

When God Does Old Things in a New Way

I was participating in a large conference meeting recently and enjoying a worship service while awaiting the keynote speaker's message when I heard a few people who were sitting directly behind me discussing the service. I didn't want to hear them, but they were speaking loud enough to be able to be clearly heard above the worship team (which meant they were talking very loudly).

What I heard them say was not something new—it is something I have heard said countless times over my nearly 40 years as a believer in Messiah Yeshua and many times in synagogue before I came to faith in Yeshua as my Messiah.

I am certain that once you see the statement below, you will also say that you have heard it many times yourself. The statement was "That is not the way we used to do it!!"

This statement is often said in defiance to whatever is being done at the time in the service. It may be a commentary on the opening prayer, the worship music/choir, the use of a digital presentation instead of song books or the preaching style of the speaker. The long list of things we used to do differently grows every week as new ideas are implemented and new technology becomes available.

The trouble with the "that's not how we used to do it statement" isn't the statement itself, because the statement itself is true. The problem is that, for some reason, the people making that statement believe that because people are doing something that has been done before in a different way that G-D cannot or will not respond by blessing those in attendance.

In other words, if we sing a song a new way, G-D can't move.

Or, if we don't use songbooks, there won't be an anointing of our worship service. Or if we sing an ancient song with a modern melody, it somehow loses its spirituality. Whenever I hear someone make the "That's not how we used to do it" statement, I respond by saying I am so glad the people of Israel didn't have that same attitude when they crossed the Jordan River into the promised land.

Think about this with me for a moment. The children of Israel are at the banks of the Jordan River just as they were when they were at the banks of the Red Sea. And just as when Israel crossed the Red Sea, the waters parted and Israel walked across on dry ground. However, as we read in Joshua, Joshua's actions were completely different than Moses':

"It will come to pass when the soles of the feet of the kohanim (priests) who are carrying the ark of Adonai, Sovereign of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the Jordan's waters will be cut off. The waters coming downstream will stand up in one heap" (Josh. 3:13, TLV).

As we read in Exodus 14:16:

"Lift up your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it. Then *Bnei-Yisrael* will go into the midst of the sea on dry ground" (Ex. 14:16).

Notice that Moses lifted his staff and G-D parted the waters while Joshua sent the *kohanim* carrying the ark ahead, and as they stepped into the water, the water parted. In both cases, both leaders followed G-D's instructions and when they did, G-D brought about a supernatural response.

As we look at these two events, we see the beginning was the same when both Moses and Joshua led their people to a body of water. Their response was the same: to seek G-D and follow His instructions. The end result was the same: The water parted. It was only the methodology that was different.

When the children of Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, crossed on dry ground, it was the result of G-D doing an old thing in a new way. So, whenever you hear someone say, "That's not how we used to do it," remind them that G-D often does an old thing in a new way and encourage them to step into the water with you.

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