

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Let's pray...

[Jos 3:1-17 NKJV] 1 Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over. 2 So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; 3 and they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. 4 "Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by

measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed [this] way before." 5 And Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." 6 Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people. 7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, [so] I will be with you. 8 "You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.' " 9 So Joshua

said to the children of Israel, "Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God." 10 And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God [is] among you, and [that] He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: 11 "Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. 12 "Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. 13 "And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, [that] the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off,

the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap." 14 So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, 15 and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), 16 that the waters which came down from upstream stood [still, and] rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that [is] beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, [and] were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. 17 Then the priests who bore the ark of the

covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

There is an excitement in the air and a sense of anticipation in the hearts of the Children of Israel as it appears that finally they are going to enter the land that was promised to them.

For four hundred years, they were strangers in the land of Egypt until God delivered them.

Then they wandered the wilderness for another 40 years because of the disobedience of the previous generation.

But Joshua is leading them now –

And the only thing that is keeping them out of the Promised Land is the Jordan River.

Now, living in Southern Arizona, we really can't grasp the significance of a river crossing because the only time we see any water in our Santa Cruz River is during our monsoon rains.

Nine of the twelve months, I can hop over the over our mighty Santa Cruz.

However, as we will see in our text this morning, this is happening during flood season.

This is happening as the snow smelts in the mountains.

Estimates are that the Jordan River had swollen its banks and could be as much as a mile wide.

It would be impossible for two million people to cross the Jordan River with women, children, livestock and all of their possessions.

However, nothing is impossible with God.

As believers, we face impossible obstacles that hinder our spiritual progress as well.

It could be a habitual sin, it could be pride, it could be a shame that we have to bear.

However, God wants us to cross those obstacles, but in order for us to do so, we have to focus on Him and wait upon Him.

That is what we are going to see Joshua do this morning here in chapter three.

[Jos 3:1 NKJV] 1 Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over.

I asked you to make a note that Joshua rose early in the morning – and that is because I have mentioned repeatedly through our study in Joshua - that that Joshua is a type or a shadow of Jesus.

And one of the things that we saw in the life of Jesus as we studied the Gospel of Mark was that He was an early riser as well –

But Jesus wasn't an early riser so that He would be able to drink His coffee and watch the news or go on social media.

He was an early riser so that He could fellowship with the Lord.

Turn with me to the book of Isaiah 50, This prophecy speaks of Jesus Christ.

[Isa 50:4 NKJV] 4 "The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to [him who is] weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.

Notice how "me" and "my" are capitalized.

Jesus was guided by His daily fellowship with the Father.

And we will see that Joshua, when he has fellowship with the Lord – he will be successful but when he chooses to rely on his own understanding, he suffers setbacks.

And we will see this in the weeks to come.

Church, there is no substitute for seeking the Lord on a daily basis.

It doesn't have to be in the early morning – it could be later on in the day. But it cannot be neglected, especially if we want to cross over into His blessings.

So Joshua brings everyone to the banks of the Jordan where they sit there and stare and listen to the roaring river for three days.

You see God is going to show them that nothing is impossible if they put their trust in Him.

[Jos 3:2-3 NKJV] 2 So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; 3 and they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.

Once again, we have Joshua making sure that the people know the plan for crossing the Jordan – he tells his officers the plan and they spread out and tell the remainder of the people.

You see strict adherence to the plan was commanded.

And the first part of the command was – keep your eyes on the Ark of the Covenant.

When it moves, you move.

And I asked you to make note of the Ark of the Covenant.

And the reason is that we will see ten different references to the ark of the covenant in this chapter alone,

The ark of the covenant is a box or a chest that the Children of Israel built according to God's design.

It was made of Acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

There were three things inside the ark of the covenant.

(Hebrews 9:4)

1. The tablets containing the 10 commandments

2. A jar with Manna

3. Aaron's rod.

The significance of the Ark of the Covenant is that it was the physical dwelling place of the glory of God on earth among His people.

The Ark of the Covenant represented the very presence of God in their midst.

Later, when the temple is built – the Ark of the Covenant is what lied inside the Holy of Holies. This is where the atonement and sprinkling of the blood took place.

So really, their guide across that the impossible obstacle – is the presence of God.

[Jos 3:4 NKJV] 4 "Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed [this] way before."

When the Children of Israel were delivered out of Egypt, It was God that led the way. During the day time, it was a pillar of cloud that guided their way and at night it was a pillar of fire that guided their way.

But now, they are led by this box/ark.

And in order for everyone to keep their eyes on the ark and not get ahead of the ark, they have to have a buffer between them and the ark.

If the buffer is not there, the people will crowd the ark and then the people would be able to push the ark because it isn't moving at the speed that they want.

How do I know that?

Because that is our sinful nature.

You see, we often find it hard to give God space to lead us.

We want things now – on our time. Not His time.

And when we don't get what we want, when we want it, we tend to resort to running ahead of God – thinking we are somehow helping Him out.

The next thing we know, we are in trouble and now we have lost sight of our Guide.

[Jos 3:5 NKJV] 5 And Joshua said to the people,

"Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

The Hebrew word that is used here for sanctify – means to set apart or “to prepare”

For the Children of Israel this usually meant that it was time to bathe or time to put on new clothing.

However, as believers – when we sanctify ourselves, we prepare our hearts in order to be able to receive His outpouring in our lives.

Think of our lives as a cup.

God wants us to be able to receive as much as Him as possible in the cup.

When we allow sin in our lives, it is like rocks being placed inside the cup. Now, we limit how much we can receive.

However, when we sanctify ourselves, we examine ourselves, we confess our sin and the rocks are eliminated from the cup and therefore we are able to receive more of Him.

Unfortunately, many believers today are trying to be filled with the Spirit when in reality they need to be emptied of sin.

Listen to what Paul tells the church in the Book of Galatians [Gal 2:20 NKJV] **20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the [life] which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

Church, that is why we constantly need to examine ourselves and pray that God search our hearts and reveal what's restricting His outpouring –

In other words, we are to pray that He might show us where the rocks are.

[Jos 3:6-8 NKJV] 6 Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people. 7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, [so] I will be with you. 8 "You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When

**you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan,
you shall stand in the Jordan.' "**

Forty years earlier, there was another water crossing and of course that was when God parted the Red Sea.

One of the biggest differences between that event and this event here on the banks of the Jordan is that at the Red Sea, Moses stretches out his hands and the Red Sea is divided before the Children of Israel walk in it.

Here at the Jordan River, the priests are actually going to have to take that initial step and allow their feet to touch the Jordan River.

Why???

Why doesn't God simply part the Jordan here in the same way that He did the Red Sea???

You see church, God demands a step of faith here from the Children of Israel in order to enter into His promises.

He still parts the Jordan for them but, it was after they take the step.

Remember two weeks ago when God tells Joshua – every place that the soul of your foot will tread upon I have given you.

You see, God uses every opportunity to teach us to see and hear with the eyes and ears of faith.

His message to us is – step out in faith and watch and see what I'll do.

[Jos 3:10-12 NKJV] 10 And Joshua said, "**By this** you shall know that the living God [is] among you, and [that] He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: 11 "Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. 12 "Now therefore, take for yourselves **twelve men** from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe.

All of these ites mentioned here – for over four hundred years, they had called the Promised Land home.

They were not going to simply leave the area when the Children of Israel walk in and tell them that the land belongs to them.

They were going to fight for it.

And Joshua knew that there would be another obstacle once they cross the Jordan. However, through the work that God is about to demonstrate to the Children of Israel at the Jordan – by this, it will be a token as a promise of His future blessing and movement for them.

In other words, what God is about to do right now before your very eyes, it is proof of the things that He will accomplish whenever we have to face the ites.

I asked you to make a note of these twelve men.

They will play a significant role in the next chapter.

[Jos 3:13-15 NKJV] 13 "And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the

ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, [that] the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap." 14 So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, 15 and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest),

I asked you to underline the word heap.

Many scientists will try to explain what is happening here by theorizing that just maybe there was an earthquake

upstream from where they were and debris came down and dammed the Jordan River until the Children of Israel were able to cross over.

However, the scriptures tell us that the river stood as a heap. Other translations use the word wall.

A wall of water.

And I also told you earlier that this happened during flood season as well.

The only explanation for what happened was that God held the water so that the Children of Israel would be able to cross the obstacle.

[Jos 3:16 NKJV] 16 that the waters which came down from upstream stood [still, and] rose in a heap very far

away at **Adam**, the city that [is] beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, [and] were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

The city named Adam – we don't the exact location, all we know is that it must have been along the Jordan.

However, what we see here in chapter three is that the water were rolled back all the way to Adam.

And the significance of this is that when our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ died for us on the cross, it important to note that the waters of judgment were also rolled all the way back to the first man – Adam.

[Rom 3:23-26 NKJV] 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace

through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth [as] a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

[Jos 3:17 NKJV] 17 Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on **dry ground** in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

The priests positioned themselves with the ark of the covenant in the middle of where the Jordan River flowed minutes earlier.

Note that they stood firmly on dry ground – not muddy ground – dry ground.

That means 2 million people crossed that day and not one of the 4 million chanclas were left behind in the mud.

Every one of them had a choice, any one of them could have looked at the raging Jordan and said, I choose to stay here on the banks of the Jordan.

However, they took the step of faith and moved a step closer into the Promises of God.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I

believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please

forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give

me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

