

Joshua Chapters 3 and 4

Notes and Questions for Sunday, December 16, 2008

- A few notes from Chapter 2 as background:
 - The 2 spies return to Joshua bearing Rahab's message that "indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us." (2:24 & 2:8)
 - Rahab's message also refers back to the Song of Moses (Ex 15:15-16)
 - This result in direct contrast to the return of the spies in Num 13 who feared (Num 13:31-33) and the whole camp became fainthearted (Num 14:1-3)
 - Rahab's scarlet cord may bring to mind the blood on the doorpost from Exodus 12
- 3:1 uses the term "crossed over." It is used eighteen times in chapters 3 and 4. A point of emphasis!
- Note the central role of the Ark of the Covenant. The ark is mentioned 17 times.
 - What were they to do when they saw it? (3:2)
 - Why do you think they were supposed to keep a distance (2,000 cubits ~ ½ mile) from the ark? (3:2-4)
- Why are the people told to sanctify themselves? (3:5) Are there applications for how we prepare to worship or prepare for God to intervene in our own lives?
- What does God promise Joshua in 3:7? For what purpose does God exalt Joshua?
- What was the reason for the nature of the miraculous crossing at the Jordan? (3:10)
- God is called "Lord of all the earth" in 3:11. This is not a common name for God in the Old Testament. Why do you think it is used in this context? Psalm 114 speaks to God's mastery over the earth itself, specifically in reference to this event.

- Compare to Jesus: “Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey him?” Matt 8:26
- Why does the writer interrupt the story to give a parenthetical on the river conditions in 3:15?
- What is the purpose of the 12 stones in chapter 4?
 - Note that the explanation of the 12 stones is inserted right in the middle of the overall narrative of the crossing. The crossing begins in 3:14 and does not conclude until 4:14.
 - The narrative of the stones is placed right in the middle. 4:1-10, signifying its importance.
- The 12 stones were not only for remembering, but also for teaching children. 4:6-7, 22-24.
- This event, like the Red Sea crossing was so powerful and unique it was memorialized to be remembered for all generations.
 - The death and resurrection of Christ on the cross is the same... “once for all” Heb 10:10
 - How do we memorialize Christ’s death? Do we use that as an occasion for teaching children too?
- The Jordan crossing happened on the 10th day of the first month (4:19), the same day some 40 years later that Israel first prepared to leave Egypt by setting the Passover lamb aside (Ex 12:2-3)
- What was the implication of God’s miracle at the Jordan according to Joshua’s speech in 4:21-24?