Slow Down & Enjoy the Miracle

**Read:** Joshua 4:1-18

**Text:** Isaiah 52:12 “For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel *will be* your rereward.”

**Introduction:** I read something this week that reminded me of this scripture. It seems that most people are always in a hurry. Get behind a driver who is actually driving at the posted speed and see how many other drivers pass him. If you are like me you look for the shortest line at the store and get upset when the shopper ahead takes out 50 coupons at the end of her sale. What’s your hurry? Are you afraid someone will beat you to the parking lot exit? In the military we used the phrase: “Hurry up and wait.” We would rush to an assignment and wait in line for hours. After a lot of doing that a person should figure out that life is too short to be hurried.

**The crowd that hurried** is found in the story of the crossing of the Jordan. This crossing was very different from the crossing of the Red Sea. When they crossed the Red Sea they were being pursued by Pharaoh’s army and on their way to peace. This time there was no army behind but many enemies lay in wait for them. When they crossed the Red Sea the waters had parted and there was a wall of water on both sides. At Jordan the water above piled up in a heap but the river bed on the downside was dry.

All of these adults had heard about the crossing of the Red Sea but they could not recall it for they had been born on the trip. They were seeing a similar miracle for the first time in their memory.

They are in the midst of a fantastic miracle so why were they in such a hurry? Wouldn’t you think that there had to be a boy in that crowd who would have liked to throw a rock into that wall of water? Can you imagine a little girl saying, to her mother, Hey look at the fishy in that aquarium? The parents were hurrying their kids along as they sped through the middle of a miracle.

In soccer there is a penalty for being off sides. At a certain point in the field of play players must be behind the ball. To get ahead of the ball will negate any points that might be scored on that drive.

I believe that these people missed out on much of the joy of this miracle because they got off sides. Theologians will tell you that it should have taken at least 8 hours for the Israelites to pass over Jordan at a walking pace. A miracle that lasted for 8 hours would really be a story to tell; wouldn’t it?

**The crowd that didn’t hurry** was the priests that bare the Ark. They stood all day right in the middle of this miracle. They were the ones that first dipped their feet in the water and had a front row seat to see the waters part and view the dry seabed to their left and the mountain of water piling up on their right. They were the ones who exhibited great faith. They knew that God was at work and they were not going to miss a moment of it. Can’t you hear them with the wonder and sense of awe coming from their mouths as they say things like Oh praise Jehovah. What a great God we serve! Only a powerful God could do something like this! Oh the praises that must have come from their lips as they worshipped God in the middle of this great miracle. We are serving a God not made with hands but Oh what big hands He must have to hold back the water like this!

**Qualifications for a miracle:** Did you know that you are not eligible for a miracle unless you have a problem? So first off you need to recognize that the problems you have may actually be a blessing. Enjoy them! God has sent them to place you in a position to have a miracle.

In the book of Daniel we read about the three men in the fiery furnace. One part of the story stands out to me and that is that these three men had to be ordered out. In Daniel 3:26 we read that the king saw them in the fire and commands that they come out. Have you ever wondered why they did not come out on their own? They had learned how to be blessed while they were surrounded by the flames. They were thrown in against their will but their will changed when Jesus showed up. Being in the flames with Jesus beats being in the Air Conditioning alone.

**Conclude:** It is easy to marvel at the faith of some and mock the lack of faith in others but if I was honest today I might have been in that hurrying crowd as well. I want you to be encouraged this morning that there is nothing that happens to you or I that is not in the plan of God. It is about time that we learned to submit to His plan and enjoy the ride. He is with us and if the results are tragic or magic He is still with us. What could be better than that?