

Finishing Well

Lesson #8

4 "Let Us" Statements: Hebrews 4

March 10, 2021

Hebrews: The Supremacy of Jesus Christ

Written to Hebrew believers who had trusted Jesus Christ for their salvation.

Danger in returning to the Temple and Jewish religion to escape increasing persecution

Hebrews' 5 warnings are a unit which build upon one another and intensify until warning #5.

Warning #1: Danger Of Drifting > Because of Neglect > Leads to

Warning #2: Doubting and Disbelieving God's Word > develop hardness of heart

Heb. 3:11, 19 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. [Unbelief about what?]

- God could give them victory IN THE LAND.
- God could give them victory over the enemies.
- God would be faithful to keep and fulfill His promises.

They REFUSED to continue a Life of Faith and enter their inheritance

An entire generation failed to INHERIT what God had promised. [Canaan; Promised Land;

Inheritance] They were safely delivered out of Egypt, but they never TASTED or enjoyed the promised rest in Canaan.

Many Christians have the mistaken idea that salvation - being delivered from the bondage of Egypt - is all that is involved in the Christian life, but our salvation is only the beginning.

Deut. 6:23 He brought us out [justification]...that he might bring us in [sanctification].

Forty years had passed since God had brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moses was dead, but God had not changed His mind regarding "bringing them into The Promised Land."

Joshua 1:9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

God had declared: Canaan was theirs. In Joshua 2:9-11, the 2 spies made an amazing discovery.

- For 40 years, the Canaanites had been a defeated foe since the day they heard about the Red Sea.
- God caused the hearts of the enemies to melt; there was no more courage in the enemy.
- The enemy believed the God of Israel was as competent to get His people in as He was to get them out! They were amazed it took Israel so long to take what God had given them!
- The spies discovered that for 40 years in the wilderness, Israel had been fighting a battle already lost, instead of enjoying in Canaan a victory already won!

Before they can enter Canaan, they must get past one final, major obstacle: the Jordan River.

3 Days of Waiting Before Crossing

Test Their Resolve > To Cross The Jordan and Engage In Battle

Recall: They flunked the test 38 years earlier at Kadesh-barnea to enter and claim their Promised Land - their inheritance. They began walking by sight and not faith.

God Will Test Their Faith By what they SEE.

Normally, in the off-season, at that very spot, the Jordan was 30 yds. wide and only 4-6 ft. deep. BUT now it's the "time of barley harvest" when the Jordan River swells to an impassable width of over 1 mile with swift moving currents. [50x normal width]

There was no way they could cross this river on their own! They needed supernatural help. It seems God always does things in such a way that no man can boast of having done them on their own. This crossing would be no exception.

"2 Let Us" Commands Following The Warning: Enter The Rest

Heb. 4:1 Therefore, Let Us Fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, [Israel's rest in Canaan # 2663 katapausis] any one of you should seem to have come short of it. Come short of it = 5332 = hustereo = "failing to fulfill a goal" = to be *in lack* and hence, unable to meet the need at hand *because depleted* ["all run out"]. This *state of lack* [insufficiency] naturally results when a person misses out on what is vital.

Heb. 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with FAITH in them that heard it.

Heb. 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest [#2663], he also hath ceased [#2664 rested] from his own works, as God did from his.

- Ceased or rested from = #2664 = katapauó = to still, restrain, to cause (one striving to do something) to desist:

Heb. 4:11 Let us therefore be diligent [opposite of drifting] to enter that rest, [2663] [know and EXPERIENCE it for ourselves] lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience [unbelief; like those in the wilderness] [from Amplified]

- Diligent = #4704 spoudázō - make haste; with zeal and eagerness; fully apply oneself; acting *fervently* [speedy commitment] to accomplish all that God assigns through faith ["His inbirthed persuasion"].

Phil. 2:13 [Not in your own strength] for it is God Who is all the while [effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure *and satisfaction and delight*. [from Amplified]

- Disobedience = #543 = apeitheia = particularly obstinate opposition to the divine will: Divine will = enter abundant life; sanctification; conformed to image of Jesus Christ

Heb. 4:12 For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom we must answer. [give account] God gives us something to search out our hearts.

a. The Word of God

- A living, active, sharp, critic. It can cut that callus off where nothing else will.

b. God Himself Heb.4:13; cf. Job 34:21

- For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he sees all his goings."

God's Instructions:

Josh. 1:11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within 3 DAYS ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.

Question: Why were they left to gaze upon it for 3 days, faced with the fact that they had no means of their own for crossing it?

- Was it not to impress Israel more deeply with a realization of their utter helplessness?
- Was it not to shut them up more completely unto Himself?

Isn't that the purpose of God's providential dealings with us?

1. To bring us to the end of our own resources
2. To make us conscious of our own insufficiency
3. Bring us into a situation from which we cannot extricate ourselves
4. Confront us with some obstacle which is insurmountable to human mind and might

Our extreme situations furnish the most suitable opportunity for God to display His power. It is God's way with His people to order His providences that they are "pressed out of measure, above strength", until they are brought to despair of deliverance by their own efforts. Then they discover that death is stamped upon all their members and powers and are brought to acknowledge "we have no might . . . neither know we what to do" [II Chron. 20:12]. Note they at once added, "but our eyes are upon Thee"!

Many Christians say they want holiness and a walk with God but aren't willing to pay the price. They look to cross the Jordan without first dying to self! Many people try to get the godly results of crossing the river without obeying God. They try to cross over the Jordan their way. They forget that the blessing in obtaining what God has promised is in the DOING of what God says to get what is promised! The Jordan is the symbol of death. It is not until we appropriate the solemn truth or learn from painful experience that death is written upon all our natural powers that we are likely to make any real spiritual progress.

Israel had to realize: if they are ever going to cross over Jordan, God must take them across!

<u>Challenge:</u> Cross The Jordan River	Die To Self & Desires of The Flesh
Claim & Posses The Inheritance	Live & Walk According To God's Word

There is a CALL FOR CONSECRATION BEFORE the crossing of the Jordan [symbol of death].
Joshua 3:5 Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify [Consecrate] yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

- Consecrate = *qadash*. It is in the *hithpael* stem which is reflexive and means, "consecrate yourselves for God's use, set yourselves apart, prepare yourselves."

God sanctifies us by His Word and by His Spirit, but He also tells us to sanctify ourselves.

II Corinthians 7:1 - "Having therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Is everything in your life just as the Lord would have it to be?

- Remember, there is forgiveness in confessing our sins to the Lord -

I John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Rom. 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

- Personal responsibility. Spiritual preparation is the vital element.

To experience God's power, protection and deliverance, we **MUST** prepare our hearts and deal with known sin in our life through confession.

- Our right relationship with God brings the power of God on our work and ministry.

Rom. 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

- To BE the conqueror that I am in Christ, I must separate from the wilderness, die to self and consecrate myself to Jesus Christ.

There is a CALL: EXPECT A MIRACLE BEFORE the crossing of the Jordan [symbol of death].
Joshua 3:5b: "for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

- Expect God to work a miracle. They were to be eager, gripped by a sense of wonder.

Israel was not to lose sight of their God who can do the incredible and the humanly impossible.

Vs. 5 Lord was going to do "wonders."

Vs. 10 God said He would "drive out" the enemy.

Vs. 13 God would "roll back" the Jordan — "they shall stand upon a heap."

Consider: When there is a lack of consecration through confession for the defilement of sin along with a commitment to God's purpose for our lives in service or ministry, we hinder the power of God.

- Consecration removes the barrier to God's power, to fellowship & prepare our hearts to receive His grace.
- Consecration builds our faith so we will put our feet in the water, cross over the Jordan & go up against the enemy.

God's Word of Instruction To Possess The Land

- Joshua symbolized Jesus - the Provision of victory
I Cor. 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Ark symbolized Presence and Power of God
- Priests symbolized Purifying work of Sanctification by the Holy Spirit

Joshua's Instructions to the People & Priests

Josh. 3:2-3 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host; 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.

The Preeminent Place of the Ark = Power & Presence of God

Its prominence is stressed in the number of times it is mentioned.

- Joshua 3 = 9x Joshua 4 = 7x

Prominence is stressed by the nature of the commands & statements given in its regard.

A. Watch God

When the Ark was in the Holy of Holies, the glory of God rested upon it as the dwelling place of God. To Israel, it represented God's presence in the midst of His people.

When God moved, they were to move. When God stopped, they were to do the same.

Also Jesus' practice: John 5:19 "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."

B. Follow God - When they saw the Ark of the Covenant move, they were to "leave your place, and go after it" They were to pursue God!

This may require us to leave our comfort zone! Stepping out by faith is not always easy, but it leads to victory in your life and circumstances. If you expect to get past your obstacles and enter your Canaan, you must learn to follow and pursue God.

Paul declared in II Cor. 3:4-5: Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God.

- God Himself was going before them as their source of victory.

Special Instructions to the People

1. They were to follow Joshua who would command them as God's divinely appointed leader.

JOSHUA - Type of Christ = In the Hebrew, his name means = Jehovah the Savior.

Gk. Joshua means = Jesus and is so translated in Heb. 4:8.

This OT Joshua is a symbol of our divine Joshua who is called "the Captain" of the believer's Salvation in Heb. 2:10.

- Joshua is a type of Christ our Conqueror who leads us daily into our Inheritance He has planned for us.
- God's people will BEGIN to experience their POSITION in Christ - when they BEGIN to Cross the Jordan following Christ!
- Obedience to God and His Word means we die to self, in so doing, We EXALT CHRIST!

2. Follow The Ark wherever it leads. We are to "walk in the Spirit."

Gal. 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Gal. 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Joshua 3:4 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.

- Unfamiliar and new ground ahead ➤ They had to trust the leadership of the Lord.

Follow at a space of 2,000 cubits = about 3,000' = 10 football fields - WHY?

- There was to be NO careless intimacy - BUT a profound respect and reverence.

Had they surrounded the Ark, nobody would have known the way.

There would have been only confusion with about 50 sub-committees deliberating the issue.

- Give God room to maneuver in time and space. Don't crowd in on the situation.

Ps. 37:5, 7a Commit thy way unto the LORD, trust also in Him and He will bring it to pass...

- Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him.

- If you are solidly convinced God is the arbiter of your affairs, you will not be anxious.

This is our daily walk. Hurry at your own peril, "for you have not passed this way before."

Special Instructions to PRIESTS Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying,

Joshua 3:6, 8 Take up the Ark of the Covenant and cross over before the people.

So they took up the Ark of the Covenant and went before the people.

You shall command the priests who bear the Ark of the Covenant, saying,

When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.

They were to step out into the water - BEFORE it parted.

Joshua spoke to the Israelites with Words Of Victory. His faith became contagious.

Joshua 3:10-11 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

- You will now live KNOWING that your God is alive, powerful and among you.

Promise For Victory The living God is among you / He is with you!

Power For Victory He will not fail you.

Crossing The Jordan River is a picture of entering into spiritual warfare to claim what God has promised. In claiming our inheritance, we **MUST** see it as a SPIRITUAL battle. This is not a work of the flesh. You cannot look back over your life and say "See what I accomplished! See how much I have gained." This should mean the end of a life lived by human effort and the beginning of a life of faith and obedience.

"2 Let Us" Commands Following The Warning: Enter The Rest

Heb. 4:14-16 Seeing then that we have a Great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, Let Us Hold Fast Our Profession.

¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

¹⁶ Let Us Therefore Come Boldly Unto The Throne Of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Christ Has A Superior Title

Jesus Christ is Greater In His Person: In His unique person, Jesus Christ unites Deity and humanity, so that He can bring people to God and bring to people all that God has for them.

Jesus Christ is Greater In His Position:

When He ascended to the Father, Jesus Christ passed through the atmospheric heavens and the planetary heavens into the third heaven where God dwells [II Cor. 12:2].

Jesus Christ is Greater in His Throne Of Grace

- The mercy seat on the ark of the covenant was God's throne in Israel [Ex. 25:17-22].
- But it could never be called "a throne of grace." Grace does not veil itself from the people. Grace does not hide itself in a tent.
- Every believer in Christ is invited, and encouraged, to "come boldly unto the throne of grace"

Jesus Christ is Greater In His Mercy & Grace

- When an Israelite was tempted, he could not easily run to the high priest for help, and he certainly could not enter the Holy of Holies for God's help.
- As believers in Jesus Christ, we can run to our High Priest at any time, in any circumstance, and find the help that we need.

Because of the superiority of Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest, over Aaron, two important conclusions can be drawn.

1. There is no need in giving up our profession just because we are going through testing and trial [Heb. 4:14]. The word translated "profession" means "confession."
 - Homologia = #3671 = what one professes or confesses

These Hebrew Christians were tempted to give up their confession of faith in Christ and their confidence in Him. It was not a matter of giving up their salvation since salvation through Christ is eternal [Heb. 5:9].

It was a matter of their public confession of faith. By returning to the Old Testament system, they would be telling everyone that they had no faith in Christ [Gal. 2:11-21].

This kind of unbelief would only bring reproach to Christ's name.

- The great purpose of salvation is the glory of God [Eph. 1:6, 12, 14].
- It was the glory of God that so concerned Moses when Israel broke God's law and made the golden calf [Ex. 32]. God offered to destroy the nation and to begin a new one from Moses, but Moses refused the offer.
- Instead, Moses interceded for Israel on the basis of God's glory and God's promise.
- God spared the people, even though He disciplined them for their sin [Ex. 32:11-13].

2. There is no need to go back because we can come boldly into the presence of God and get the help we need. No trial is too great, no temptation is too strong, but that Jesus Christ can give us the mercy and grace that we need, when we need it.

There is no need to drift or doubt because we can boldly into the presence of God and obtain the help we need.

If we fail to hold fast our confession, we are not proving that Jesus Christ has failed. We are showing that we failed to draw on His grace and mercy when it was freely available to us.

Mark 8:34 "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" is Christ's own unchanging demand. To "deny himself" is for a man:

- To abandon all trust in himself
- To disclaim any capability of his own
- To be emptied of self

Only true disciples of the Lord apply for this river crossing.

It is death to self - deliberate decision.