

Joshua

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[0 : 0 0] In humble dependence upon the Lord for all needed help, as we turn into his word, I would ask you to turn to the third chapter of the book of Joshua.

And the last close of the fourth verse. The book of Joshua, chapter 3, verse 4, and the last close.

For ye have not passed this way, here to forth. For ye have not passed this way, here to forth.

And who is this word spoken to? Who is it addressed to? Every believer. Every soul that fears God.

Every trembling comer unto him, who by faith and under the direct and divine teaching of the Holy Spirit, had been brought to feel and know their lost sight, and led to that only Savior, a precious Jesus.

[1 : 3 6] These are the ones to whom this word is addressed. And if you are found as such a soul as that, it's addressed to you.

In the literal application of it, of this narrative, or this part of the history of Israel of old, it was addressed to his national people at a time of a special need.

At a time in their history, when they were entering into a new path, under the direction of Joshua, whom the Lord raised up in place of his servant Moses, and charged him, and committed to him, the care of his people.

And they come now to a very important place. It was to Jordan itself.

The very border of that promised land, which had been set before them for so many years by the promise of a covenant God.

[3 : 0 0] And now they were there. Moses had gone. The Lord had taken him. But a dear servant, a faithful servant of God, had been raised up in his place, Joshua.

And the people were given the heart to obey him, and to declare that they would follow whereso'er he led them.

But there was more than that. There was nothing in Joshua. He had no strength or power in and of himself.

No ability to bring them over this Jordan into that land of promise. He was but a poor, weak and helpless worm, as every sinner is.

And so then, this word was sent by God, almighty God. And it was sent for an express purpose.

[4 : 1 0] And I believe that this same word is made known unto all that fear God, because he knows the way we take.

We know it now. And its application comes into almost every facet of our lives, of our pilgrimage, of our experience, both in providential matters and in spiritual exercise.

these words will be found most true. We have but to briefly think upon them, and we notice how applicable they are.

But what I wanted to come to, that the word that was given to Joshua, to speak to this people, that this eventful moment in their history, and in their journey, was a word from the Lord.

It came from God himself. And it did not say, look to Joshua. Trust in Joshua.

[5 : 31] It set before them God's appointed means, wherein they should find the guidance, the safety, the security, that such a people in their state and condition needed.

They needed one about them. And they needed one to go before them. And they needed one to uphold them.

Surrounded. That's the covenant of grace. And if you and I are children of his grace, through his mercy, that covenant will be to us most precious.

But even so, in this Old Testament dispensation, before the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came from his glorious throne to fulfill that work that was given him to do, even the salvation of his people, there were given these evidences, these signs, these symbols, that by faith, those that possess this faith, were enabled to view the same source of that security and help and hope as we who live in this present time.

here it is set before us as the ark.

[7 : 20] That was the symbol of God's presence. It had been through their journey. It was built according to the design of Almighty God.

It was spoken of by him to this people and manifested in the days of Moses as that place wherein he may be found, where he dwelt in their midst, made his presence known and his word sent forth, the ark of the covenant.

Now, this people, in this step they were to take, where to look there. 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.

We need not an ark to look to. That type and that shadow has been fulfilled.

The apostle says, but we see Jesus. What a mercy if in the midst of all our tribulations and perplexities concerning the path we are called to tread, the way we have to go, the difficulties that surround us.

[9 : 07] We have this same faith, for it is the same faith, to look to Jesus. And what a mercy it is that the Lord God Almighty never left and never will leave his own people without direction.

sometimes we feel to be in the dark. Sometimes we know not which way to take in our own understanding.

But why is that? If we are brought into confusion of mind and darkness and spirit, it is because we are not looking to Jesus.

This people must watch it, watch the ark. they must all the time watch it, if they were to know the way they were to take.

And the gracious God who provided this direction knew, foreknew, as he foreknows the path of each one of us.

[10 : 22] He foreknew the way Israel of old must go. He foreknew the way that you and I must go. Every step that has to be trodden is ordered, appointed.

Yes, those ways that are hard to understand, those deep places. and my mind was led to this portion of God's word in trying to think upon that to bring before you, the mysteries of his dealings.

Oh, it comes very close. For ye have not passed this way heretofore, therefore you need one to help you, to guide you, to direct you, to come at times into the path of deep affliction.

My mind was with your dear deacon, our beloved friend. You have not passed this way heretofore, and so it comes to pass, with the people of God as well as with the world in, how to enter into a path they never knew before.

And there's only one way that path will be sanctified, and that is as that soul, in that deep path, looks to their Saviour, and has a rope within that faith of God's elect that enables them to look upon their trial, their affliction, whatever it might be, and confess and acknowledge that the Lord is just and right in all that he does, and that his purposes shall ripen fast in it, to acknowledge that they are in his hands.

[12 : 36] Oh, dear old friend, Mr. Garnham used to speak so often of the moulding and fashioning, this is one of those paths where the way is new, the path is strange, that which you enter into is mysterious to your understanding, and yet with it all you are brought to confess the Lord is good, you have not passed this way here to for, and I try to pray for our dear old friend, that he might know particularly, and very near unto him, the presence of his dear Saviour, as he passes this way, the issue we know not, the Lord does, you have not passed this way here to for, but I am with you Israel, passing through the fire,

I will not leave thee, never, nor forsake thee, and this is the strength and comfort of that soul in their path, but affliction is not the only way in which this teaching is felt so needful, just think for a moment, there is not one of us knows what a moment will bring forth, we know not, we have not passed this way heretofore, we can't say what will take place within the next few moments or hours, and we might be in our own minds quite comfortable, quite settled, that's not the way the Lord brings his people to down where he brought Israel here to cross Jordan, they had to be lively, awake, they had to be watching, they had to be aware of their need of protection and help, and so this word was given to Joshua that they were to watch the ark of the covenant of the

Lord at all time. We know that in the earlier journeys, it is recorded that the cloud rested upon it, that was the manifestation of God's presence there, and we read also that when the cloud stayed, they stayed, and when it moved, they moved, the Lord will never, never leave his people without a right to direct him and guidance.

Them that look for him, he appears in his own appointed way, and what a mercy if we are brought to know that way, and given this faith, to look alone to him with a crying air heart, grant me thy divine direction, in the way that I must go.

That's a good hymn, and I believe there are times in the experience of the children of God, when that prayer, it's a prayer of reality.

[16 : 16] mercy. But to come back to the narrative for a moment, they were to watch the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and they were to watch the priests that bore it, and then you shall remove from your place and go after it.

Oh, what a mercy, if we are unable to do just that. Now, I say we have no ark to look for, or to look to, but we have a precious Saviour revealed in the word of his grace.

We have a mercy seat, which the ark also represented, and that mercy seat is Jesus, and he is also the high priest over and that mercy seat is open day and night to such as feel their need, and cry unto him for help.

Now, do we by grace use this great privilege, or do we despise it, or do we ignore it, or do we put it in a secondary place?

it would be sad for Israel of old did they disobey this word that was given of God to them, for then there must be confusion.

[18 : 00] So with us, ye have not passed this way heretofore. Lord, show me now thy way, or give me a heart to seek, to know and do thy will, leave me forth in that way that is right and pleasing in thy sight.

Thou hast declared it, there is a way, and it's Jesus. But in that way, all the prophet Isaiah declares, there will be nothing to harm you.

How does the Isaiah write it? I'm afraid my memory won't quite bring it forth, but it's in that 35th of Isaiah.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness. Now, that's your prayer to Jesus. At the mercy seat, he who knows your heart and desire says you've not passed this way heretofore, but look unto me, it shall be called the way of holiness.

The unclean shall not pass over it, it shall be for those the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein, and no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall walk thereon, it shall not be found there, the redeemed shall walk there.

[19 : 42] This is the way, says our poor soul, I long have sought, this is what my desire is. Oh then, looking unto Jesus, trusting wholly and solely upon his power to save, his atoning blood to cleanse and make us meet and fit to enter therein, he has said, you have not passed this way heretofore, but I have gone before you.

This is the way walk in it, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, the redeemed shall walk there.

These are definite statements by Almighty God concerning his spiritual Israel. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head.

They shall obtain joy and gladness, sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Now this people they came now in obedience to this word to hear what the Lord should say.

You have not passed this way heretofore, so sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

[21 : 14] Ere tomorrows. Oh, sometimes, you know, we plan so far ahead, and yet we know not what an error may bring forth. Ye know not.

You have not passed this way, so therefore how can you plan? But a moment and her breath may be taken. No tomorrow.

But that comes into this word also, because I want to notice here we close, that this applies not only to her temporal power, her providential matters.

It's a mercy that it does. And it would be our mercy if we are kept close, looking unto him, leaning upon him, pleading at that mercy seat that he will keep and lead us in every matter that concerns us.

He led them forth by a right way. And as I said earlier, I was thinking of our dear old friends. I was also thinking of our dear younger friends, whom we have mentioned in prayer.

[22 : 28] You've not passed this way heretofore. It's a new experience. It's a new exercise if you fear God. Oh, what a mercy that he knows that path before you enter into it.

It is their humble and earnest prayer. that those things that we have read in the book of Proverbs tonight may be written in the heart. For these are those things that are made known by Almighty God.

They are addressed to those who fear him and would walk with delight in his ways. What did we read?

That it shall, I have taught thee in the way of wisdom, I have led thee in right paths. This is spoken by God who rules and reigns supreme over our lives and in our hearts, over all our circumstances.

But he also says this, and this is a fulfillment of the word spoken here, that he will guide and direct.

[23 : 43] he will ease and remove those great fears that be set. When thou goest, thy step shall not be straightened, and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go, keep her, for she is solid life. And in all those exhortations that we read together, there is that which is most profitable in the unknown path, the unknown way which we are called to enter into.

And we cry the Lord, my bless, for our dear young friends, in that way which they have not passed here to fall. But it might be for the glory of his dear name that they can testify that the Lord was with me there, and the spared, and the days and years pass along, oh, that they may have reason to bless his name for this word, and for this exhortation, and for this lesson that is taught us from the experience of his Israel of all.

Sanctify yourselves, separate yourselves, trust not in your own understanding, trust in the Lord with all thine heart, lean not unto thine own understanding, in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy powers.

Sanctify yourself, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. And then the Lord's servant Joshua gave the instruction that that which they were to do was in accordance with the mind of God.

[25 : 54] And if we are brought humbly to seek to know his mind and will to be revealed unto us and in us, then our soul will know the blessing.

Take up the ark of the covenant, pass over before the people. And they took up the ark and they went before the people. And then the Lord said, this day will I begin to magnify in the sight of all Israel that they may know that as I was with Moses, I will be with thee.

Read the chapter through and you'll see how the Lord did go before them and make their path plain, open the waters, led them forth in that right way by a miraculous work.

The waters stood on and heaped and they went through. Ah, this is the Lord. Worship him. But I want also, as the Lord may help me and the Holy Spirit give understanding, to think of it in this aspect.

You have not passed this way heretofore. And now I'm concerned with never doing so. Concerned with sinners under conviction of sin.

[27 : 27] tried and burdened and bowed down. And because of that weight they feel upon them. And it's a way they've not passed heretofore. They can't understand it.

Was it so with you? Can you remember that time when you wondered what was taking place within you? Both providence and grace perhaps seemed afraid and the word of God condemned.

and yet there were some things that was wrought within your poor heart that made you flee to a mercy sea.

You've not passed this way heretofore. Blessed soul, you're walking in the same steps as his spiritual Israel and he will guide.

Yes, he is an almighty saviour. He leads them forth by his blessed spirit. He grants to such a soul as this an understanding of their need.

[28 : 39] And it is the Holy Spirit's gracious office that who go before them in this untrodden way. This unknown path and experience to ally those deep fears that arise that you must forever lie in hell.

No. The way you have not passed here before and that way leads to Jesus.

It leads to Jesus' precious blood it leads to that fountain open for sin and uncleanness where pardoning mercy is discovered to that sin convicted soul.

you have you have not passed this way here to forth. It is a fresh path for a coming sinner a saved sinner and in days to come they too will testify I knew not the way.

I trembled I was afraid but I called upon the Lord I looked to the ark I looked to Jesus and he heard me and he delivered me out of my distresses.

[30 : 06] Bless all that is thus led in an unknown way but when this is revealed where salvation lies where forgiveness flows from the heart of a compassionate saviour a way you have not passed heretofore when the hard heart is broken down when the mind is made submissive to the will of God and the one concerned is made willing to leave all to follow this hour a way yes a new way you are not passed heretofore but oh what a blessed path this is why following in the footsteps of the flock seeking the good shepherd of the sheep desiring to know your part and lot amongst his flock the sheep of his pasture it's all new and those who have been enabled by grace to tread this path out through wilderness spared to tell of the wonders of his grace look back and at times are enabled to encourage the lambs that follow on a new path tell me was it thus with you so says the lamb and the sheep in

Zion say ah the Lord is faithful look to Jesus turn not to any other oh in the exhortations in Proverbs how it tells us again and again look not to any other way trust no other source for the Lord shall be thy confidence and shall keep thy foot from being taken this is the way walk in it you have not passed this way here to forth these are but brief thoughts but they embrace such a great experience sinners saved by grace and blessed with a living faith in God in his only beloved son as they take these steps on the way to

Zion they are all new all fresh sometimes they create such tremblings and fears unless we should stumble but not while our good guide and saviour goes before and his word is fixed in that covenant ordered in all things that sure all that the father hath given me shall come to me every one of them so why be not afraid of sudden fear neither of the desolation of the wicked for he has said here is the word when they lie down they shall not be afraid they shall lie down and they sleep shall be sweet he led them forth in pastures oh there are some sweet scriptures to comfort these travelling ones but it's a new way and a new experience what is before us yeah there is another path that this believing soul is called to tread you have not passed this way heretofore and

I'm going to briefly bring it before you I feel it needful the soul that with sincere desires and seeks after Jesus love will continue pressing toward the ark for they know that except they keep their eye on Jesus fix they shall come into trouble there is a step to be taken oh when sin is pardoned you feel the love of a savior shed abroad in your heart when you melted down at his present his word is sweet to your taste all these new experiences in the soul that have been made known unto you by the revelation of the Holy Ghost there is a path still and that is the ordinances of his house you have not passed this way heretofore oh what a deep and solemn exercise it is we well know and those who have trodden that path know but be not afraid

I am with thee Israel passing through this fire it is my way it is the way the Lord commands you have not passed this way heretofore but it does not say you are not going to pass it the way into the promised land was through Jordan and therefore they must follow the ark if they are to arrive there safely they are to heed the word that their God has spoken and to obey the commands given unto his servant Joshua that was the only way of safety the only way that they could please their God and obtain the inheritance which was promised not passed this way heretofore oh how we feel so much to need the presence of the

[36 : 26] Lord in that path and the confirmation of the spirit of the Lord in applying our hearts unto wisdom it is not according to the wisdom of man it is a blessed path it is a God honouring path and it is one that brings to the soul engaged in that way a holy sacred yet solemn joy because it is the way your Lord himself have trod and he says follow me you have not passed his way heretofore but entering into it to realise the blessing that is there it is a special blessing it can be found in no other way in no other place

Israel's promised land had to be entered by an appointed wife the believers heaven is also in the path of obedience to their God to their Lord there is the water of baptism buried with Christ you may rise again with him oh what is set before us here they went down into Jordan but they came up and they left their stones of remembrance they raised the altar but what follows that path you have not passed heretofore there is the path to the Lord's table the ordinance of the Lord's supper and here we come so close to a dear redeemer the dying love here is the blessing that the soul when rightly exercised into hardly bear hardly enter into and yet it is made so sweet that the soul with sincere desires seeking after

Jesus love longs to know that they are amongst those people this blessed people to whom the Savior said do this do this in remembrance of me and that cannot be in any other way but in the appointed means through the ordinances of his house but I want to come a little further before we close to the latter part of the journey you have not passed this way here before Jordan we know bespeaks the river the river of death often referred to you have not passed this way here before we have each of us come must come to our dying hour all then to have our eyes on

Jesus and there all our hope to stay and to believe with all our heart and soul and mind and spirit he has gone before he has made that path climb he has removed the obstacles taken away the curse for death is the fruit of sin the wages of sin it's our just deserve and all what fears are created oft times in the thought upon that solemn moment away you've not passed this way here before but it's a way we've all got to tread sinner and saint alike believer and unbeliever alike but the believer has this for the comfort of their soul the ark their Jesus has gone before and oh the sweet promise that was given in that which he spake unto them ere he came to calvary that which we read of in the 14th chapter of John that sacred petition in the 17th chapter of John that wonderful vision given as he ascended at last into his glory all bespeak this one thing

I am with thee I will never leave thee follow me so why the why the ancient prophets went a road that leads from banishment yes that's the truth of it it leads to heaven itself and as Israel entered into their inheritance through obedience through the fulfillment of the promise given of old so shall the ransomed of the Lord as we read come to Zion yes every song redeemed by Jesus precious blood shall enter into that glorious inheritance and there it will not be to tell to sinners round it will be to join in an everlasting song of praise unto him who has loved us and washed us cleansed us oh how the atonement is magnified in that song of glory of why ye have not passed this way heretofore well these are a few broken thoughts they laid upon my spirit

[43 : 19] I knew not how I was to try and speak from them but may the Lord grant to us an understanding and teach us by his spirit our need to keep our eyes on our precious saviour or without his eternal death amen