



Session 3 | Joshua is Encouraged as He Takes the Lead | Joshua 1:10-18

Transition in leadership is not an easy in any field of endeavor. Imagine following in the footsteps of a leader who had nurtured and guided you for over forty years, and then moving two-million plus people into a new land. That was Joshua's task. At this point in the narrative Joshua may be in his 60's or 70's. He is not a novice; he is tried and tested. He had experience, and the discipline needed to get the job done. But still, he needed encouragement to press on.

Verses 10,11—

Joshua has been given the charge, three times, by the LORD to “Be strong and of a good courage.” Why did he need those encouraging words from the LORD? His first command tells us the answer. **Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people..., within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land....** We don't have any proof in the Scripture, but Jewish tradition says that Joshua gave this command to the people on the very same day that the traditional 30-day mourning period over Moses' death was concluded (Deuteronomy 34:8,9). During the days of mourning, their progress into the Promised Land was halted. They could see the Land before them, most likely for thirty days the anticipation had been high, even in the midst of their mourning. Now they have three days to get food for the journey ready, it's time to go!

Three days in Scripture seems to follow a pattern or parallel of preparation. For example, on the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place from afar where he would be instructed to offer up his son (Genesis 22:4). Jonah was three days in the belly of the fish (Jonah 1:17). Jesus rose from the grave on the third day (Matthew 12:40; John 2:19), Saul/Paul was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink (Acts 9:9), etc. **Three days** seems to imply intense introspection and spiritual reflection in preparation for an even that is transformative. In our passage, the people have three days to reflect on the previous forty-years of wandering in the desert. But the big event now is the crossing of the Jordan river into the Promised Land.

Verses 12-18

You will recall that this two-million plus mass of people are made up of various families descended from Jacob (Jacob's name was changed to Israel). Recall also that Jacob had twelve sons (see the list in Exodus 1:2-6). All of these sons (now families) are going to inherit a part of the Promised Land they are about to enter. Levi will not have an inheritance, and neither will Joseph. However, Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh will (Just keep all this in mind as we will study this later).

In verse 12 Joshua is speaking specifically to three of these *tribes*, the **Reubenites** (Reuben), **Gadites** (Gad), and **half the tribe of Manasseh**. These tribes had requested from Moses that they NOT go into the Land, but rather they be allowed to keep the land on the east of the Jordan river (Numbers 32:1-5). But Moses said to them, wait a minute, you mean *your brethren shall go to war, and you shall just sit here?* (Numbers 32:6). But the **Reubenites** and the **Gadites** said to Moses, No! *We ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, then once all Israel is safely in the Land, we will return to our inheritance on the east side of the Jordan.* Moses agreed to their request (Numbers 32:17-22)

Joshua is now reminding them of their promise to go over the Jordan, **armed** and ready to fight.

They replied to Joshua, **as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee.** And they give Joshua encouragement: **Only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.** It is interesting Moses' name is mentioned eighteen times in this chapter. He was certainly a shadow looming over Joshua. But the tribes were telling Joshua, it's going to be okay. Maybe they were expressing “*Moses is dead and you can't be Moses, but you can be Joshua! Be who you are only be strong and of a good courage!*”

We all need encouragement; we all need to be *edified*. The word edify in Greek is *oikos*. It is usually used in the New Testament as *oikodoms*. *Oikos* means *house*, and *domos*, we get words like dome or domesticate. *oikos* can mean *to build (or roof)*, so, to build a house.

Simply put, it means to tell someone to *be strong and of a good courage*. The apostle Paul instructs to “Follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may *edify* (oikodome) another.” Paul also instructs, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of *edifying* (oikodome), that may minister grace unto the hearers.”

Joshua needed edifying, because in three days it was all going down! For you and me, it is going down every day in our world and we all need to be built up; In your own home, how can you edify your family? In your church, how can you edify your pastor and fellow members of the body of Christ? How can you *oikodome* someone today?

Let's be encouraged today to lead those around us to be built up upon the Savior as we conclude with hymn #525 from our church hymnal, A Christian Home.

