

Proclaiming the Gospel

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

November, 2010

Got A Problem ?

The children of Israel had a land promised to them, a land flowing with milk and honey, a life in the presence of the Lord if they were faithful to serve Him. **But, they were faced with a problem – one swollen out of proportion and overrunning its banks . . .**

How many times have you faced a problem - **one swollen out of proportion and overrunning its banks**, one that seemed larger than you could bear? Perhaps you needed to make a decision; you needed God's guidance in your life, you needed to know His will. Did your heart cry out, "Jesus, lead me through this situation; guide me in the way that I should go!"

God said, “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye” (Ps 32.8). I am reminded of a parent giving instruction to his child with a look, an expression of the eye. That child had to look at the parent and be close enough in relationship to the parent as well as in proximity to see this expression. How often do we find our attention on other things, thoughts, and activities rather than on the Lord! We become insensitive to the voice of the Lord when our eyes are not on Him. Many messages have been preached regarding Peter taking his eyes off Jesus while walking on the water. We can learn from his experience. Our problems cease to exist when we are able to keep our eyes on Jesus.

How do we keep our eyes on Jesus? Time spent with Him in prayer and private worship as well as being with Him in His Word will create within us a source of His strength and His wisdom that is necessary to know His guidance continuously in our lives. He says we are to abide in Him and He in us (Jn 15:1-11).

The children of Israel were faced with a problem – **one swollen out of proportion and overrunning its banks, the Jordan River had to be crossed**. The danger was great; they could not conquer it in their own strength without loss of life. God’s solution, His will, was that they keep their eyes on Him and follow Him.

The Ark of the Covenant, the presence of the Lord, dwelt in the midst of the Children of Israel. We are given a thrilling picture in Joshua, Chapters One

In the flood of the enemy, but you **will** walk in the midst of the water on dry ground.

Brothers and Sisters, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is greater than all the power that Satan can bring against you. "Ye are of God, little

children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I Jn 4,4).

The Lord commanded Joshua to be strong in HIM as He commands you and me also: "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" (Jos 1.9)

Got a problem – one swollen out of proportion and overrunning its banks? Then walk in obedience to the Word of the Lord that is given to us again and again – either in a direct way or through His prophets of old.

And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD... (Ex 14.13).

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Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31)

through Three, of God's care for His children when they trusted Him and followed closely enough to keep their eyes upon Him.

The Israelites were facing major changes in their lives. They had wandered in the wilderness long enough, and God was about to give them their Promised Land. The past was gone, and Moses was dead. God told Joshua, "Arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people..." (Jos 1.2).

God gave Joshua specific instructions and encouraging words for the task ahead (Jos 1.1-9). He promised Joshua, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you..." (Jos 1.3).

He encouraged Joshua to be strong and very courageous, to obey the law, and to meditate on the law day and night. Again, He told him, "...be not afraid, neither be discouraged: for the Lord thy God is with thee withersoever thou goest" (Jos 1.7-9).

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it (Jos 1.10, 11).

The people received their instructions. Preparation was required before the Israelites could follow the Lord across the Jordan. A period of time would lapse before they could move on, a time of remaining where they were. But during this time, they were to prepare food for the journey. The Israelites came to Jordan and sat there for three days. There probably was a lot of impatience in the camp, but to move on without the presence of the Lord, the Ark, would have meant disaster. Notice how the Lord leads His people (Chapter Three) after they have spent three days waiting on His timing and preparing food for the journey, and sanctifying themselves in obedience to God's instructions.

The Ark was in the camp with them; it was God's power on their behalf, and it was His guidance. They were to keep their eyes centered on Him. Why? "...that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore" (Jos 3.4). They were about to experience the Lord's guidance and His power; they would see the presence of the Lord step into the problem. When the Ark began to move, God's people were to move carefully – keeping the Ark in sight. Only then could they experience the guidance of the Holy Spirit taking them a way in which they never before had traveled.

Notice the instructions to and actions of the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant. They were to go before the Children of Israel and follow these instructions: "when ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan" (Jos 3.8). The presence of the Lord went *into* the problem **before** the Israelites and by this would they know He would drive the enemy out from before them.

And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *[that]* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off *[from]* the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap (Jos 3:13).

Interesting words are used in these verses: stand still (v 8), rest (v 13), dipped in the brim of the water (v 15), stood firm on dry ground (v 17).

Notice the presence of the Lord went before the people and stood still in the midst of the problem (v 8). As soon as the Ark, carried by the priests, rested in the waters of the Jordan, the waters "stood upon an heap" (v 13). The words, "were dipped in the brim of the water," refers to the feet of the priests standing upon the edge – where the presence of the Lord rested and caused the waters to roll upon a heap. In verse 17, we find that the priests stood firm on dry ground while the people passed over.

This is a powerful portion of Israel's history, but how does it apply to your personal life in Christ Jesus?

I ask you again, Do you have a problem swollen out of proportion and overrunning its banks – one impossible for you to handle?

The apostle Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3.14), indicating that God's people are called to a "high calling," a close position in our relationship with Jesus. We have a "promised land" given to us.

New territory awaits us in our experiences with the Lord. It is time to grow in love, trust, and surrender to the Lord. We are called to abide in Him and He in us which will enable us to see His eye and know His guidance – a position strong against the enemy.

As we abide in Him, He says to us, as to Joshua, that every place the soles of our feet tread upon, He gives to us. The enemy is defeated as we, through Jesus Christ tread down Satan's obstacles meant to hinder us.

We face difficulties through which we must pass, problems and decisions which require our knowing God's will and leadership.

When we are sitting still, waiting on God's timing (usually impatiently) nothing seems to be happening, but this is a time of preparation. Like the Children of Israel, we must prepare food; we must be in the Word, prayer, and worship so that we are not caught spiritually depleted when our strength is tested. We must become saturated with the Holy Spirit as we feast on the Lord Jesus Christ. Like the Israelites, we must be close enough to see His movements and follow Him.

Know that He actually steps **INTO** the problem ahead of you; His feet **STAND STILL** and **REST IN** the problem. When you see His presence standing and resting in the situation, you can walk through it "on dry ground."

His presence in any situation is the power of the Holy Spirit to defeat the enemy; it is His guidance, the "go ahead," if you will. You will not drown