

JOSHUA 3:1-6

14 FEBRUARY 2021

ICE BREAKER: Describe something you own that you would never sell.

GROUP QUESTIONS:

(Read verses 1-3) For the Israelites, it's taken 40 years to arrive to this moment. All the preparations was complete for the long-awaited conquest of Canaan, the Promise Land. God had already revealed His will that they would conquer Canaan. The spies had returned with favorable news. The Canaanites were gripped with fear and ripe for conquest, confirming God's promise of military success for the Israelites.

Yet, after starting early in the morning and marching to the Jordan River, the Israelites are called not to immediately cross over, but to wait. They were called to wait for three days, staring at the raging Jordan River.

1. How has **God** ever **called you to wait for a blessing** you felt **God had already prepared for you**?

(Read verses 2-3) The main character of this chapter is the **Ark of the Covenant**. The Ark is mentioned ten times by name and referenced multiple other times. Some think the uniqueness of the New Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ is its revelation of God's **immanence**, that **God is with us, Immanuel**.

Actually, the **Doctrine of Immanence** is revealed right here with the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark represented **the very presence of God with them**. For the Israelites, the Ark answered the questions of 'Where is God?', and, 'Is God for us or against us?' How did the Israelites know the Sovereign God of the Universe was with them in their life journey? They could just look with their own eyes and see the Ark.

2. What **visible markers** has God put in your life to remind you that **God is with you and for you**?

(Read verses 2-4) The Ark of the Covenant also spoke of the **absolute and perfect holiness of God**. Although the Ark was a visible reminder that God was with them, the Israelites were ordered to '**keep a distance** of about a thousand yards' from it, a distance of ten football fields!

Why? Because although God was with them and for them, He was not to be treated like them. He was all-powerful, all-knowing, and awesome in holiness. To approach this holy God without due reverence, awe and permission would be **fatal**.

3. What helps you grasp the **awesome holiness of Almighty God**?

(Read verse 5) Joshua commanded the Israelites to '**consecrate yourselves**'. Consecrate comes from the root word to be **holy, sacred**, and **separate from** what is **common** or **unclean**. The Israelites had to wash themselves and their clothing with water and practice ceremonial rites that would render them clean.

The Israelites would know that if they were to enter Canaan, **the Holy Land**, they would **first** have to **commit to be a holy people**. If we are to go on to receive God's blessings, our promised inheritance from God, we must first, before all else, commit ourselves to be a holy people, a people committed to **live a holy and uncommon life**. There is to be a distance, ten football fields of separation, of the moral quality of our lives from those around us.

4. What **area** in your life is God challenging you to **make holy, visibly distancing yourself** from the world?

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE & USE PRAYER LIST AS BIBLE BOOK MARKER

PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those in your group plan to share Christ with this week.)
