

Sabbath School Lesson #3 – Memorials of Grace – 11-17 October 2025

Christ would have us have memories of grace, as did the Israelites: “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: That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever” (Joshua 4:23-24). Even today as we journey in our spiritual walk, the Lord is drying up the waters before us that we may have memories of grace. To see these graces, we are asked, “Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you” (Joshua 3:5). The Lord is ever ready to do wonders with His people. All that is needed is that the people sanctify themselves, cut themselves loose, and set themselves apart from the world, and all that is of it, that God may have full possession.

Sunday: Crossing the Jordan – Read Joshua 3:1-5; what do we learn from directions given to the Israelites? When the officers were preparing the people for the great movement that was to take them into the promised land, they said to them: “When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure; come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go; for ye have not passed this way heretofore.” That, “not passed this way” before is the secret of Christian progress: always treading a path hitherto untrodden. We must never assume that past experience is sufficient to carry us through any work without special, divine guidance, however familiar with the affair we may consider ourselves. “It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jeremiah 10:23), no matter how often he has passed over a road. “The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord,” and only the Lord can keep him from falling in the plainest path. So each day’s task, though it may be but the repetition of the same thing that we have done hundreds of times, must be met as an entirely new thing. In that way continual improvement may be made in our work; and that is what God would have. God promises to show us “new things;” for the work that we best know how to do, He knows how to do far better; and therefore there is always the possibility for not to do far more and far better work than we ever yet have done. With God all things are possible, and therefore in Him even the impossible is possible for us. With our eyes fixed on God, we have but to step boldly into the raging flood that threatens to stop our progress, and God will make the way. “It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.” “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6). There is nothing so simple but that it needs the wisdom of God to understand it thoroughly; nothing so small but that God’s own power is needed in order that it be done properly. The adage that ‘experience is the best teach’ is not true. Take the experiences of the children of Israel. What do they teach us? – when they trusted the Lord it went well with them, and when they assumed that they knew how to do things themselves they made pitiable mistakes. That which all our experience should teach us is that “power belongeth unto God” (Psalm 62:11) – only in His is success.

Monday: The Living God of Wonders – Read Joshua 3:6-17; what lesson do we learn of the trust in God of wonders that the Israelites had crossing Jordan? The river Jordan was rolled between the Israelites and the land to which they were to go with all their flocks and little ones. The river was at its height, overflowing all its banks, and there were no bridges; but the same God who had brought His people through the Red Sea was still leading them, and He was as able as ever to do wonders. All the people took their places according to the Lord’s directions, the priests bearing the ark being about a thousand paces in advance of the host. Onward they marched toward the river, whose flood still kept on its way. To the very brink of the stream they came, yet the waters receded not an inch. But this people had learned to trust the Lord, and, as He had told them to go on, they hesitated not for an instant. Into the water they went, although they knew that it was so deep that it could not possibly be forded, and swift enough to carry them away. They had nothing to do with considering difficulties; their part was to obey the Lord and go forward, and His to make the way. Ponder the account in verses 14-17. What a display of faith and trust in God! The bed of the Jordan

was dry, it is true, for the people to pass over, but on the right hand was a wall of water, piling still higher and higher, with no visible support. Picture to yourself that mighty heap of water, apparently threatening to overwhelm the people, and you can better appreciate the faith of those who calmly passed over before it. All the time of the passage the priests stood calm and unmoved in the midst of the river bed, and the people marched over without breaking ranks. There was no unseemly scramble to get over quickly, lest the waters should come down upon them; for "he that believeth shall not make haste" (Isaiah 28:16).

Tuesday: Remember – Read Joshua 4; why did God ask the Israelites to build a memorial? So that they could teach their children and the next generation, and thus the memory of God leading them would be kept in their minds. It was for the same reason that ashes were kept. Much of the typical service was directed by the Lord in a way, to arouse a spirit of inquiry in the minds of the young, so that they themselves would ask for information. The Passover was planned so that the children would say, "What mean ye by this service?" (Exodus 12:26). The twelve stones were piled up on the banks of Jordan as a "sign" to attract the attention of the children, so that in answer to their question, "What mean ye by, these stones?" they might be taught of the time when God stayed the floods of Jordan before the hosts of Israel. If the curiosity of the child is aroused and he himself makes the inquiry, the lesson is more forcibly impressed upon his mind. It would seem that for this reason God had the ashes of the sacrifice at first placed on the east of the altar, where they would be so conspicuous that every child entering the court could not fail to see and ask, "What mean ye by these ashes?" and then he would be taught by the parent the wonderful truth that all sin would be finally burned to ashes in the fires of the last day (Malachi 4:1-3).

Wednesday: Forgetfulness – Read Joshua 4:20-24 in light of Judges 3:7; 8:34; Psalm 78:11; 45:17; Deuteronomy 8:2, 18; what lesson do we learn about how quickly the people forgot the mighty deeds of the Lord? Although Israel saw God's "wonderful works," "they soon forgot His works," "and His wonders that He had showed them" (Psalm 78:4-11; 106:13); therefore they did not know His ways. We have no grounds on which to accuse the Israelites, for we are equally guilty with them. We have all seen the wonderful works of the Lord, and yet have remained in ignorance of God's ways. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious; and His righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered," or, more literally, "He hath made a memorial for His wonderful works" (Psalm 106:2-4). God's works are all about us, and they reveal Him to us. "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made" (Romans 1:20). Every day of our lives we have been beholding the works of God, which clearly reveal "the invisible things of Him," even "His everlasting power and divinity and yet we have not known His ways. Every day God is doing just as wonderful miracles as the dividing of the Red Sea, yet people do not see, or they see but quickly forget His works.

Thursday: Beyond the Jordan – Read Joshua Psalms 114; how is the crossings of the Red Sea and Jordan, presented? The crossing of the Jordan is coupled with the crossing of the Red Sea, and is fully as wonderful an event. Did you ever stop to think that the apparent danger to the Israelites increased every minute that they were crossing the river? There was waters underground, waters above the clouds, and waters besides. We are so accustomed to think of the fact that they crossed over safely, that we never consider the danger that they were in while crossing over. 'Ah, no,' you say, 'they were not in danger at all; for God was holding the waters back.' True; and so He is always doing for His people. He measures all the waters of the seas in the hollow of His hand; and this is told us as a reason for quiet confidence in Him at all times. The Israelites were really in as much danger in crossing the Jordan as the disciples were on the Sea of Galilee, or as we ever can be when we are in the path in which God is leading. What we need to do is to dwell in the secret place of God, who inhabits eternity, so that in the midst of present difficulties and threatening dangers, we look at them as already past. That is the secret of strength, and of victory. Our very temptations and dangers and difficulties are made the means of our deliverance, just as Noah and his family are said to have been "saved by water" (1 Peter 3:20) which destroyed the earth.