

STUDY GUIDE

SERMON TOPIC:
"This is Not That"
WEEK 1

1. READ

Pastor's Selected Scripture: Joshua 5 : 10 – 12 New King James Version (NKJV)

10 Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. 12 Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

Further Reading: Joshua 1 : 1 – 9 New King James Version (NKJV)

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: 2 "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. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. 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. 6 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. 7 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. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in 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. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God *is* with you wherever you go."

Isaiah 43: 18 – 21 New International Version (NIV)

18 "Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
19 See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.
20 The wild animals honor me,
the jackals and the owls,

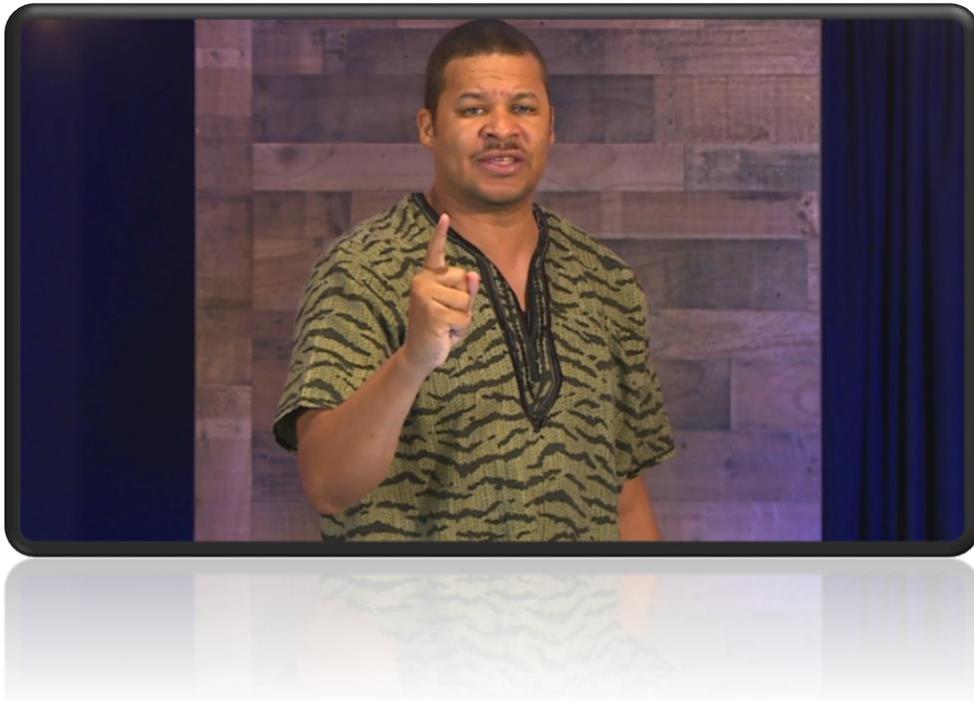


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because I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland,
to give drink to my people, my chosen,
21 the people I formed for myself
that they may proclaim my praise.

2. REFLECT

[Click the image to view this week's sermon on YouTube]



This week our Senior Pastor Rev. Matthew L. Watley started a brand-new sermon series entitled “Forward.” Although the future is uncertain, we can trust and believe that God is still making a way for us to move forward. Over the next few weeks, we will focus on leaving the past behind and learning God’s desire for us to walk confidently into our next season.

In our lesson for week one entitled “This is Not That,” Pastor Watley explores the way God has called us to move forward in times like these. As we continue to witness dramatic shifts and changes in our environment, our journey forward will also require dramatic shifts and changes in our thinking. For example, when Bishop TD Jakes moved from his home church in West Virginia to plant his new church in Dallas, TX, he recognized that he could not use the same



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strategies, traditions, and ways of doing things from West Virginia. Instead, he had to grow, adapt, and develop new tools to be successful in his new space. Likewise, Pastor Watley urges us to remember that when seasons shift in our life, we cannot hold onto our old ways of thinking and behaving. As Rev. Dr. William D. Watley says:

“We have not yet discovered that newness requires newness!”

In our scripture for this week (Joshua 5:10-12), we find Joshua and the nation of Israel literally on a journey into their new season. After spending generations in the wilderness and wandering around Mt. Horeb unable to provide for themselves, God was about to teach them a new way of living. During the time they spent in those harsh environmental conditions, the Israelites often lost faith, hope, and sight of God’s purpose for their lives. In order for them to move forward, they needed to learn to become fully dependent on God and trust in God’s plan. As a result, God used their circumstances to move them from **independence to dependence**.

Unable to grow crops or gather fresh produce in the desert, the Israelites had to fully depend on God to send them quail and manna to eat. For forty years, they witnessed God’s faithfulness and learned to trust that God would always be with them. However, when God subsequently made a way for them to enter into the promised land, he challenged them to develop their faith even further. When the children of Israel arrived in the new land, instead of having to wait for God to send them the white doughy substance they typically ate, God blessed them to grow grain and fresh produce for themselves. After facing their obstacles and overcoming their various trials in their past season, they had reached a new season where God was calling them to participate in their own survival. They now had to shift from **dependence to interdependence!**

It is important to remember that at this time, this generation of Israelites had become accustomed to God directly giving them food. They had not been required to cultivate land, learn to farm, or develop the skill to raise livestock. However as they moved forward, God was calling them to take a risk and do something new. They already learned to trust in God’s power, but they were now called to trust in the power God was placing inside of them. Moving forward required the Israelites to learn new skills and develop new ways of thinking to produce for themselves, while God blessed the works of their hands. Once God empowered them to produce for themselves, the manna stopped.

Verse 12 states, “Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.” As the Israelites moved from a place of scarcity to a place of abundance, they no longer needed to depend on the practices of their old season. This is an important reminder for us, that our new season will require us to live differently than we did in our last season. What are some of the things God is calling us to release from our past season in order for us to move forward?



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3. RESPOND

Introspective Questions

- What are these passages of scripture saying to you?
- How are you planning to move forward into this new season?

Discussion Questions

- After eating manna for so long, how do you think the Israelites reacted to the manna suddenly stopping?
- Do you think the Israelites learned the lesson God was trying to teach them about moving from dependence to interdependence?