

Discovery Hour
Week 5, E 100
February 7, 2010
Dave Timmerman

Overview

In the middle of the week we read from Joshua, chapters 1-4. This is the transition to new leadership in the person of Joshua. God repeats the promise to Joshua, the same one that he gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v. 1-5). He also says to Joshua three times in the first chapter, “Be strong and courageous!” The last time he says, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go?” (v. 9). And, we read that as they are taking up Joshua as their leader when they tell him they will follow him they also say, “only be strong and courageous” (v. 18). Joshua tells them that they are to be people of the book: “do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth, meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful” (v. 8). We too are to be strong and courageous as we rely on God’s promise and we too are to be people of the book.

In chapter 3 the people arrive at the Jordan river, and so the threshold to the promise land. Here they are told to camp and to consecrate themselves because God is going to “amazing things among” them (v. 5). The reason for this is so that they “will know that the living God is among” them (v. 10). And so, the command to consecrate themselves. This also occurred prior to their receiving the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19: 10, 14-15). They were to wash themselves, and their clothes, and refrain from sexual relations. As Francis Schaeffer states: “

We must remember throughout our lives that in God’s sight there are no little people and no little places. Only one thing is important: to be consecrated persons in God’s place for us, at each moment.

Finally when they cross the Jordan, God performs the same miracle as during the exodus as the waters of the Jordan “pile up” so that the people may pass through on dry ground. The priests carry the ark into the river and as they do the waters part. God also commands them to take twelve stones from the river and the place them on the bank as a memorial to what has taken place. Thus these chapters have two important concepts for us to consider today: *consecration* and the use of *memorials*.

In the future, when your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever. Joshua 4:6-7

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean for a believer today to consecrate him or herself? Are they always consecrated, given that they have the Holy Spirit inside of them?

2. Do we have any memorials today that are significant to us? Which ones and how are they significant? How important are these? Is there any potential downside to them? Can you have too many?
3. What does it mean for us to be people of the book?