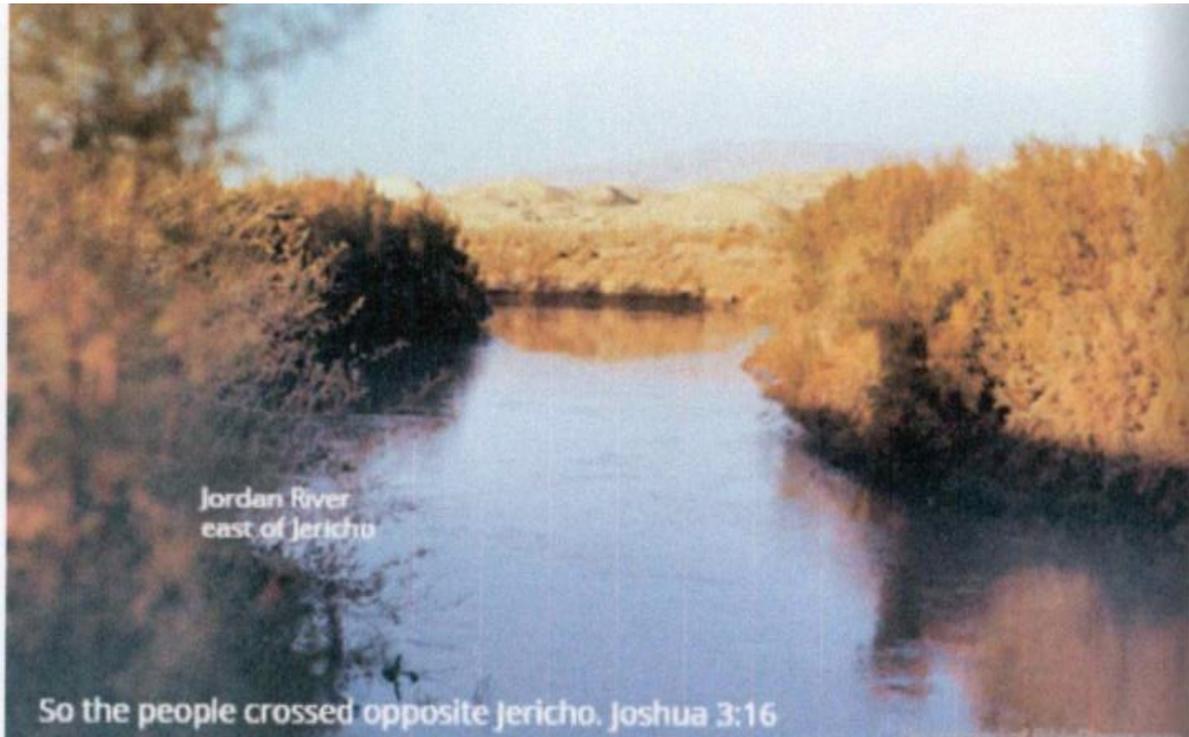


JOSHUA CHAPTER 3

THE SECOND “Red Sea” Miracle: Crossing the Jordan



- In Josh 1:9 the new leader was told to be **STRONG and COURAGEOUS... fearLESS and CONFIDENT** because **the Lord your God IS with you.**
- When the 12 spies returned from Canaan in Num 14, there was rebellion and disobedience to the Lord's Word – and we saw the dreadful consequences:
cf 1 Sam 15:22 **obedience is better than sacrifice
rebellion is like a sin of sorcery...**
- Here in Josh 3 the 2 spies gave their good report (2:24) and it was followed by immediate obedience from Joshua and from the priests – so the people obeyed also.

3:1 **Joshua rose early in the morning and set out from 'Acacia Grove' (Shittim) and came to the Jordan with all the children of Israel.**

- Num 25:1 Moses had brought them as far as Shittim.
Joshua will take them the final stage of their journey.

Note: They **stayed** for **3 days** waiting for God's order to move on: Isaiah 40:31
It seemed the **wrong TIME** to cross the Jordan: 3:15 (*this is a VIP statement!*)

In March/April – the month of Nisan – Passover time – the Jordan **Floods** when the snow on Mt Hermon melts

– this is Harvest-time in the lower Jordan Valley – where the Israelites are.

Be still and know (learn) that I am (really) God! Ps 46:10

- Q.** Why did the Lord make Israel encamp for **3 days** looking at how impossible it was to cross the Jordan at **that** time?
- A.** We are so self-reliant and self-sufficient that God needs to bring us to **the end** of our resources... to make us conscious of our own inabilities...
- He needs to humble our pride and make us aware that – in spite of what **we say** that we often “lean on the arm of flesh”: Jer 17:5
 - He wants us to begin to truly **rely** on Him and His Power to save us. **[Let Me DO!!]**
 - Man's extremity is God's opportunity: Ps 107 cf Abraham: Rom 4:17-21
 - The Jordan river in spate is now **the new “GIANT”**

The Solution – we have to **FACE** the ‘giant’; name it; call on God’s power; then conquer it.

Vital Question: What does **God** want to do in these circumstances? What is **His Will?**

A = Here at the Jordan God it was about to **ENTER** and claim a land for His own Kingdom – this was **GOD’S ENTRY** into the Promised Land!!
- and He wanted to enter **AS GOD** – in His own Godly way.
cf Zach 4:6



3:2 As Israel waited beside the turbulent waters, she was expected to remember their ancestors standing by the Red Sea. **There** Moses told them: **Have no fear! Stand firm and you will see what the Lord will do... you have only to keep still:** Ex 14:13,14 cf 2 Cor 1:8-11

3.3 After 3 days the leaders told the people that **AFTER the Ark** moved they were to move. **The Ark** – holding the Presence of God **AND** His Word – would **LEAD** the Chosen People into the Chosen Land. They were **His** People.

Future:

- One day Jesus will return in Glory and claim the **whole** earth as His Kingdom: Rev 19:10...
- The Israelites are here because they conquered the two giants, **Sihon & Og**
- When Jesus returns it will be **after** He has conquered Beast and False Prophet, the two giants that menace the world right now.

What to do? **Be still** in **contemplation** of the Triune God and then you will **discover** what **He** will do.

- The Jordan River **symbolises ‘death’** because of the etymology of the name in Hebrew. So, entrance into Canaan **through** the Jordan symbolises **RESURRECTION** after death.
- Our biggest “Jordan” is **death to self** and the rising of **unconditional love** in our souls (Agapē)
 - If we cross **this** ‘Jordan’ successfully then the death of the body carries no fear. **Mt 10:21**
 - The **stillness** of contemplation shows up our **POWERLESSNESS**, but then we discover **the power of powerlessness:**
 - Dan 3: the 3 men in fiery furnace
 - Dan 5: Daniel in the lion’s den
 - Dan 13: Susanna before the lying judges
 - Lk 1: BVM before the impossibility of giving birth.
 - NT: Hanging on the Cross, Jesus looked completely powerless – He never looked less like the King of the Jews, He never looked less like a Messiah but yet He was all of those things but infinitely more.

The Solution: **Fiat!** “Be it done unto me according to your Word.”
“Not my Will, but **Thine** be done”: Jesus in Gethsemane.

The Way Forward: **Follow the Ark!** (*The Ark today is Our Blessed Mother*)

- They were instructed to keep their eyes on the **ARK** – which **represented CHRIST**.
- **The ARK** is central to the entry into the Promised Land.
- In Ch 3 and 4 the Ark is mentioned – or alluded to 21 times: $7 \times 3 = 21$
→ **Wisdom 7:27-30**: This describes the perfection of God in **21 attributes**.

7 = number of perfection
3 = number of Blessed Trinity
- **The ARK reveals:**
 - (i) God’s Presence in the Cloud and Fire.
- the Shekinah over the Cherubim **on** the Ark.
 - (ii) God’s Will – since the tablets of the Covenant were inside it.
 - (iii) God’s Provision for us – since a jar of Manna was in the Ark.
 - (iv) God’s Care for His people – in the Priesthood and liturgy He himself provided, so that the people’s prayer and worship would be acceptable to Him.
 - (v) God’s Mercy – since the Throne of Mercy overlaid the lid of the Ark.
 - (vi) Throughout their history, **the Ark** demonstrated to all **other** nations that the chosen people were **GREAT only** | when God was **with** them.
| when God was fighting their battles **for** them.
- It did not take long for Israel’s enemies to find out that **THEY** were **NOTHING** if God **WAS NOT** with them!! John 15:5 **“without Me you can do nothing”**. Ps 78:10

Christians, take note: Listen to **1 John 2:6** **“whoever abides in Him does not sin; whoever sins has neither seen Him NOR known Him”**.

In **Josh 3:3** The ARK is referred to as **The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God**.

- Therefore it refers to the fact that **THE REIGN** of **God** was about **to begin and** that they are entering the Promised Land as the People of **THIS** Covenant.
- Other nations had covenant relationships with their Kings / Pharaohs / Rulers and they had their **own** laws.
→ But Israel had **The Law of God** as the Law of the Land – a **THEOCRACY** when they conquered this land they would **REPLACE** pagan law with **Law of God**.

- We**
- are the People of Christ and **His Law is our law** – but the world has rejected God’s Law in favour of paganism and immorality... We’ve got to go back to “square 1”!
 - Israel’s “following the Ark” pointed to her commitment to the Covenant.
 - Our following of Christ points to **our** commitment to **the Gospel** and **New Covenant** Jn 10:4; Rev 14:4

Ark of Covenant in 2022 – is our Blessed Mother. She has been coming to the world for the past 200 years, since La Salette in 1846 to prepare her children to cross their ‘Jordan’.



The Timing of the Crossing: on the 3rd day! – resurrection day.
Ex 19:12: it was on the 3rd day that God appeared on Mt Sinai.
Since the people were instructed **THERE** to prepare for 3 days,
we then understand the 3-day waiting **HERE** as spiritual preparation
for God to intervene on the 3rd day!

Note: If spies representing Israel's **enemies** from Canaan were **WATCHING** this drama, they would be totally puzzled by the **INACTIVITY** for 3 days.

- they would expect troop manoeuvres or mass movement of people
- to be confronted by **a silent praying crowd** would confound them.
To them Israel was "**doing nothing**".
Yet Israel was doing **EVERYTHING** by opening the Heavens to facilitate their entry.
- The spies would look for **BOATS** that they could sabotage... none!
 - their reports of inactivity would lull the Canaanite Kings into inactivity - which would be lethal for **them**.

3:4 Something New Follow the Ark

During their wandering in the wilderness, they were led to follow **THE CLOUD** which appeared **ABOVE** the Ark. Ex 13:21, 22; Ex 40:36-38

- But the desert signs will **cease** as they enter this new phase of their History.

- 1) They were to put a distance of 1,000 cubits between themselves and **the Ark**.
 - This was the reverential distance between the Holy of Holies and the congregation
cf distance between Tabernacle and the congregation in our Churches.
- 2) **For you have never gone this way before.**
 - you have never marched **IN THIS MANNER** before.

- Before now – during their wandering in the Wilderness – they always followed **THE CLOUD** – the **OBVIOUS** Presence of God: Ex 40:36-38

- **Now** their **FAITH** must increase **AND** their trust in God must increase.
 - they will **SEE** only the Priests, the Ark and **the leaders** of Churches
- God had carried them with signs and wonders up to now.
 - but the new situation demanded Faith, Trust **And** obedience. cf Luke 17:5

Notice that God moves on even though we may not have passed our previous tests well!
So we may have a spiritual **LIMP!!**

Notice that the Ark of the Covenant went **AHEAD** of the People.

- so our Blessed Mother – the Ark for Christians – went ahead of us in Redemption.
- **And** she travels with us in these terrible times as we face the Antichrist – the biggest giant of them all!

3:5 **Sanctify yourselves! Because the Lord wants to work wonders for you!**

- Moses said the same in Ex 19 just before **THE THEOPHANY** in Sinai cf 1 Sam 16:5
 - it means **PREPARE** yourselves spiritually
 - this involves removing **BLOCKS** to God's coming **to you!**

Ⓝ He won't come to a defiled temple. **Heb 12:14** Heb 10:22

cf 2 Cor 7:1 Ⓝ this has the full meaning of Ex and Joshua.
2 Tim 2:21 1 John 3:3 Jer 20:7 1 Pet 1:16

- Joshua told the people to get into the right frame of mind so that they could experience the Presence of God.

3:6 Joshua now instructs the Priests to take the Ark ahead of the People at a distance where they could all **SEE IT** (Ex 19:22)

- the obedience of the Priests is the **headline** for the People to follow:
cf Titus 2:7 1 Pet 5:3 1 Tim 4:12

3.7 The Lord then spoke to Joshua: **"Today*, I will BEGIN to make you a GREAT MAN in the eyes of Israel. I am going to be with you as I was with Moses."** (*the day they crossed the Jordan)

- Moses told the People that Joshua would take them into the Promised Land: Deut 1:38 and 34:9

Ⓝ At the beginning of Jesus' Ministry – the True Jeshua – when He came to the Jordan at the beginning of His Ministry, it was the time for the Father **TO BEGIN** to make His Son great in the eyes of Israel! Matt 3:16-17 (Jn 1:31)

- for **THEN** the **Heavens** opened and the Holy Spirit descended and declared **WHO** Jesus **REALLY** was!

Contrast Israel accepted Joshua as their divinely appointed leader and served the Lord all the days of Joshua (Josh 24:31)

With Jesus – whom the Father revealed as His Beloved Son

(Jn 1:11): **"He came unto His own and His own received Him not!"**

They followed the human army leader: Joshua
They rejected the Prince of Peace: Jesus
They honoured Joshua and crucified Jesus!

3:8 You are TO STAND STILL in the Jordan.

Joshua instructed the Priests to carry the Ark INTO the Jordan and to stand there until further notice!!
(cf Ex 14:13,14)



- These priests are types of the Redeemed in New Testament: **1 Pet 2:5,9**
 - Just as Joshua uses his divine authority to instruct both priests and people here... so the True Joshua – Jesus - gave the Sermon on the Mount – the instruction for all the Redeemed, both priests and people: **Matt 5-7**

OBEDIENCE: would you stand still in muddy, turbulent water in a River overflowing its banks?
– until further notice???

- This river was **UNFORDABLE** at this time! (1 Cor 1:21)
 - It's like us trying to preach CHRIST CRUCIFIED to the present society!
 - This is Faith, Hope and Trust in God. God always **TESTS** Faith and obedience.
- When people have unsolvable problems, that bring them to the brink of their "Jordan". Get them to **STAND STILL** and see what God will do for them!
 - if they refuse, they dishonour God and close the door to miracles.

3.9 Come closer to hear the Word of God!

We must feed on this Heavenly Manna so that our souls **OPEN TO GOD**.
Jesus is the Word of God. (Jn 7:16; 12:49)

3.10 Today you will know (realize) that the LIVING God is among you.

- 2 Kgs 19:4, 1 Thess 1:9 Here Joshua contrasts the LIVING God with the DEAD idols they have met in Egypt and will meet in Canaan.

- This was going to be Israel's struggle the whole of its History, because serving the Living God involves Faith, Hope, Love and Trust. It also demands a Holy Life, whereas the dead idols represent Satan and so his followers live an **immoral** life.

(NB) We become **LIKE** that which we worship: 2 Cor 3:18

Joshua then states **the FACT** that God **will** give them victory over the Tribes in Canaan.

Why didn't he say that God would **OPEN** the Jordan for them?

He concentrated on **Victory in** the Land to emphasise that the **First** Miracle – the opening of the Jordan – was the promise for **all** the rest.

He wouldn't open the Jordan for them **TO FAIL** afterwards.

(ie) the miracles would **Flow** – just like this River.

“Nothing is impossible with **God**” – the **LIVING** God:

Mk 9:23 Lk 1:37 Mt 19:26 Jer 32:17, 27 Phil 4:13 Job 42:2 Is 41:10 etc.

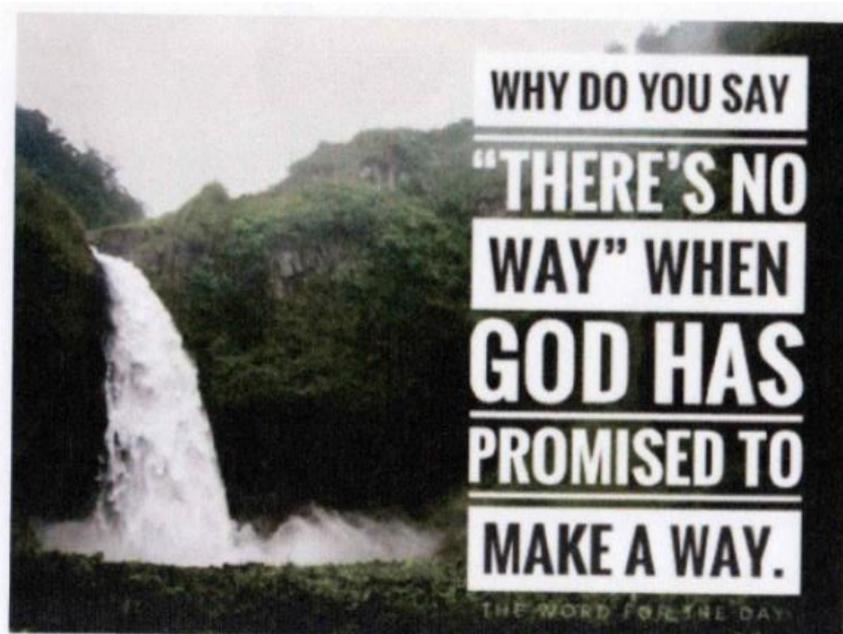


'Your Jordan'
is
'death to self'

3: 11-12

Notice the continued miracles depended on **5 FACTORS**:

- (i) Trust God beyond Reason
- (ii) Absolute obedience to God's Will
- (iii) Fix your eyes on the Ark of the Covenant: Blessed Virgin Mary!
- (iv) Realize that nothing is impossible with God.
- (v) The Lord leads His People to victory. We are not alone!



3:13

As soon as you step **INTO** the water, the River will open...

(NB) They were all to witness that it was **the Presence** of God in the Ark that opened the Jordan!
→ God is SPIRIT so we can't **see** Him with **fleshy** eyes but we can witness **His works**.

Notice that **God** could open the River **WITHOUT** the priests
but the priests could not open the River without **God!**

- In His graciousness He uses His **chosen servants** to work with Him... but **He** does all the work!

(NB) It was the "God of the whole Earth" they were dealing with!

- We need to remember this **today**.
- **and** heed Jesus' plea to "**Let me do!**"

First use of this title in the Bible!

Then Joshua chooses 12 men for a task we will see later...

3:14

The Priests obeyed Joshua and took the Ark to the Jordan River.



3:15-16

Immediately, the River obeyed its Creator and **stood back** to allow Him and His Chosen ones to cross over.

3:17

The Priests held **the Ark** in the middle of the Jordan to allow the people to cross over on **Dry Ground!**

(NB) 5:1 The people West of the Jordan were terrified upon witnessing this great sign of WHO THE GOD of ISRAEL was!

Before we go on, let us compare and contrast the crossing of the Red Sea in Ex 14 with the crossing of the Jordan River in Joshua 3