

Joshua 3: Passing Over

In Joshua 3:1–17, the Israelites stood at the edge of the Promised Land, preparing to cross the Jordan River after 40 years in the wilderness. This marked a significant transition as they took their first steps toward the land God promised them. The Jordan would have been overflowing during harvest season, making it impossible to cross safely without divine intervention. God instructed the Israelites to follow the ark of the covenant, which represented His presence among them. Just as God had guided and protected His people when they escaped Egypt, He was present with them as they crossed the Jordan. The focus of this passage is not simply the miracle itself, but the assurance that God was with His people as they entered a new and uncertain chapter.

The Israelites' journey reminds us that life often includes seasons of waiting, transition, and adjustment.

- Like the Israelites in the wilderness, we may experience times when we feel lost or uncertain, but God can use these seasons to teach us patience, contentment, and dependence on Him
- We may also find ourselves standing at the edge of something new, feeling both nervous and excited about what lies ahead
- Even after entering a new season, challenges remain, and we must continue to trust God and follow His guidance

No matter where we find ourselves, we can move forward in faith, knowing that we do not have to navigate change alone.

Joshua 3 reminds us of three important truths about God:

1. His presence

- God was present with the Israelites, and through Jesus, we can trust His promise to be with us always (Matthew 28:20)

2. His faithfulness

- God had remained faithful to His promises throughout Israel's history, reminding us that His character does not change and that we can remember His past faithfulness as we face present challenges

3. His glory

- God is described as the living God (Josh. 3:10) and the Lord of all the earth (Josh. 3:13), emphasizing His power, authority, and ability to work in ways beyond our understanding

Whatever season of life we are experiencing, we are called to focus on God, trust His faithfulness, and follow His leading.

Discussion Questions

1. Open up your time together in a word of prayer, asking that the Holy Spirit would be present in your conversations.
2. **Read Joshua 3:1-17.**
 - What stands out to you in this chapter?
 - Are there any questions that this passage raises for you?
3. The crossing of the Jordan echoes the earlier crossing of the Red Sea.
 - Why do you think God gave His people another experience that reminded them of His power and faithfulness?
4. Think about a time when you experienced God's faithfulness in your life.
 - If you are comfortable, share this experience with your group
 - How might remembering that experience strengthen your trust in Him today?
5. In Joshua 3:10, God is described as the "living God," which could also be translated as powerful, mighty, great, or strong God.
 - What does this description tell us about God's character?
 - How should it influence the way we live out our faith?
6. Joshua reminds the Israelites that God will drive out the nations before them as He brings them into the Promised Land.
 - How can remembering God's promises help us persevere when we face challenges?

- How can we distinguish between trusting God's promises and assuming He will give us everything we want?
7. The sermon describes three seasons of life: the desert (waiting), crossing over (change), and having crossed over (adjusting to change)
- Which of these best describes your current season?
 - How are you seeing God working in your life during this season?
8. Sometimes we assume that once we have crossed into a new season of life, the hardest part is over.
- Why is it important to continue trusting and following God after a major transition, rather than only seeking Him when we need help getting through it?
9. The Israelites had to step forward in obedience while the Jordan was still an obstacle.
- Is there an area of your life where you sense God inviting you to take a faithful next step?
 - What makes that step difficult, and what might help you move forward?
10. End your time together by spending some time in prayer, lifting up your requests and praises to God.