

Title: Sanctified for a Holy Use

Text: Joshua 3: 7-4: 24

Date: September 15, 2018

Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Proposition: The preeminent purpose of God in sanctification is to magnify Christ in the heart of his people so that we will fear God our Savior and follow him in faith to be used to preach the gospel of Christ.

Joshua 3: 7: And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify THEE in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

Joshua is type of Christ. His name means Savior. Moses could not take the children of Israel into Canaan because Moses represents the law. And no sinner can be justified by the law of Moses. Christ alone fulfilled the law; Christ alone is the Righteousness of his people and his righteousness is imputed to us through faith alone; Christ alone brings the elect of God into God's presence, into the promised inheritance of his people. That is what we are about to see and seeing Christ accomplish our salvation is how God gives us a new heart of reverence for Christ and faith in Christ.

I. GOD MAGNIFES CHRIST IN THE HEART OF HIS CHILD BY SHOWING US WHAT CHRIST ACCOMPLISHED ON BEHALF OF HIS PEOPLE. (As we read this, focus your attention on the Ark; the Ark also typifies Christ). **Joshua 3: 8: And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.** [picture Christ faithfully enduring the cross] **9: And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God. 10: And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.**

The River of Sin and Death

The Jordan River represents our death in trespasses and in sins, these enemy nations represent all our enemies, which separated us from our God. The Jordan River separated the children of Israel from the promised land. God brought them to the Jordan at this time of year because this was when the river was overflowing its banks. Left to themselves, there was no way they could cross.

Do you see the picture? "Your iniquities [your overflowing river of sin, your overflowing river of death] have SEPARATED BETWEEN you and your God." (Is 59: 2) Our enemies are too many, too mighty for us.

Christ Pictured in the Ark

How then can a helpless sinner cross the overflowing river of sin and death, defeat all our enemies and come into communion with God into his promised land? Here is how, "the living God *is* among you, and he will without fail drive out from before you" all your enemies. How so? Here is how? Here is how, "Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over BEFORE you into Jordan."

Christ is pictured in the Ark, going before those he will deliver, into the overflowing river of death. Christ put away all the sin of God's elect and defeated all the enemies of his people by enduring the cross in place of his people. Christ took our flesh; Christ took our sin; Christ took our punishment; Christ took our death, standing still in the River of death, til it was dried up. Let's see it pictured in our text.

Joshua 3: 13: 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. [a mound] 14: And it came to pass, [if God says it, it always does come to pass] when the people removed from their tents, to pass over

Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; 15: And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) 16: That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon an heap very far, [upstream] from [at] the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those [waters] that came down toward the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea, [the Dead Sea where Sodom and Gomorra once were] failed, *and* were cut off:...

Adam's Transgression Finished

The city of Adam was 20 miles upstream. These cities—Adam and Zaretan—were about 12 miles apart. They were beside each other at the same latitude: the city called Adam was on the east side, the wilderness side of the Jordan River; Zaretan was on the west bank. When they stepped into that river a dry channel of about 20 miles appeared for the children of Israel to cross.

Habakkuk 3: 8: Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation?... 13: Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed;

Oh how wise and powerful our God is, brethren! He brings them to this place where there was a city called, Adam. And by the priest bearing the ark stepping into the river of death, the waters as far back up stream to the city of Adam were cut off.

Remember Daniel 9:24 said Christ would “finish the transgression, and make an end of sins.” All Christ's people were represented in the first man, Adam, and by Adam's ONE TRANSGRESSION—the transgression—death flowed like an overflowing river downstream through generation after generation drowning all God's elect people in sin and death. But by Christ the last Adam, stepping into that river in place of his people—he made an end of the transgression for his people all the way back upstream to our first representative Adam. That is what is pictured here.

The Work Finished

Drop down to: **Joshua 4: 10: For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was FINISHED that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua:**

Christ remained on the cross until every thing was finished that the LORD commanded him AND until everything was finished that Moses commanded him, that is, until everything was finished that the law commanded of him. Christ hung on Calvary's tree with the sin of his people upon him bearing the wrath of infinite justice in place of his people until everything God commanded and everything the law commanded was totally FINISHED!

And when Christ finished the work and was buried, right then, the fleshly, sinful man of each of his elect died and was buried so that our body of sin is destroyed.

Romans 6: 6:...our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed,...

Romans 7: 4: Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ;...**6:** But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held;

The Ark Came Out of the River of Death

It gets even better! When Christ was raised from the dead every elect child of God passed over the river of death in him and entered into God's presence in the promised land in our risen Redeemer—**Joshua 3: 16:...and the people passed over right against Jericho. 17: And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood**

firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan [drop down to] Joshua 4: 11: And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PEOPLE [notice: the ark and the people passed over together.]....15: And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, 16: Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan. 17: Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.

The LORD commanded and Joshua commanded—at both God the Father’s command and at Christ the Son’s own command, Christ our High Priest arose out of death, out of the grave. When Christ arose to the right hand of the Father all his elect arose in him.

Colossians 2: 12:...wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Question: once they were passed over that river, the river began flowing again, but was that flowing river a threat to them any longer now that they were on the other side? No. Believer, sin and death has no more dominion over you because we are risen with Christ to the other side! You have no reason to worry anymore about that river of sin and death.

Romans 6: 9: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our Old Man and New Man

How can I be sure? Notice this in **Joshua 4: 9: Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day....4: 20: And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.**

Did you see the picture? Believers are called “lively stones.” (1 Pet 2: 5) Twelve stones lay buried in the river of death where they are to this day. Those stones picture our old man of flesh, “For ye are dead.” (Col 3: 3) But the twelve stones which were set on the other side of Jordan, picture our new man, “and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (Col 3: 3)

Right now, believer, in the mind and all-seeing eye of God, your old man of sin is dead and gone while your new man has eternal life—“Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.” (2 Cor 5: 17) Christ said, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (Jn 11: 25-26)

Reproach Rolled Away

Can it get any better? Yes indeed. Now look at this: once on the other side **Joshua 4: 19: And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho.**

They “encamped in Gilgal”—it means “a rolling away”.

Joshua 5:9: And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

When God raised Christ, and his people in Christ, he “rolled away” the reproach of our sin off Christ—and likewise the reproach of all our trespasses, along with the law which was against us—all is rolled away.

Colossians 2: 13: And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Believer, everything that was against us is rolled away—taken out of the way—everything!

Hebrews 10: 16: This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17: And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18: Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

Romans 8: 1: *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Hebrews 9:28: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Christ Magnified in Our Sight

Do you remember at the beginning why God said he was doing all this in our sight?—**Joshua 4: 14: On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.**

Beholding, Christ crucified in our room and stead, accomplishing complete redemption for us, is how God puts his fear—good fear—into our hearts, (pictured in their new fear of Joshua). This new Godly reverence for Christ replaces that legal fear we once had toward the law (pictured in their fear of Moses.)

Romans 8: 15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

II. SECONDLY AND LASTLY, GOD SANCTIFIES US TO USE US FOR THE HOLY USE OF DECLARING THIS GOSPEL FOR THE CALLING OUT OF HIS LOST SHEEP IN THIS EARTH—

Joshua 4: 1: And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, 2: Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, 3: And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night. 4: Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: [and they did as he commanded]

Called Out of the River of Death

God commanded twelve men be called so Joshua did it; God commands and Christ accomplishes all that God demands. These 12 men were called “out of the people, out of every tribe.”, “according to the number of the tribes of Israel.” (v5) It signifies that each elect child whom Christ redeemed shall be called to life, sanctified out of the people, into Christ.

These twelve men gathered twelve stones from the river of death from the place where the priest's feet stood firm. Christ called twelve apostles and by them “standing firm” in the gospel, Christ called more of his elect out of the river of death, and continues unto this day, calling and building up his “lively stones” out of “every tribe,” kindred, tongue and people on earth. They left those twelve stones “in the lodging place.” Christ has left us in his church which is our “lodging place” just for the night, until Christ returns. Those 12 men were men “whom he had prepared.” Every blood bought, Spirit born child of God, is a child whom Christ has prepared.

Called to Call Others

What was the purpose of these stones? Believer, what is our purpose? **Joshua 4: 6: ...that this may be a sign among you, ...7: ...these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.**

Believers, as living stones, are “signs”, miracles of God’s grace, for “a memorial” to the children of Israel, to those called and those of God’s elect whom Christ shall yet call.

Do you realize a believer is a standing witness of Christ just by the simple fact that we now believe on Christ. That in itself is a wonder and sign memorializing our great Savior.

Our Message

What are we to declare as we bear witness? **Joshua 4: 22: Then ye shall let your children know, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. 23: FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over:**

We are only to declare what God our Savior has accomplished for his elect. We have nothing to boast of because all we contributed was sin. We are to go forth speaking of God’s works not our own.

Deuteronomy 3:24: O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

Prepared for War

We shall meet with enemies but we are well armed for this warfare—**Joshua 4: 13: About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.**

Forty thousand was a remnant compared to the number of enemies they faced and so it is with us. Yet, we are a remnant armed, prepared for war—but “the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.”

Brethren, the work he has already finished for us is guarantee to us that he shall make us victorious against any enemy we face. Remember, Joshua 3: 10-11: “And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you [all your enemies]. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.” Because God gave his Son and his Son went into the river of death on our behalf on the cross, God will with him give us all things and “we are more than conquerors through him that loved us!” (Rom 8: 32; 37)

A Two-Fold End

This work he has separated us unto works a two-fold end.

First, it is to make all people to know who our great God is—**Joshua 4: 24: That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty.** No matter if men hear and bow or if they hear and reject us, “all the people” shall know “the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty.” Our gospel is either a savour of death or of life. (2 Cor 2: 16) All men shall know either by the grace of God or in the day of judgment.

Secondly, this gospel God has graciously entrusted into our hands is not only for the benefit of others whom he shall call but it is for our own benefit as we declare it to others—**Joshua 4: 24: ...that YE might FEAR the LORD your God for ever.**

Imagine fighting a warfare in which they you defeated your enemies was by eating good bread. So that not only are your enemies defeated but also you are edified by the bread yourself. That is what happens as we go forth with the gospel. This is how God sanctifies Christ in the hearts of his people and makes Christ All unto us. I pray he do so for those who do not yet know him.

Did you notice the ark came behind the last one to come across the Jordan? This is how he shall continue to sanctify Christ in our hearts until the last one has safely reached our promised Canaan. Was there one lost? One left in the wilderness? Not one! So it shall be!

Amen!