

January 2007—Our Guide to the Great Unknown

Part 1

Over the past months, many of our CBM family have faced some huge difficulties. The upcoming year will likely afford many new and exciting adventures. Some will take the form of unforeseen blessings; others will be startling heartaches. All are custom designed to make you more like our Savior. A couple of verses have characteristically been a precious encouragement to me as I face my journey. "And they commanded the people, saying, '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**. . . that ye may know the way by which ye must go: **for ye have not passed this way heretofore**'" (Josh. 3:3-4). This whole passage is rich in symbolism and spiritual truth for the believer.

The children of Israel were on the brink of entering the land of promise, a literal land, yet also symbolic of day-by-day victorious living for you and me. To make the adventure of the unfamiliar even more exciting, between them and the land flowed the Jordan River, symbolic of mighty raging difficulties that we will face.

As we focus on these verses, we observe that

God will guide us through uncharted places (v 4). We've not passed this way before so we need someone to guide us. The problem is we want details. I just got off the phone with a friend whose husband is dying of ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). I led her to Christ 4 years ago. He came to the Lord within the last few months. We talked about his death for the first time as well as some "unknowns" facing them. I believe I encouraged her, and desire to edify you, with four considerations we **don't** need to know about uncertainties facing us.

We don't need to know *where*. Sometimes God shares this information, many times not: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, *not knowing whither he went*" (Heb 11:8).

We don't need to know *what lies ahead*. God may keep you in the dark so you *have* to keep your eyes on Him. Oh, and get this: I believe scripture teaches that it is possible to fear God, obey Him, and still not understand "Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God" (Is. 50:10) Obviously, I don't think the "darkness" in this passage refers to sin—but rather a lack of comprehension of what God is doing—and that's all right with me! His instructions? Let him trust (keep trusting) and stay (keep staying) on his God! Besides, in many cases, if we knew the future we couldn't enjoy today.

We don't need to know when. "And they commanded the people, saying, 'When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God . . . then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it'" (Josh. 3:3). Know this about God. *Timing* is far more important than *time*. Think about it; Moses got ahead of God, killed the Egyptian bully in Exodus 2, and spent 40 years on the backside of the desert. When God was ready to move the Israelites, it took about 24 hours to leave Egypt!

We don't need to know why. God does not need to explain, just keep your eyes on the Ark. And here is where it all comes together; the Ark is a life saving symbol of Jesus Christ! It contained:

The Ten Commandments: symbolic of Christ, *the righteousness of God*.

Thee golden pot of manna: symbolic of Christ, *the resources of God (the Bread of life)*!

Aaron's rod that budded: symbolic of Christ, *the resurrection of God*.

So the essential question is; in my day by day living, am I getting to know Christ better? When I cultivate my relationship with Him, I will know *when He moves and I can go after (with) Him!* What a delightful prospect as I face some of the uncertainties that will surely come my way.

Bill

Special note: There was an error in the TNT last month; Ruth was the wife of Boaz, not his mother (I knew that, yet wrote it anyway). I am a bit disappointed that none of you (especially you Builders) commented on my obvious pun concerning Onan! Anyone reading?