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向來沒有走過的路

約書亞記三到四章記載了以色列人過約但河的事蹟，是我們跟隨主應該學習的功課。在踏上神所應許的新地之前，神命令他們必須先渡過約但河。那是收割的日子，雨水多到漲過約但河的兩岸（書三：15b）。統帥約書亞卻叫官長吩咐百姓拔營，等候過河：

第一，「…要離開所住的地方，跟著約櫃去。…使你們知道所當走的路，因為這條路你們向來沒有走過。」（書三：3-4）約櫃代表神的同在，意思是要跟隨約櫃，順從神的引導，把腳步踏向未來。

第二，約書亞吩咐百姓：「你們要自潔，因為明天耶和華必在你們中間行奇事。」（書三：5）神是慈愛的神，也是聖潔公義的神，祂不能容忍罪惡污穢。所以神的百姓，必須自潔，除去一切的污穢不義，才可以走神的道路。

第三，約書亞對以色列人說：「你們近前來，聽耶和華你們神的話。」（書三：9）單單聽神的話，不聽別的聲音。

第四，約書亞說：「看哪，普天下主的約櫃必在你們前頭過去，到約但河裡，因此你們就知道在你們中間有永生神；並且祂必在你們面前趕出…（敵人迦南七族）。」（書三：9-11）當我們單單聽神、跟隨祂時，不只有神的同在，更有神的應許：連前面可能有的敵人、可能有的爭戰，祂都要為我們除去、為我們勝過。

第五，「等到抬普天下主耶和華約櫃的祭司，把腳站在約但河水裏，約但河的水，就是從上往下流的水，必然斷絕立起成壘。」（書三：13）水是洶湧流動、來勢可怕，不是人力可以止住的。但是神要人不看環境，而以信心跟上祂，神的大能，就會使河水停流，而且聚起成堆，直立如壘。這是人未曾經驗過的事，需要人用信心，而且是沒有前例的信心。

第六，「那從上往下流的水便在…亞當城那裡停住，立起成壘；那往…鹽海下流的水全然斷絕。於是百姓在耶利哥的對面過去了。」（書三：15-16）抬約櫃的祭司，領導百姓，用更大的信心，踏出腳去；腳一入水，水流就止住了。當百姓肯順從神的引導，走這條信心的新道路時，神就來成就，使得他們可以安然過去。

第七，「…祭司在約但河中的乾地上站定，以色列眾人都從乾地上過去，直到國民盡都過了約但河。」（書三：17）因著神的大能，加上人的信心，以色列人終於能夠渡過約但河，踏上了神應許的迦南美地。

生活中的經驗是寶貴的，但常常神會帶領我們走新的路，是我們沒有走過的。我們要小心自潔跟隨主，聽神的聲音，順從祂的引導；不容任何人、事、物代替神的帶領，才能踏在神所應許自己的地上。

國民都過了約但河後，神吩咐約書亞，從民中揀選十二個人，每支派一人，要他們：「…從約但河中、祭司腳站定的地方，取十二

塊石頭帶過去，放在你們今夜要住宿的地方。」（書四：3）「這些石頭…可以作為證據。日後，你們的子孫問你們說：『這些石頭是什麼意思？』你們就對他們說：『這是因為約但河的水在耶和華的約櫃前斷絕；…這些石頭要作以色列人永遠的紀念。』」（書四：6-7）

人的難處，是得了神的恩典，卻常忘了神的恩典和祂奇妙的作為。神叫約書亞吩咐以色列人，把原來在河底的石頭，取十二塊帶到吉甲營中，立在那裏作為神大能和恩典的見證（參書四：19-20）。神的靈又感動約書亞，另外把十二塊石頭放在約但河中，在抬約櫃的祭司腳站立的地方；直到今日，那石頭還在那裡。（書四：9）預表主耶穌的代替——我們本來深陷污泥中、是該死該滅亡的罪人；神卻差祂的兒子基督耶穌降世，為我們代死又復活。神的心願是、人人悔改相信祂，就可以被救拔出來、並在祂的復活上有分，不至滅亡，反而進入應許之地得永生。

神這樣大能大德的救恩，我們不能只自己歡喜享用，自己記念不忘就夠了。神要我們體會祂的心腸，在當代人中作祂的見證，傳揚祂的美德和福音，使救恩臨到外邦人，叫他們的人數可以添滿。同時更要傳承給兒女子孫，讓神的名在他們中間得著榮耀、稱頌和敬拜，直到世世代代、永永遠遠！



中國行

感謝神格外的恩典和保守，也謝謝弟兄姊妹的代禱和支助，我們已平安地從四十天的中國之旅回來。這趟我們去了五個城市、十一個不同的聚會點，看見許多愛主又對主的話飢渴的弟兄姊妹，受到很大的鼓舞和激勵。實在滿心感謝讚美神！

中國自改革開放以來，對外貿易和個人企業多如雨後春筍，都市經濟快速起飛，帶給社會的是一片新氣象和繁榮。但相比之下上班族的壓力就越來越大，面臨了房子太貴，醫

療保險不夠，兒女教育費難以支付…等等問題。一般中等以上八十平方米的房子，要價八十萬左右人民幣。對月入千元到三千元的普遍大眾、特別年輕人來說，若不靠父母窮他們一生的積蓄支助，簡直買不起房子。老年人的醫療保險每月由政府付五十元，一年六百元，一次感冒醫藥費下來就用完了，如果沒有經濟能力有餘的兒女相助，日子挺辛苦的。就是城市內，由於人浮於事，大學生過剩，一些賦閑在父母家中、所謂的“啃老族”，也多少帶給許多中老年人難言的困擾。至於有兒女的中、青代們，為了要讓下一代成為出人頭地的精英族，循著讀高校→求高職→賺高薪的路子，耗資費神，還常常得不到兒女的諒解。

貧富懸殊依然是很大的隱憂。而大量的農村勞力湧入城市，民工的大遷徙，也是人口流動中史無前例的。以前還穩得住群眾社會的主席、國家、主義、學雷鋒…等精神標榜，因著近十幾年的急劇變化，都成了虛無、都是捕風，帶給人心無比的空虛和極大的不安。感謝神，祂不丟棄中國，還顧念我們的骨肉同胞。在神州大地興起了許多信主、愛主祂的兒女，因著主愛的吸引和激勵，看見福音的大能和需要，願意為傳福音付上代價，堅信唯有耶穌基督的福音才是真正的拯救，能滿足所有人心靈空虛的需要！

所到的各個聚會點、多半是一個周末三天的聚會，一般從上午九點到下午四點、或四點半。人們擁擠在小屋裏，長坐在小凳上，一手翻聖經、一手記筆記，那場面真令人感佩，也叫人不能不傾全力地與他們分享神的話。復活節的周末在上海，主日聚會後，為五位決志的慕道友施浸，感謝主有祂的同在。一般聚會中年輕的大學生顯著的多起來，這是特別令人振奮的現象。但也因著大學校園工作的迫切，需要有更多全時間的帶領同工。他們生活的供應，民工當中的福音工作，和同工子女們的教育問題，都是當前迫切的需要。請您們特別記念，願主的恩典在這些未得之地上愈顯豐厚。

主若許可，我們願意順從祂的心意再去中國。請您舉起禱告的手，願主在一切安排上顯明祂的旨意和帶領。您們各位的代禱是我們的力量和鼓勵，也是出外客旅日子中的安慰。我們謹此在主裏致上深深的謝忱！



Never Passed This Way Heretofore

Before the Israelites could step on the new promised land, they had to pass over the Jordan River. It was the season of harvest, and the rain caused the river to overflow its banks. Joshua instructed the officers to command the people to get ready to go. We shall learn their lessons from Joshua chapters 3 and 4.

(1) 3:3-4 "Go after it (the ark), so you may know the way, for you have not passed this way heretofore." The ark represents the presence of God. To step into the future, one must follow the ark, namely, to follow the divine guidance.

(2) 3:5 "And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow Jehovah will do wonders among you." God is loving and kind, but also holy and righteous. He will not allow sin nor fornication. Therefore, the people of God must sanctify themselves, to cleanse from all unrighteousness in order to take up the way of the Lord.

(3) 3:9 "And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of Jehovah your God." We ought to listen to the word of God alone, nothing else!

(4) 3:9-11 "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 the Canaanite..... Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passes over before you into the Jordan." When we hear and follow Him, His promise also goes with us along with His holy presence. God will remove all enemies, and win all the battles for us.

(5) 3:13 "And it shall come to pass, when the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of Jehovah, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, even the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand in one heap." The water was fierce and awesome, and could

not be stopped by human power. But God wanted them to look at Him instead of the surroundings. He also wants us to follow with faith. His power did make the water stand still in one heap. Man had never seen that before, only experiencing it through faith.

(6) 3:15-16 "when they that bare the ark were come unto the Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brink of the water, the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap." To lead the people, the priests had even greater faith. When they stepped into the river, the water stopped. When people were willing to obey God and take on this new way, God fulfilled His promise and they passed on.

(7) 3:17 "And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel passed over on dry ground, until all the nation were passed clean over the Jordan." The power of God and the faith of men made it possible for the Israelites to cross the Jordan and enter into the promised land.

Experiences are valuable. But, God often leads us onto a new way that we had not passed heretofore. We need to sanctify ourselves, listen to His command and follow. Do not allow anyone or anything to take the place of His divine guidance. Then we will enter into God's promises. After the people crossed the river, God instructed Joshua "to take hence out of the midst of the Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the lodging-place," (4:3). Those stones would be "for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. Ye shall say unto them (future generations), Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah; when it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off." (4:6-7).

The trouble with us is that we often forget God's blessings, soon after we were blessed by His wondrous work. God commanded Joshua to take up twelve stones from the river to the camp at Gilgal as a testimony of God's power and grace (4:19-20). God's spirit further moved him to put twelve stones from the dry river bank into the river. This is a symbol of the substitutive work of Lord Jesus, who died for us on the cross. God desires all men to

repent and be saved, not to perish but to have a portion in His resurrection life.

So great is this salvation that we partake and remember. We should also share with others in this generation. As His witnesses, we preach the gospel among the gentiles so their number may become full soon. Most importantly, we ought to share it with our children so the Name of the Lord be glorified and adored forever and ever!



China Mission

We thank God for His grace and protection. Our gratitude also goes to those who prayed and supported us during our recent trip to China. After forty days on the road, having visited five cities and eleven assemblies, we are finally home. The Lord allowed us to meet many who loved the Lord and His Word, and we were greatly encouraged. Praises be to His Name!

The economy over there continues to boom, and the society shows a sign of new prosperity everywhere. At the same time, the pressure on working class is also getting greater as housing, medical and educational expenses grow. The price of an average apartment at 800,000 RMB is a far cry for those with monthly incomes in the one to three thousand RMB range. The elderly have to rely on their children for medical expenses, because the government subsidy is very inadequate. A new phenomenon is the unemployment among college graduates. Without a job, these adult children have to stay home to eat off the parents. The parents with young children spend money and energy to put their kids through the best schools in order to pursue the dreams of the wealthy. Often they feel stressed out.

Economic disparity among people is a great concern. The large number of migrating workers coming into the cities from farming communities is unprecedented. In the past, there were the slogans of nation, party and doctrines. But now only emptiness and insecurity fill the human hearts, forcing them to pursue the material goods. Thank God, who did not forsake our kinsman. Many were drawn to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and many even consecrate themselves to preach this gospel to bring the needy mass this one, true salvation.

On this trip a typical three-day weekend meeting would last all-day long, from 9 to about 4:30. We admired the congregation crowded in small rooms,

taking notes with one hand and the Bible in the other while sitting on small stools for hours. One could not help but pouring out oneself when people were that hungry for the Word of God. A most impressive new trend is to see a large number of college students and graduates coming into the church. During the Easter weekend, we met with a house church in Shanghai. Five were baptized after the worship service. Thank God for His presence in our midst.

Spiritual growth in small assemblies and on college campus is perhaps the greatest challenge facing the people we met. Many young ministers who serve sacrificially on campus are badly in need of our prayer as well as financial support. The ministry among migrating workers and their families represents another fertile ground and urgent need. You are encouraged to pray for these specific areas.

If the Lord is willing, we plan to re-visit the Orient again in the fall. Would you please lift your hand of intercession for this future plan? Your support and prayer have been our strength and encouragement away from home. It is a great comfort to know wonderful people like yourselves are praying for us. Thank you very much in the Name of Jesus!



感謝與代禱

1. 請弟兄姊妹繼續為多用途建築物計劃代禱，工程合約已於五月份簽妥、貸款申請已被批准、動工許可已經批出，若一切順利，建築物可於明年初落成。
2. 請記念在 Sanford 服事飛行員的福音聚會。求主親自呼召祂所揀選、屬於祂的羊。



Prayer And Thanksgiving

1. Please pray for the multi-purpose building project. Contract has been signed in May. Loan has been approved. Permit has been issued. If things go smoothly, the building will be ready early next year.
2. Please remember the Gospel meeting at Sanford serving the pilot trainees. May the Lord Himself call the sheeps that belong to Him that was chosen.