

Then Joshua told the people, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do great wonders among you." - Joshua 3:5 NLT

What is God's role- He is working wonders, things beyond our understanding, things we deem impossible. Because for us they are impossible, but not for God.

In Joshua 3:5 the Lord tells the people to purify themselves. Would God be unable to work wonders if the people were not consecrated. No. But would the people be able to participate in those wonders? What happened when Achan stole loot from Jericho that God said to destroy? Read Joshua chapter 7 for the full story.

Israel was defeated in battle, and everyone suffered until Achan and his family were destroyed along with what he had stolen. Then Israel was consecrated once again and poised to participate in God's victory.

What does Achan's story teach us about obedience and the effect of our sin on those around us? Do you feel there is anything holding you back from experiencing the great things God wants for you? Spend a moment in silent prayer asking God to reveal any hinderances that you need remove.

WRAP-UP

God is ready to do great things and we are invited to be a part of that. God commands us to be strong and courageous by recognizing He is with us and He is the one in control, not us. We must set aside sin and selfish desires to purify ourselves for the Promised Land. And we need to find our rest and freedom in the presence of God in Jesus.

PRAYER

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

MEMORY VERSE

This is my command--be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." - Joshua 1:9 NLT

Challenge – Ask God for His vision of your Promised Land.

Get Ready for Great Things

Great Things #1

INTRODUCTION

Seasons are changing, and we feel the shift from summer to fall – from beach days to football games, maybe pumpkin spice lattes soon. Excitement's building, like something's coming. This week, we're exploring Joshua's story. Israel moving from the wilderness to the Promised Land, anticipating that God would do great things. You might sense big things coming too, especially after 50+ baptisms at New Life last week. Let's learn some lessons from Joshua. How do we prepare for the great things God has planned? Just like Israel got ready to move to the Promised Land, let's gear up for the amazing things ahead.

Ice Breaker

Thinking about changing seasons and new beginnings, what's one thing you're looking forward to or anticipating in your own life right now?

Key Passage

Then Joshua told the people, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do great wonders among you." - Joshua 3:5 NLT

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Promised Land

2 "Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. 3 I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you-- - Joshua 1:2-3 NLT.

Forty years after the Israelites left the slavery of Egypt they arrived at the Promised Land. This was a literal, physical place across the Jordan

River. They had only heard about it and dreamed about it, but they had never seen it for themselves.

13 "Remember what Moses, the servant of the LORD, commanded you: 'The LORD your God is giving you a place of rest. He has given you this land.' - Joshua 1:13 NLT

28 Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. - Matthew 11:28 NLT

What did Joshua want the people to remember about the land (verse 13)? Why did the Israelites need rest? What are the things in our lives that we need rest from? Where do we find our rest (Mat 11:28)?

The Promised Land was also a place where God's people would be consecrated, or distinct and set apart. When God first promised the land to Abram it meant that he had to leave behind the familiar things that had defined him and instead, trust and follow God.

1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. 2 I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. - Genesis 12:1-2 NLT

9 But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. - 1 Peter 2:9 NLT

Each of us has things we leave behind to follow God. What sorts of things did you separate yourself from when you decided to follow Jesus? We are different from those who don't know God and because of this we have something to offer to others. What are some practical ways you can show the goodness of God to those still in darkness?

Maybe you are having a hard time leaving behind what was previously your "Promised Land". What things have you set your heart on as your end goal in life? If it is anything less than God's calling and His Kingdom, then you'll fall short of the true goal. If we live for success, relationships, pleasure, wealth, or power then we will find ourselves stuck in the wilderness, unsatisfied and wanting more. God has so much more for us than the world can offer. Set your sites on things above not on earthly things (Col 3:2). That is where you will find God's peace and your true Promised Land.

2. Our Role - Strong, Courageous, and Consecrated

6 "Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them.

7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. ...

*9 This is my command--**be strong and courageous!** Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." - Joshua 1:6-7, 9 NLT*

God didn't just suggest, he commanded Joshua to be strong and courageous.

Each time God said "Be strong and courageous" he also gave Joshua an encouragement. In what ways did He encourage Joshua in each verse above?

So how do we become strong and courageous? They key is found in Joshua 1:9." For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." How does God's presence give you strength and courage? If we are not feeling courageous then we are likely fearful, anxious, or troubled. What does Phil 4:6-7 give us as the antidote?

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. - Philippians 4:6-7 NIV

Part of finding our Promised Land is living in the peace of God. If you are without God's peace, you aren't in the Promised Land yet. But there is good news, that peace is found in Jesus.

3. God's Role – Great Things

"This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: All this may seem impossible to you now, a small remnant of God's people. But is it impossible for me? says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. - Zechariah 8:6 NLT