

## Mantles, Miracles & Memorials

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### I. The Mantle

#### Deuteronomy 34:9-12

"Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses. But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land, and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of Israel."

#### Joshua 1:2-9

"Moses My servant, is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them--the children of Israel. **Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.**"

(v.5) "No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only **be strong and very courageous**, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of Law shall not depart from your mouth, but **you shall meditate on it day and night**, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it, For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor dismayed, for **the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.**"

\*Joshua was the successor of the most revered leader of Israel. He accepted the mantle AND the word of the Lord. He could have easily backed down after comparing himself to his predecessor. But, he chose to believe the word of the Lord--that God was with him just as He was with Moses.

### II. The Miracle

**Joshua 3:7** "The Lord said to Joshua, 'This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so will I be with you.'"

(v.14-17) "So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as those who bore the ark came to Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap...and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan."

\*As Joshua stepped out in obedience, facing the impossible, he stepped into the miraculous. The Lord parted the Jordan River at its fullest capacity to exalt Joshua in the sight of Israel--the same miracle He performed at the Red Sea for Moses.

### **III. The Memorial**

**Joshua 4:5-7** "Cross over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time, 'What do these stones mean to you?' Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever."

(v.24) "that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever."

\*Joshua also set twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan to commemorate the miracle where they had stood on dry ground. In the next chapters there is an act of consecration by circumcision, the end of manna and the miraculous victory at Jericho.

### **IV. This is what I feel the Lord is saying to us.**

#### **1. There are unclaimed mantles waiting at the altar.**

When mantles aren't picked up, there are no miracles from which to pick up stones and memorials aren't built for our children.

#### **2. We are suffering from an identity crisis, just like the world.**

We're living in a time when everyone is so obsessed with finding out who they are, that we'll look to everything and everyone but God to find it (*personality assessments, strengths, etc.*).

Our identity is defined by the One who knew us before He knitted us in our mother's womb! We are fearfully and wonderfully made by the maker of Heaven and earth! The intricacies and hidden details with which He designed us IN SECRET cannot be fully revealed in the results of a personality test! {Psalm 139:13-16}

#### **3. We are overwhelmed by inadequacies and underwhelmed by His presence.**

We've become so self-aware yet lost awareness of His presence. It should be no surprise that oftentimes, God calls us to do something in an area where we feel inadequate or weak. His power/strength is made perfect in our weaknesses! {2 Corinthians 12:9} We must be vigilant not to create idols of our inadequacies. {2 Corinthians 10:5}

#### **4. We've focused so much on acquiring information or knowledge, yet we're not any wiser.**

We've been leaning on our own understanding. {Proverbs 3:5-6} We'd rather ask Google than God, because we want immediate answers. We need to regain the art of waiting on the Lord.

## **V. Three Levels of Rejecting the Mantle**

1. Reluctance
2. Resistance
3. Resentment

## **VI. Where do we go from here?**

1. Seek the Lord and His presence. Repent and consecrate yourself at the altar.
2. Be strong and courageous. Accept the calling of the Lord and pick up the mantle.
3. Seek Godly wisdom through His word. Meditate on His Word and feed on His faithfulness.
4. Seek Godly counsel, not approval or false confirmation from those that only agree with your fear.
5. Remember that the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. He knows you've never been this way before and He'll never abandon you.
6. You've got to start living like He is actually your portion. His grace truly is sufficient.