

GOING ON WITH GOD - CROSSING OVER JORDAN

Joshua 3

(Josh 3), “And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. {2} And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host; {3} And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. {4} Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore. {5} And Joshua said unto the people, **Sanctify yourselves:** for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you. {6} And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people. {7} And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. **{8}** And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan. **{9}** And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God. {10} And Joshua said, Hereby ye 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 passeth over before you into Jordan. {12} Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man. **{13}** And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap. {14} And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; {15} And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) **{16}** That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. {17} And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.”



S CROSSING OVER JORDAN HAS BORN MUCH SYMBOLISM throughout CHURCH HISTORY. For many it has SYMBOLIZED passing from this life into **heaven**. Heaven would be **THE ETERNAL PROMISED LAND**. Many **HYMNS** reflect that understanding. *ON JORDAN'S STORY BANKS* is one good example. THAT **WONDERFUL SONG** depicts one's passing from this world into heaven's promised land.

S CONSIDER A SECOND ANALOGY THAT PARALLELS JOSHUA, CHAPTER 3. After crossing Jordan there were **BATTLES** to be fought, **ENEMIES** to face, spiritual **LESSONS** to be learned. They entered into the Promised Land, but that was not heaven.

FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE **CROSSING JORDAN** represents

entering into **A NEW LEVEL OF THE BELIEVER'S LIFE**. It is a picture of **ENTERING INTO THE FULNESS OF GOD'S PROMISES**.

S **THAT ANALOGY HAS APPLICATION FOR US**. It has been stated there are more than **SEVEN THOUSAND PROMISES** in the Bible addressed to God's Children. It is one thing to have a promise offered to you, it is quite another to enter into that promise and experience its fulness.

S **JESUS SAID:**

- **(John 10:10)**, "... I AM COME THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE, and that they might have **IT MORE ABUNDANTLY**."
- **(John 8:32)**, "And ye shall know the truth, and **THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE**."
- **(John 8:36)**, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

S **IN ORDER TO *GO ON WITH GOD* and *CROSS OVER OUR JORDAN*, WE MUST DO THREE THINGS:**

- I. **HAVE DIRECTION FROM GOD**
- II. **BE DEDICATED TO GOD**
- III. **DEPEND UPON GOD**

I. WE MUST HAVE DIRECTION FROM GOD

(V. 1), "And Joshua **ROSE EARLY IN THE MORNING**; . . ."

S **PERHAPS** Joshua had **A SLEEPLESS NIGHT**.

S **PERHAPS** rising early was **A REGULAR HABIT FOR JOSHUA**. He may have used that time **to meet** with God.

S Joshua might have been **FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF MANY OTHER MEN OF GOD:**

- **ABRAHAM**

(Gen 19:27), "And Abraham got up **EARLY IN THE MORNING** to the place where he **STOOD BEFORE THE LORD**:"

- **DAVID**

(Psa 5:3), "My voice shalt thou hear **IN THE MORNING**, O LORD; **IN THE MORNING** will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up."

(Psa 55:17), "**EVENING**, and **MORNING**, and at **NOON**, will I **PRAY**, . . ."

- **IT WAS SAID OF JESUS**

(Mark 1:35), "And **IN THE MORNING**, rising up **A GREAT WHILE BEFORE DAY**, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there **PRAYED**."

(V. 1), ". . . They **REMOVED FROM SHITTIM**, . . ."

S **ISRAEL WAS CAMPED AT SHITTIM** before they moved to the Jordan River. It was while Israel was at Shittim that **BALAAM** attempted to curse Israel. The **TWO SPIES** from chapter 2 were sent to Jericho while Israel was camped at Shittim.

S **"SHITTIM" MEANS "ACACIA TREES."** *Shittim wood* is wood from an acacia tree. Many of the items in the **tabernacle** were made of shittim wood. **The ark** itself was made out of shittim wood overlaid with gold.

S **SHITTIM WAS LOCATED** approximately **8 MILES EAST** of the **JORDAN RIVER** and about **5 MILES NORTH** of the **DEAD SEA**.

(V. 1), "... **THEY ... CAME TO JORDAN**, HE and **ALL** the children of **ISRAEL**, AND **LODGED THERE BEFORE THEY PASSED OVER.**"

S **ISRAEL** made the eight-mile trip and **CAMPED EAST OF THE JORDAN RIVER** before crossing over. They had talked about this day for forty years. In that particular month of March/April (Nisan), the talk was over. The day of their crossing was **AT HAND**.

S **FROM THAT LOCATION** they could look across the Jordan River valley and **SEE THE CITY OF JERICHO SIX MILES WEST** of them. Their first formidable obstacle after crossing the Jordan would be the city of Jericho.

S **IT MUST HAVE BEEN A FOREBODING THOUGHT** as they considered the battles they were going to encounter on the other side of Jordan. Some must have wondered to themselves **WHAT THEY DOING THERE**. They were about to go into **battle** to take the Promised Land. There was going to be **conflict** and **loss** of life. There were fortified cities to be conquered. The occupants of those cities had no intention of giving up that land, even if God had promised it to Israel.

S **THE QUESTION** — **WHAT WERE THEY DOING THERE?** We are not left to guess. **THE ANSWER** — **THEY WERE THERE BECAUSE GOD HAD LED THEM THERE!** They were not there at **ABRAHAM'S** bidding. Their location that day was not the idea of **MOSES** or **JOSHUA**. They were east of the Jordan that day because **GOD HAD LED THEM THERE!**

S **THEY WERE THERE IN FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM** MORE THAN FOUR HUNDRED YEARS EARLIER

- **(Gen 13:17)**, "Arise, walk through **THE LAND** in the length of it and in the breadth of it; **FOR I WILL GIVE IT UNTO THEE.**"
- **(Gen 15:7)**, "... I am the **LORD** that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, **TO GIVE THEE THIS LAND TO INHERIT IT.**"
- **GOD'S PURPOSE** in giving Israel that land was **TO REVEAL HIMSELF** to the world. **THE MESSIAH**, a descendant of Abraham, would be born in that land. He died on an old rugged cross in the city of Jerusalem for the sins of the world. The Book of all books — **THE BIBLE**, would come, in part, from that land. No wonder Satan resisted so strongly.

- **GOD ESTABLISHED HIS COVENANT** with Abraham and God intended to carry it out. Israel was east of the Jordan that day **BECAUSE GOD IS A COVENANT KEEPER. GOD HAD LED THEM** to that particular location on that particular day because it was in His plan to do so.
- **PROOF FOR ISRAEL THEY WERE IN THE CORRECT LOCATION** was **THE CLOUD OF GOD'S PRESENCE**. Up above them was the cloud that had led them for forty years. That cloud **HAD LED** them to the eastern side of the Jordan River. They were in the right place, at the right time, because God Himself had led them there.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO US? IN ORDER TO GO ON WITH GOD, WE MUST HAVE DIRECTION FROM GOD. We must find God's direction for our life.

S **DON'T GO CAMP EAST** of the Jordan because you think it would be **A NEAT IDEA** and **A CHALLENGE** to your faith.

S **SCRIPTURE DOES NOT TEACH "name-it and claim-it,"** it teaches **"Find God's will and claim it."**

- **(1 John 5:14)**, ". . . This is the confidence that we have in him, that, **IF WE ASK ANY THING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, HE HEARS US:**"
- **(Rom 10:17)**, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

S **SUPPOSE** some Christian wanted to demonstrate his faith by reproducing some of **THE MIRACULOUS WONDERS** found in the Bible. Let's pick **A COUPLE OF BIG MIRACLES** to illustrate this point.

1) **SUPPOSE A PERSON** decided that he **WANTED TO CALL DOWN A FLOOD ON THE WORLD LIKE NOAH**. He wants it to happen, therefore, he believes it will happen. He believes it so strongly that he **BUILDS AN ARK**. He **TELLS EVERYONE** that sees the ark that God is going flood the world again. When they ask why, he says, "Because I have faith." Suppose he has more belief in a coming flood than Noah himself had. Would the world be flooded again? **He makes his claim by faith**. Would the world be flooded again? — **ABSOLUTELY NOT !**

THE REASON IT WOULD NOT HAPPEN IS BECAUSE HIS FAITH IS NOT BASED ON "GOD'S WILL." LISTEN TO GOD'S WILL:

(Gen 9:13), "I do set **MY BOW IN THE CLOUD**, and it shall be for a token of a **covenant** between me and the earth."

- A **COVENANT** is a **contract**. It is an **agreement**.
- God has revealed **His contract regarding world floods**.

(Gen 9:15), "And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and **THE WATERS SHALL NO MORE BECOME A FLOOD TO DESTROY ALL**

FLESH."

- Faith is not "name-it and claim-it"; faith is "find God's will and claim it."
- JESUS PRAYED, "*NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE.*"

S **SOMEONE SAYS**, "DID NOT JESUS SAY WITH FAITH YOU CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS?". What Jesus said is found in the Book of **MARK**.

(Mark 11:22-24), "And Jesus answering saith unto them, **HAVE FAITH IN GOD**. {23} For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. {24} Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

IN THAT PASSAGE, **FAITH COMES FIRST**. True faith is based on God's will, not human whim (Rom 10:17). **THE PRIMARY FACTOR**, as to whether **mountains move or not, IS GOD'S WILL**. Faith is absolutely essential, but faith is not the primary factor. **IF** it is God's will that mountain be moved, then faith can accomplish it. But you had better find out if it is in God's will, or you will appear awfully silly speaking to that mountain.

(1 John 5:14), "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, **IF WE ASK ANY THING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL**, he hears us:"

2) **ELIJAH CALLED FIRE** DOWN on an altar at Mount Carmel in **1 KINGS 18**. As a result, the pagan prophets of Baal were defeated and genuine faith in God was encouraged. What **AN AWE-INSPIRING MIRACLE** THAT WAS.

JUST SUPPOSE some pastor gets tired of the moral collapse in our land and decides to exalt God by calling fire down on some modern day false prophets. He invites everyone up to the top of Rattle Snake Mountain. He says, "God has done it before, I have faith He is going to do it again." He advertises through T.V., RADIO and NEWSPAPER. He invites the president. He goes all out, just like Elijah did.

The **DAY ARRIVES** and the multitudes have gathered upon the mountain. The altar is built. **THE QUESTION — WILL THE FALL FIRE? THE ANSWER — IT DEPENDS UPON THE WILL OF GOD. GOD'S WORD IS PRIMARY AND THAT PASTOR'S BELIEF IS SECONDARY**. If he stands out there and it is not the will of God, the fire will not fall. Scripture even gives **AN EXAMPLE OF THE FIRE NOT FALLING** when someone wanted it to fall.

(Luke 9:52-56), "And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into **A VILLAGE** of the **SAMARITANS**, to make ready for him. {53} And they **DID NOT RECEIVE HIM**, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. {54} And when his disciples **James and John** saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we **COMMAND FIRE TO COME DOWN** from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? {55} But he turned, and **REBUKED THEM**, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. {56} For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

ELIJAH was successful because Elijah did what he did at the bidding of God.

S **ISRAEL WAS EAST OF JORDAN** because GOD HAD LED THEM THERE.

S IN ORDER TO **CROSS OVER OUR JORDAN**
I. WE MUST HAVE **DIRECTION FROM GOD**

II. WE MUST BE DEDICATED TO GOD

S **IT IS ONE THING** FOR GOD TO GIVE US DIRECTION, IT IS ANOTHER TO **FOLLOW THAT DIRECTION**.

S It is one thing to say, **"I accept the promise,"** it is quite another to **enter into** that promise.

(V. 2), "And it came to pass **AFTER THREE DAYS**, that the officers went through the host; {3} **AND THEY COMMANDED** THE PEOPLE, saying, When ye **SEE THE ARK OF THE COVENANT** of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and **GO AFTER IT.**"

S **THE MOST MENTIONED ITEM** in this chapter is **THE ARK OF THE COVENANT**. The word *Ark* appears **10 times** in this chapter.

S CONSIDER **TWO REASONS** THE ARK WAS GIVEN SO MUCH ATTENTION and PROMINENCE IN THIS CHAPTER:

1) IT WAS **THE ARK OF THE COVENANT**. *Covenant* means *contract*. Its name reminded them of God's promise. God made a covenant WITH **ABRAHAM** in Genesis 15. God made a covenant WITH **ISRAEL** at Mt. Sinai. God was **about to act in accordance with His covenant**. God telling Israel to "GO AFTER" the *Ark of the Covenant* was like God saying, "Go after my promises." It was a reminder that God was **A COVENANT KEEPING GOD**. Who would have ever imagined, Israel would have arrived safely at the promised location after forty years in the wilderness. They arrived safely because **GOD IS A PROMISE KEEPER**.

2) THE ARK BECAME THE METHOD BY WHICH GOD **WOULD LEAD THEM**. **FOR FORTY YEARS** GOD HAD LED THEM BY THE CLOUD OF HIS PRESENCE. Once they cross the Jordan River, that cloud would lead them no more. Rather than looking up to that cloud for direction, they will look to the *Ark of the Covenant* for guidance. As the cloud had symbolized God's presence and guidance, the *ark* would symbolize God's presence and guidance.

WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE God **removed** the CLOUD? Why did God cut off the **MANNA** after crossing over the Jordan? Why did God lead them in that manner for forty years, and then change His method of leading once they crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land?

Perhaps you had **TRAINING WHEELS** on your **BICYCLE**

when you were a little kid. Those wheels were necessary while you were in training. There came a day when you put away your training wheels and were promoted to **advanced riding**.

It seems that the cloud was the equivalent of training wheels for Israel while they were in the wilderness. **THE TIME HAD COME FOR ISRAEL** to move on to **deeper** and **greater** things.

THERE ARE ALSO TIMES WHEN **WE** MUST MOVE ON TO ADVANCED THINGS, TOO.

- **(Heb 5:12)**, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”

(V. 4), “Yet there shall be **A SPACE BETWEEN YOU AND IT**, about **TWO THOUSAND CUBITS** by measure: **COME NOT NEAR** unto it, **that ye may know** the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.”

S They were to keep the distance between them and the ark of approximately **1000 YARDS**, i.e., the distance of **ten football fields**. CONSIDER **TWO REASONS** they were to keep that distance between them and the ark. There was a **PHYSICAL REASON**, and there was a **SPIRITUAL REASON**.

1) **A PHYSICAL REASON** was **SO THEY COULD ALL SEE THE ARK**.

(V. 4), “. . . **That ye may know** the way by which ye must go: . . .”

In order to follow the ark, they had to be able to see it. It was **easy** for the two and one half million people **to follow God's CLOUD**. All they had to do to see it was look up and there it was. Seeing the ark was more difficult. There was **NO WAY** so many people could see **THE ARK** if they were bunched up around it. With the ark far ahead of them, they would be able to see and follow it.

With the ark far ahead of them, they would have been able to observe the ark being taken down into **THE JORDAN RIVER**. They would have been able to associate the cessation of the river flow with the presence of the ark. That was **A MIRACLE** that God wanted all of them to see. That miracle would serve as a source of encouragement and strength.

2) THERE WAS A **SPIRITUAL REASON** for keeping the 1000 yard distance. That ark represented the presence of God Himself. **AS GOD WAS HOLY, THAT ARK WAS HOLY**. It was **NOT A TOY**. It was not a common piece of **HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE**. It was the *Ark of the Covenant*. God expected them to **SHOW PROPER RESPECT** for that which represented His presence.

HUMAN NATURE is such that **HOLY THINGS OF GOD** are often **TAKEN LIGHTLY**. God **HAD TO TEACH** them **THE MEANING OF HOLINESS**. God had to teach them the difference between “the holy” and “the common.” Throughout Scripture God has had to teach His people the meaning of “holiness.”

- S **NADAB & ABIHU** were the sons of Aaron, the high priest. They took strange incense into the tabernacle and they died before the Lord. God revealed why they died.
- **(Lev 10:3 NIV)**, “. . . ‘Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored.’ . . . ”
 - **(Lev 10:10 NIV)**, “You must distinguish between the holy and the common, between the unclean and the clean,”
- S **UZZAH** took hold of the *Ark* in a manner not in compliance with God’s direction. He died beside the ark. (2 Sam 6:6-7)
- S **ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA** sold a possession and told a lie before the Lord regarding the amount they had given. They died before the Lord (Acts 5:5, 10).

GOD’S HOLINESS IS PRIMARY and SIGNIFICANT! GOD’S HOLINESS may be **insignificant** to fallen human nature, but it is not insignificant to God.

JOSHUA’S COMMAND TO ISRAEL CONTINUES:

(V. 5), “And Joshua said unto the people, ‘**SANCTIFY YOURSELVES:** for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.’”

- S You would have thought that Joshua would have told them to **sharpen their SWORDS** and check their **ARROWS**. What Joshua told them to do was “**SANCTIFY YOURSELVES.**” “Sanctify” is not a military word. “Sanctify” is a **WORSHIP WORD**, a **religious** word. The general is telling his army to get right with God before they go into battle. **OBEDIENCE TO THAT COMMAND** was **ESSENTIAL** to their **VICTORY** and conquest of the land. Obedience at that point was the difference between defeat and victory. Israel’s defeat at the city of **AI** stands as testimony to that truth (Joshua 8).

- S **OBEDIENCE TO THAT COMMAND** is also **ESSENTIAL TO VICTORY IN OUR LIVES** as we **GO ON WITH GOD**.

- **(Prov 21:31)**, “The horse is prepared against the day of battle: **BUT SAFETY IS OF THE LORD.**”
- **(Psa 33:16-20)**, “There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. {17} An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. {18} Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; {19} To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. {20} Our soul waiteth for the LORD: **HE IS OUR HELP AND OUR SHIELD.**”
- **(Psa 20:7 NIV)**, “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.”

- S **THEIR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION WAS CALLED SANCTIFICATION.** Before crossing over with God they had to be “**SANCTIFIED**” = “**TO BE HOLY.**”

In the Hebrew it is called “**QADASH**” (kaw-dash’). **God used A RELATED WORD** at **THE BURNING BUSH** when HE TOLD

MOSES to **take off his SHOES** because he was on **HOLY GROUND** (Ex 3:5). God told Moses **not to approach** His presence **until** he had made **SPIRITUAL PREPARATION**.

S SANCTIFICATION IS A NECESSARY ELEMENT IN PREPARATION FOR OUR GOING ON WITH GOD.

- **(Heb 12:14)**, “Pursue peace with all people, and **HOLINESS, WITHOUT WHICH NO ONE WILL SEE THE LORD:**”
- **(1 Pet 1:15-16)**, “but as He who called you is **HOLY, YOU ALSO BE HOLY** in all your conduct, { 16 } because it is written, “**BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.**””

S THE GOOD NEWS IS GOD HAS DONE A MIRACULOUS WORK in the lives of those who have placed their **FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. GOD HAS SANCTIFIED THEM!**

- **(1 Cor 6:11)**, “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but **YE ARE SANCTIFIED**, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”
- **IF YOU ARE BORN AGAIN, YOU ARE A SAINT.** The word “saint” comes from the same Greek word as “holy.” As a saint, you are **SANCTIFIED!** Your sanctification took place **at your salvation**, past tense. **YOUR SANCTIFICATION IS ALSO A PROCESS** (1 Th 4:3-4; 1 Th 5:23; 2 Th 2:13; Phil 1:6; Rom 8:28-20). You were sanctified, but you are **ALSO BEING SANCTIFIED.**

S “SANCTIFIED” is a big scary word with A VERY SIMPLE MEANING. When Joshua told Israel to **“SANCTIFY YOURSELVES,”** he was telling them to **DO TWO THINGS:** one **NEGATIVE** and the other **POSITIVE.**

1) NEGATIVELY, SANCTIFICATION MEANT “PUT OUT OF YOUR LIFE THOSE THINGS THAT DO NOT BELONG (“be separate from the world,” “clean up” “put away unholy things”)

2) POSITIVELY, SANCTIFICATION MEANT “BE DEDICATED TO GOD” (“Come to God”)

- **WE HAVE A GOOD ILLUSTRATION OF SANCTIFICATION** given forty years prior to Joshua 3. The illustration **COMES FROM MOUNT SINAI** before God gave His Word to Moses and Israel. **(Ex 19:10)**, “And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and **SANCTIFY THEM** to day and to morrow, . . . ”
- As you study Exodus 19, you discover **SANCTIFICATION MEANT THREE THINGS:**
 - 1) **THEY HAD TO WASH THEIR CLOTHES.** Water was a personal luxury. Surely that meant they had to **BATHE**, too. Water was not readily available in the wilderness. It cost them dearly to use that much water. Have you **EVER THOUGHT** about coming into God’s presence being associated with **personal cleanliness?**
 - 2) They were to **KEEP THEIR DISTANCE** from Mount Sinai by

not crossing the **SET BOUNDARIES**. Our growth in godliness **OUGHT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT** the boundaries that God has set.

- 3) **MARRIED COUPLES WERE TO ABSTAIN** from physical intimacy.

JACOB demonstrated the relationship between **sanctification** and **personal holiness**.

Jacob had his first great encounter with God at a place he called **BETHEL**. The word means "house of God." That is the place he saw the ladder extending into heaven with angels ascending and descending. That is the context for the song ***WE ARE CLIMBING JACOB'S LADDER***.

At a later time in Jacob's experience, he desired **A CLOSER WALK** with God. With that desire came a longing to return to Bethel where he had his first encounter with God. Listen to Jacob's response in returning to that location:

(Gen 35:2-3), "Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, **PUT AWAY** the strange gods that are among you, and **BE CLEAN**, and **CHANGE YOUR GARMENTS**: {3} And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, /// who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went."

- S **JACOB** said to his **FAMILY**, "**SANCTIFY YOURSELVES!**"
- S **JOSHUA** said to his **ISRAEL**, "**SANCTIFY YOURSELVES!**"
- S **GOD** said to **US**, "**SANCTIFY YOURSELVES!**"

IF WE WANT TO CROSS OVER JORDAN INTO A GREATER WALK WITH GOD, THEN WE MUST *PUT OUT OF OUR LIVES THOSE THINGS THAT DO NOT BELONG*

- 1) **"CLEAN UP"**
- 2) **BE SEPARATE** from the **WORLD**
- 3) **TURN** from **PERSONAL SIN**
- 4) **AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN PERSONAL REVIVAL IS HOLINESS. REVIVAL WILL NEVER HAPPEN WITHOUT PERSONAL REPENTANCE AND HOLINESS BEFORE GOD.** Joshua could have **WALKED** around Jericho for **SEVEN MONTHS** and the walls would never have fallen if Israel had refused to sanctify themselves. The **EVANGELIST** can preach until he is blue in the face, but without personal holiness, heaven will remain as brass. The river will never divide. Our going on with God is put on hold.

WE SHOULD EACH EXAMINE OUR LIVES WITH GOD'S HOLINESS IN MIND.

(2 Chr 7:14), "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

- 1) **HAVE WE LEFT OUR FIRST LOVE FOR GOD?** (Rev 2:4)
- 2) **ARE WE "DENYING OURSELVES?"** (Luke 9:23)
- 3) **DO WE NEED TO MAKE RESTITUTION?** (Luke 19:8)
- 4) Is there someone with whom we need to be **RECONCILED** (Gen 50:20)
- 5) **DO WE HOLD A GRUDGE AGAINST SOMEONE?** (James 5:9)

- 6) HOW ARE OUR FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS? (Eph 5:21ff)
- 7) Have we been **HARSH, CRITICAL, JUDGMENTAL?** (Eph 4:32)
- 8) IS YOUR CONSCIENCE CLEAR? (1 Tim 1:19)
- 9) IS THERE SOME **SECRET SIN?** (Prov 15:3)

(**Heb 12:14**), “**FOLLOW** peace with all men, and **HOLINESS**, without which no man shall see the Lord:”

(**V. 5**), “. . . ‘**SANCTIFY YOURSELVES: . . .**’ ”

- 1) **PUT OUT OF YOUR LIFE THOSE THINGS THAT DO NOT BELONG.** (“clean up”)

BUT IT IS ALSO HAS A **POSITIVE MEANING:**

- 2) IT MEANT “**BE DEDICATED TO THE LORD**” (“come to God”)

(**Josh 3:3**), “And they commanded the people, saying, ‘**WHEN YE SEE THE ARK . . . ye shall remove from your place, and GO AFTER IT.**’”

S IN OTHER WORDS, “**FOLLOW THE ARK**” wherever it goes. The way you followed the cloud in the wilderness for forty years, you now follow the ark. **Within a matter of hours** the ark would be taken down **into THE JORDAN** River at **FLOOD STAGE**. You follow the ark. Eventually the ark would lead them **INTO CONFLICT** in the Land of Canaan. Follow the ark.

S **WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN GOD’S ARK** leads you to places you would **NEVER HAVE CHOSEN** to go on your own? What do you do then? **You follow the ark! WE SING WHEREVER HE LEADS I WILL GO.** If He takes you **overseas** to a foreign field, then you follow. If He takes you to **a neighbor’s house** to tell them about Jesus, then you go.

QUESTION — with the two aspects of sanctification in mind, **WHICH DO YOU THINK WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT FOR ISRAEL TO DO** — 1) Put out of their lives the things that did not belong, or 2) Follow the ark, especially considering the difficult places that it would lead them? Which is the most difficult aspect of sanctification, letting go of sin, or taking hold of God?

CHANCES ARE GOOD they **WOULD HAVE DONE NEITHER** without God’s help. They needed God’s help in order to do both. God was faithful to help **THEM**, just as He is faithful to help **US**. God is in the **SANCTIFYING BUSINESS**.

CONSIDER THE THINGS GOD USED TO HELP ISRAEL

- 1) HE ALLOWED THEM TO EXPERIENCE **TERRIBLE BONDAGE IN EGYPT**. That bondage gave them a **desire to leave**. Had they stayed in the condition they were in originally under Joseph, they would never have left Egypt. Some people would never come to Christ except God allowed their lives to fall into shambles. (**Rom 8:20**), “For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,”

When they cried out to God for help, He sent **MOSES**. Upon Moses' arrival **THINGS BEGAN TO GET WORSE**. The Pharaoh took away **THEIR STRAW** and yet they had to make just as many bricks. **WHEN A LOST PERSON** begins to think about coming to Christ, Satan often begins to throw all kinds of **obstacles** in their way. But their misery is used to help them let go of their old life.

- 2) God gave them a **MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE**. It took **TEN PLAGUES**, but God brought what was necessary to help them let go of their old life. At the conclusion of the tenth plague, they marched out of Egypt, into the wilderness.
- 3) They needed help to make it through the wilderness. God provided **SUPERNATURAL GUIDANCE** through **THE CLOUD OF HIS PRESENCE** located up above them both day and night.
- 4) The **CLOUD** took them to the edge of **THE RED SEA**. They were trapped with the sea in front and the Egyptian army behind. God miraculously opened the waters and they walked across on dry ground. After crossing, the waters closed in behind them. They would never be able return to Egypt by that route again. God often **BURNS THE BRIDGES** of the old life behind a new believer so they will not go back into their old lifestyle. Without God's help, they would have ended up right back where they started.
- 5) **GOD TOOK THEM UP TO THE EDGE** of the Promised Land. They sent out twelve spies to survey the land. Ten spies came back with a negative report and **TOLD THE CAMP THEY SHOULD NOT GO ON WITH GOD**. They said the cities were fortified and there were giants in the land. Israel agreed with the negative report and decided **NOT TO FOLLOW THE CLOUD OF GOD'S PRESENCE**.
Because of their unbelief and refusal to go on, God let them wander **FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS**. In that desert they **EXPERIENCED dust, heat, scorpions and tent living**. **THEY WANDERED FORTY YEARS BECAUSE** they refused to go on with God when He wanted them to go.
- 6) **AFTER FORTY YEARS HAD PASSED, GOD OFFERED ISRAEL A SECOND CHANCE TO GO ON WITH HIM**. He led them up to the **JORDAN RIVER** and told them to get ready to cross over. They knew better than to tell God He did not know what was best for them. **THEY FOLLOWED THE CLOUD** demonstrating they were willing to **go on with God and take His promises**.
- 7) **AFTER THEY CROSSED THE JORDAN, THE RIVER CLOSED BEHIND THEM**. God was saying to them that He had no intention of them returning to their **OLD SELF-LIFE**. God was closing all those exit doors behind them.

S GOD HELPED THEM TO OBEY ALL THE WAY!

REMEMBER, THERE IS A JORDAN RIVER IN THE LIFE OF EVERY BELIEVER. WE ALL HAVE TO DECIDE if we are going to go on with God. We will never cross Jordan EXCEPT GOD CREATES IN US such A DISSATISFACTION for the world, for tent living, for

wilderness heat, that we finally say “*WHEREVER HE LEADS I WILL GO.*”

PERHAPS SOMEONE IS IN A SPIRITUAL WILDERNESS THIS VERY DAY. There is a genuine need to cross over Jordan and move on with God. **PERHAPS THAT SOMEONE IS YOU.** The problem is you are like Israel was before they spent forty years in the wilderness. You have all but told God **YOU HAVE NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF EVER GIVING full allegiance** to Him.

- YOU LIKE **THE DIRT** on your **spiritual clothes**.
- YOU LIKE **THE DUST OF THE WORLD** on your feet.
- YOU LIKE **someone else** carrying the load in God’s kingdom while you go **fishing, golfing, vacationing, T.V. watching** or **money making**.
- YOU HAVE BEEN LIKE THAT **FOR YEARS** AND YOU HAVE **NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER** of GIVING YOUR ALL to Christ. Loving God with all your **heart, soul, mind and strength** is **THE LAST ITEM** on your list of priorities, and **UNLESS GOD HELPS YOU, you will never cross Jordan and go on with God.**

WELL, GET READY! If you truly belong to the Lord, get ready for **Romans 8:28-29.** God is going to form you in **the image of Christ.** GET READY for some **TENT LIVING** and some **MANNA EATING.** IN THAT WILDERNESS HE WILL TEACH YOU TO BE HOLY. He will teach you **TO TRUST HIM.** In that wilderness you will learn to take your spiritual training wheels off and desire advanced Christian living.

With those baby steps toward God will come a temptation to keep the back door open for quick escape. **YOU WILL ENTERTAIN THE NOTION** of turning back to Egypt anytime you desire. What you need to know is that God has **CLOSED THE SEA BEHIND YOU.** He has cut off the escape route from you (Philippians 1:6).

“SANCTIFY YOURSELVES”

- 1) **“PUT OUT OF OUR LIFE THOSE THINGS THAT DO NOT BELONG”**
- 2) **“FOLLOW GOD’S ARK” (“BE DEDICATED TO GOD”)**

IN ORDER TO *CROSS OVER OUR JORDAN* WE MUST:

- I. WE MUST HAVE DIRECTION FROM GOD
- II. WE MUST BE DEDICATED TO GOD

III. WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD

IF YOU WILL FOLLOW GOD’S ARK, you will have some of the most **AMAZING** and **AWE-INSPIRING** experiences that life has to offer. You will experience (**John 10:10**), “. . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

(V. 6), “And Joshua spake **UNTO THE PRIESTS,** saying, ‘**TAKE UP THE ARK** of the covenant, and **PASS OVER BEFORE THE PEOPLE.**’ . . . ”

(V. 8), “And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, **YE SHALL STAND STILL IN JORDAN.**”

(V. 13), “And it shall come to pass, **AS SOON AS THE SOLES OF THE FEET OF THE PRIESTS** that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in **THE WATERS OF JORDAN, THAT THE WATERS OF JORDAN SHALL BE CUT OFF . . .**”

(V. 15-16), “And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) { 16 } That **THE WATERS** which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and **WERE CUT OFF**: and **THE PEOPLE PASSED OVER RIGHT AGAINST JERICHO.**”

S They did not use **BOATS**. They did not have to build **A BRIDGE**. What they did was follow the Lord. Once they got their feet wet in obedience to the Lord, **THE RIVER JORDAN STOPPED FLOWING**. God blocked the water off at the city of **ADAM** approximately **17 miles north** of them and they walked across on dry ground. In a few moments all their concerns about how to cross the Jordan were alleviated.

S **“WHEN GOD GUIDES, GOD PROVIDES”**

S Remember what was said earlier **REGARDING FAITH AND MOVING MOUNTAINS**. If you, by faith under God’s leading, tell a mountain to move and it is God’s will, you can move mountains. If God wants the mountain moved and you pray in faith, that mountain will move. If God wants a river to stop flowing, it will stop flowing. It is amazing what God has done in response to genuine faith.

Some years ago I heard of **A CHURCH IN NEW JERSEY** had just purchased some new property. One their **EIGHT ACRES** on a wooded hillside they had built a new church with education facilities. As they were about to move in, the city placed **A RESTRAINING ORDER** on them because their parking space was inadequate. They were in a fix for two reasons. They had used all their available funds and their was a forty-foot high mountain a good part of their eight acres. They could not financially the cost of having the mountain moved. The pastor stood before his congregation and reminded them of Jesus’ words regarding moving mountains. He asked them to come and pray together on **WEDNESDAY NIGHT. THURSDAY MORNING** the pastor received a phone call from **THE TELEPHONE COMPANY**. The voice said, “Pastor, we are going to build a new building in the city and the site we have purchased is swampy. We need more landfill in order to build. We have checked the soil behind your church and we find it has the right mixture of soil, clay and rock. Would you sell some of that land to us?” The pastor said, “I don’t know, it is the only mountain we have.” To make a long story short, the phone company moved **40,000 SQUARE YARDS** of dirt and provided enough funds to pave all the parking lots. (Luke 1:37)

— **WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD** —

IN ORDER TO *GO ON WITH GOD*:

- I. WE MUST **HAVE DIRECTION FROM GOD**
- II. WE MUST **BE DEDICATED TO GOD**
- III. WE MUST **DEPEND UPON GOD**

S **IS GOD WAITING FOR YOU TO GET YOUR FEET WET?** God often waits until we step out in faith before He opens the way for us.

- S **WHAT BLESSINGS WILL YOU MISS IF YOU DO NOT GO ON WITH GOD?** How about your **FAMILY?** What about your **CHURCH?**
- S **TAKE OFF THE SPIRITUAL TRAINING WHEELS** and go on with God. After you cross **THE RED SEA** go forward with God and **CROSS THE JORDAN RIVE, TOO.** It will amaze you what God will do with your life.