have a promise from God that I have come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly. I wonder if Israel could say, did I really pass over Jordan? Did I really? I don't feel like it. I don't really feel like a victorious Christian.

Did I really get into the abundant life? You see, that wasn't even a factor. Well, they moved in and the same day as the Passover out of out of Egypt, they stepped up out of Jordan. The very same day they stepped out of Jordan.

They were delivered just like they were delivered from bondage. Now they were delivered from self right wilderness living right into the promised land. And three days later, they ate the lamb and they had the corn and they drank the wine and they celebrated victory at Gilgal, the place of the reproach.

People quit calling Jesus names because of you. You enter a new obedience. That's revival, friends.

Relife coming into a new experience with God. A covenant pillar is set up that says God is faithful. It's a it's a memorial of my death and a memorial of his life.

And and it's it's a permanent reminder of the covenant faithfulness of God. It reminds me of several things of Jesus raised from the dead. God's memorial at the right hand of God, the father.

Today, it's that Hebrew word. It means a memorial that can't be moved. It's there.

And that's what he is raised from the dead. Well, it reminds us of assurance and complete deliverance. It's an Ebenezer.

Remember, look back and remember, and it'll bring you faith. It'll bring faith back. Look back at your life and all the things God's brought you through.

They're Ebenezer's there. Here I lift my Ebenezer safely by the power I've come. Lord, I've come this far by faith, trusting in the Lord.

And you'll never let me down because you brought me this far. What do these stones mean? Look back at your life, at the things he's brought you through, things that you wondered if you'd ever make it. And he brought it through and he set up a memorial to praise him there.

And you can see them back in your life, looking back. And that's meant to let you see that you point to that. It's a sermon in stone.

Lord, you're faithful. You're faithful. And I will praise him for his loving kindness.

And I will give thanks for all the good things. What shall I render for all the benefits toward me? I'll take the cup. The fellowship of his sufferings, being sent as he was sent, fighting his foes, not mine, but it's his power by standing in his victory.

Well, we don't have any more time, but I'll tell you this. In chapter five, fear falls on the enemies of God and his fear falls on them. They have the people of God have a new Passover and they have a new vision.

Joshua is there. Just look at chapter five, verse 13. I got to read that one.

It came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn. Who was that? I'll tell you this. It wasn't an angel because angels don't say, take off your shoes because this is holy ground.

It was that same person that said to Moses, take off your shoes because this is holy ground. They had, there stood a man over against him with a sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went unto him and said to

him, are you for us or are you for our enemies? Are you for us or are you for our enemies? I love the answer of God.

No, I'm not for you. I'm not for your enemies. I've come to take over.

He said, no, but as the captain of the host of the Lord, I've now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, what does my Lord say to his servant? And the captain of the Lord host said to Joshua, loose your shoes from off your feet for the place whereon you're standing is holy. And Joshua did it.

The soldier who fights the best bows the lowest before the Lord. And Joshua bowed and let me tell you, he got on his face. And when he got on his face, when you kneel on your knees before God, you can stand on your feet before any man.

You don't have to bow before any man if you bow before God. And if you read the rest of Joshua, you'll find out that Joshua rose up early in the morning. Joshua rose up early in the morning and he led the people of God into conquest.

And even at the end of the book, they said, there's still more. There's very much land to be possessed. Jesus is infinite.

There's more. I've never had such a hunger as I have now in the next month or two to go on with God. I'll tell you, I want to cut back my schedule and go on with God.

I hope you'll take this and get your feet wet tonight, the last study, and that you will face that thing and and remind you as you face your giants that you enter the Lord's battle, the promised land. That's where he does the fighting and you do the worshiping. Well, the question is, are you willing? Are you willing? Or do you just want to keep on wishing for leeks and onions and garlic cakes and not quite having them? You can't have the world stuff.

You're miserable. You're caught in the middle. And Jesus says tonight, take the death of Christ as your death.

Be delivered from wilderness living and take his death as your death. Get your feet wet by the person. Be strong.

Be very courageous. Meditate in the word of God. Do not be afraid.

Do not be dismayed. Pray. Sanctify yourself.

Face what has seemed impossible, maybe sorrow, maybe fear, maybe grief, maybe an obstacle. And say, I've let you intimidate me long enough. I'm coming through by the power of God.

And walk by faith. Walk by faith and get your feet wet. Obey God.

Reckon, risk and rest. And you will find a new Passover. Well, let's pray.

Father, I know this has been so technical tonight. And for some that are babes, it may have been a stake that has given sore jaws. But I pray that your spirit will apply these words, just like this rain that's falling all around us.

We don't have to have buckets to conserve it. We don't have to have things to make it managed by man. It'll fall and be applied where you want it to be put.

Just like the rain that goes forth or the seed that you scatter, it'll bring forth your thing and your season. And may this word tonight take lodging in good hearts, open, broken hearts that say, Lord, I've come this far by faith. I look back and say, God is faithful.

And so, I'm going to walk on with a fixed heart. And I'm going to get my feet wet. I'm going to walk in the Spirit, in the name of Jesus.

Now, fill me with your abundant life. The old is passed away, buried out of sight, gone. All my sins, all my guilt, all my shame, all my own sorrow is gone by faith.

And I'm starting over at Gilgal, the place of God's obedience. Bind these words to our hearts, Lord. May we talk about them when we lie down, when we're walking, when we're in the way.

May we teach our children. May they find a place in our heart. May we write them like frontlets upon our eyes.

May they be on our lips. And may we meditate in your word day and night. If we do, you've said you'll cause us to prosper in everything we do.

Thank you for your word. As we started off tonight thanking you for your word, we end off tonight thanking you for your word and the Spirit who makes it flesh in our experience as we get our feet wet. Thank you, Yeshua, our captain of the battle of the Lord.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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