

August 4, 2023

The Lord wants you to live in His liberty and freedom.

**Joshua 3:15-17** *Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (that is the Dead Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground. (NIV)*

This portion of scripture always reminds me to 'go forward by faith.' We must sometimes do the hard things we have been asked to do before we can realize the blessing on the other side of it. The LORD never promises that we will have no trials, but that He will be with us in the midst of them. He certainly was for the Israelites as they began an impossible task. They had camped on the east side of the Jordan to prepare to enter the promised land. It was there that the LORD commanded them to consecrate themselves for the task ahead. Crossing the Jordan River at flood stage was just the first of many faith steps that they would face. They would soon face the most fortified city in the Middle East; Jericho. And then many more "giants" in the land.

And so they prepared themselves in the sight of the LORD. They had to choose. Will we trust the LORD, or our own eyes? The water was rushing way too fast and deep for anyone to cross the river. They would certainly be swept away. The banks of the river were too steep. Once you stepped into the river, you would be swallowed up and dragged down-stream by the current. And herein lies the choice: trust the LORD or themselves. So many times in scripture these choices had to be made. Goliath was too big. The furnace was too hot for Shadach, Meshach, and Agednego to survive it. The army was too numerous for the 300 men of Gideon to overcome. The walls of Jericho were impenetrable. And yet, every time, these people went forward by faith. What would we have done? Joshua and the people made their decision by faith. Even though they couldn't see the victory, they trusted the God that had already given them the victory when they would step out in faith. And so the priests stepped off the bank into the flood waters, carrying the ark of the covenant. And the waters immediately stopped running and walled up to the north for miles. They crossed over (more than a million people) on **dry ground!** Our God is an awesome God!

**Dear LORD, there is nothing too difficult for You! You have all power. You have all knowledge. You are complete love and You show it to Your children. Help us to walk forward by faith, even when we can't see what is ahead. Help us to trust in You. In Jesus Name, Amen**