

1. Following God's Presence in 2022

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After God delivered the Israelites from the Egyptian slavery, His Presence travelled with them in the wilderness. He led them by a pillar of cloud by day, and gave them light through a pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21).

Our world has also become a “wilderness”, and there is now a strong need for us to follow God's Presence and be led by His Spirit so we can live in God's perfect will and be kept safe and secure in our salvation.

Joshua 3:1–4 (NKJV) *Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over. 2 So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; 3 and they commanded the people, saying, “**When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.** 4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, **that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before.**”*

- After Moses' death, Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land
- They had wandered in the Wilderness of Shur for 40 years
- Now, they are crossing the Jordan river to take possession of the land
- This was the biggest day of their entire lives
- Up to this point in their lives, they had only heard about the Promised Land
- None of them had ever been this far (with the exception of a few spies)
- Joshua instructed the priests to carry the ark of the covenant and lead the way

Verse 3 ... *When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and **go after it.***

- The ark of the covenant represented the Presence of God
- Joshua said: When you see:
 - The ark of the covenant (God's presence)
 - The priests carrying it
- You shall go after it (follow the leaders and follow God's Presence!)

Verse 4 (Msg) *Make sure you keep a proper distance between you and it, about half a mile—be sure now to keep your distance!—and you'll see clearly the route to take. **You've never been on this road before.***

- Follow God's Presence, but *keep a proper distance between you and it*

We have to find the proper balance between following the God's presence closely, but not get so close as to become familiar and lose reverence for God.

- If you keep a proper distance - *you'll see clearly the route to take*
- ***You've never been on this road before***

As we cross over into year 2022, we have never been this way before!

- Obviously, we have crossed over into previous new years
- But we have never entered into a New Year before such as 2022, with such a prevalent, advanced system of deception and fraud all around us

Matthew 24:22–26 (NKJV) *And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. **23** "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' **do not believe it.** **24** For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders **to deceive, if possible, even the elect.** **25** See, I have told you beforehand. **26** "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' **do not believe it.***

- We live in a climate and in an environment of great deception
- Jesus said that in the end times even the elect would be deceived unless those days would be shortened (limited in numbers)
- Many of the reports we hear today from a corrupt mainstream media and from crooked governments we simply should not believe

Hebrews 11:22 (NKJV) *By faith Joseph, when he was dying, **made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.***

- Joseph was a man of faith
- He knew about the exodus of his people from Egypt some 400 years before it happened

Exodus 13:19 (NKJV) *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he (Joseph) had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."*

In the end, all the "evidence" that the Promised Land belonged to the Israelites was the word of God concerning the Promised Land.

- God had spoken to Abraham, Isaac & Jacob saying that He would give Canaan to them and their descendants as their possession
- God repeated that promise to Moses at the Burning Bush

"God, how do we know that You have given us the Promised Land?"

- Because My Word says so – I have given you My promise!
- And because My Presence is going with you!
- And notably, your leader is a man of faith (he carries a bag of bones)

Joshua 3:5–6 (AMP) *And Joshua said to the people, **sanctify yourselves [that is, separate yourselves for a special holy purpose]**, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. **6** Joshua said to the priests, take up the ark of the covenant and pass over before the people. And they took it up and went on before the people.*

- Sanctify yourselves – consecrate and *separate yourselves for a special holy purpose*
- God did a wonder among the people by stopping the Jordan river, long enough for all the Israelites to pass over on a dry river bed
- **If we want to see the Lord do wonders in our land in 2022, we also need sanctify ourselves**
- Notably, God called the leaders to cross over first
- Men, you are the leaders in your family – you need to cross over before your family
- You need to carry the Presence of God so your family can follow you

1 Timothy 2:8 (GNB) *In every church service **I want the men to pray**, men who are dedicated to God and can lift up their hands in prayer without anger or argument.*