

Preparing for God's Work

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Date: 30 April 2017

Preacher: Willard Lyons

[0:00] Turn in your Bibles with me, if you will, to Joshua chapter 3, the Old Testament book of Joshua chapter 3.

! We'll look into and see what God has in store. Stand with me, if you will, while we read the passage in honor of God's Word. This morning, Joshua chapter number 3, and let's see what God says.

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.

And it came to pass after three days that the officers went through the host, and they commanded the people, saying, When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, burying it, then you shall remove him from your place and go after it.

Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Come not near unto it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way heretofore.

[1:25] And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. 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. 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.

And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When you are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither and hear the words of the Lord your God.

And Joshua said, Hereby 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, the Hivites and the Perizzites, and the Gergesites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. Now therefore take ye twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every man a tribe, and it shall come to pass, that as soon as the souls 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 also upon a heap.

[3:00] 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. And as they that bear the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bear the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest, that the waters were come down from above, stood and rose up upon a heap, very far from the city, that is beside Zeretan.

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.

And the priests that bear 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.

Let's pray together. Father, again, we thank you for who you are. Thank you for the privilege that you've given us today to acknowledge who you are and to worship you in spirit and in truth.

So, Father, thank you for this time together with these precious people, your people, your church. And so, Father, I pray that as we meet together now and look into your word, that you will indeed speak to us through your word, that your spirit will invade our heart, if you will, and permeate it,

penetrate it with what you have for us as church collectively, but also in our lives individually.

[4 : 38] And so, Father, we pray, God, that you will bless it, that you will honor your son and honor yourself through it, and give us the ability and the grace to respond in obedience to what you say to us today.

And we'll thank you for it in Jesus' name. For his sake we do pray. Amen. Thank you. Be seated, if you will. This was a time of transition in the covenant nation of God.

Moses, who has led them out of Egyptian bondage and toward the land of their inheritance, is now dead. He has died. God took him upon the mount, and there, because of his unbelief, Moses passed away, and God buried him, it says.

God did give Moses the opportunity to gaze upon the land from that height, to see the land that he had promised to Abram and his seed after him. And so he got a glimpse of that, but didn't get to walk into that place at that particular time.

He died. And so the nation is now without the man that they've known forever, if you will, as their leader, as God's man, as the one that directed them in the design and will and purposes of God.

[5 : 55] So now it's time for someone else to take the reins. It wasn't by vote. It was by God's design and God's choice. And Joshua now is the man that is to lead the covenant nation after the death of Moses.

Now he's no stranger to the people of Israel. You remember back in Exodus chapter 17, Joshua was the one that led Israel into battle against the Amalekites.

And remember, that's the time when Moses stood up on the hill and raised his arms. And as long as his arms were raised, the people of Israel were able to win and succeed.

But when Moses' arms got tired and his arms fell, the Amalekites were successful. And so remember, it was Aaron and Hur then that went up into the hill and to the hilltop where Moses was. And they would each hold an arm up so Moses, as he sat on a rock now, could raise his hands and the people of Israel could be successful. Joshua was the one that led that battle.

[7 : 09] And they defeated the Amalekites at that time. And so he's no stranger to the people of Israel. Deuteronomy chapter 34, verse 9 says, as Moses kind of ordained him to leadership, that Scripture says that he was then a man full of wisdom.

As Moses had ordained him for that particular office he's about to take after the death of Moses through the laying on of the hands of Moses. So as a result, Scripture said the people then followed Joshua.

So he's no stranger. The people know who he is. Now it's important for us to recognize the proper name for Joshua was Hosea or Hosea. He was a prince of the tribe of Ephraim.

So he's an important person amongst the nation. The name Joshua itself is the name Jehoshua. A couple of different renderings to that.

One is the idea that Jehovah or God is help. Another one is that Jehovah saves. All right? So it's a significant name here for Joshua to this new leader of the covenant nation of Israel after they have now come out of the land of Egypt.

[8 : 32] Remember, they were destined for that land that God said he was going to give them. That land that God had shown to Moses before he died.

And so now they were going to be led by Joshua. He was the one that God commissioned to take up that task to bring them in to that land of inheritance, the land of promise, the land of Canaan.

All right? So it's significant here that his name would be Joshua or Jehoshua. Jehovah helps or Jehovah saves.

Picture of God's redeeming purpose. Realize with me that one of the great purposes of God in all of his dealings with the nation of Israel and for us as well is that God wants them and us not just to see who he is, but in all that he is that he relates to us in all that he is.

He wants Israel here to see that his presence indeed is with the covenant nation. After all, they've come out of 400 years of bondage with, in essence, no real evidence of the presence of God.

[9 : 52] So now he wants them to know and see that he's present with them, but also, in that, he wants them to see his power, that the power that he possesses is what he possesses in his presence with them.

So it's going to be on his, on their, rather, behalf. All right? So, in the text that we've just read, that's before us here, we find that the mission for Joshua now, the commission that God has given him and the instructions was that he was to now lead these people into the land of their inheritance, that

land that God had promised from Abram through on that he would give to the seed of Abraham, and now it's the covenant nation.

All right? So take a look again with me, if you will, in, in, in, let's go to chapter one, though, if you will. Go to chapter one first. Important for us here.

Notice what God promises here to the nation, or through, to Joshua concerning the nation of Israel. Some great promises that God makes to, to Joshua.

Verse one, after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, notice it's Jehovah, the servant of Jehovah, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses, my servant is dead.

[11:27] Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

Now, I want you to notice something in particular that he says here. Not only does everything that God does have a purpose, but everything that God does and, and designs will come to fruition. He will fulfill that. Notice how he says this here. Arise, go over this Jordan unto the land which I do give to them, even the children of Israel.

Doesn't say, the land that I shall give to them. He's already given it to them. In his heart and mind, he's already given it to them. Now, that tells me something here that we can grasp a hold of.

In God's great design or master plan, if you will, everything is already set out. Everything is already set forth. It, in the heart and mind of God, is already an accomplished purpose.

[12:36] All right? The people of Israel are going to go into the land of Canaan and they are going to possess the land.

Now, there's still scrimmage. We saw something last night, I guess it was, about Israel's fight and battle and desire to start the covenant nation once again in the land of Israel, have a land of their own and the design and plan was that and hope was that there would be a peace with Israel, with the Jews and with the Arab nations.

Yeah, that was the hope and the design and the plan. But of course, I told my wife, I said, well, didn't work yet. Amen? There's still strife, a lot of strife, heavy strife between Israel, the Jews and the Arabs in that land.

But one day, that'll all be settled and God will be the one that settles that. So you see, when God promises here, I'm going to give you this land, this is the land I've already given you, I just want you to go in and possess it, that God has already designed in his heart and mind as an accomplished purpose, in fact, that land belongs to them.

All right? The land which I do give them even to the children of Israel. Now notice verse 3, every place, Joshua, every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you as I said unto Moses.

[14:19] Then he gives the boundaries from the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites under the great sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your coast.

Now look at verse 5, tremendous, tremendous promise here. Boy, isn't it good to know the degree to which we can trust God? Look what he says.

Now that's going to be a monumental task because Joshua and the people of Israel recognize, hey, there's people living in this land and they consider that to be their possession.

So it's not going to be an easy thing. But God makes Joshua a promise here. Verse 5, there shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake me. Tremendous promise, but a promise all of us can claim as long as we abide in the will of God.

[15:26] Amen? And secure the purposes of God through our lives. Be strong and of good courage. Alright? Alright. Joshua, I'm going to be with you.

I'm going to protect you if you will. I'm going to put a shield around you. Alright? So, as a result of that, be strong and of good courage.

Boy, we can take a long path there. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of might, of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye might be able to withstand the wiles of the devil.

That's for us as the church. Amen? As believers in the day of grace. Be strong! Not in our own strength, but in the strength of God. And, be courageous.

Be of good courage. Yeah. Don't let your knees shake in the midst of the battle. I'm with you. I've designed this. I've promised you.

[16 : 29] So, just go do it. Amen? Be strong and of a good courage, for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, according which Moses, my servant, commanded thee. Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

We'll come back to that. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein, day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.

For then, here's the promise, for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Yeah. Have I not commanded thee?

Be strong and of good courage. Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed. Look at this. For Jehovah, thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

[17 : 41] That's good news. That's good news. So God makes the promises. And now we find in chapter 2, the process begins.

Look at chapter 2. You know the story well. Joshua sees the wisdom in sending out spies into the land just to check it out and see what's going on there. So he sends two men into the land, across Jordan into the land.

They come to the house of a harlot named Rahab. Now why? I don't know. But perhaps it's because, I'm not going to speculate, but perhaps it's because it would not be an ordinary thing for strangers to go into the house of a harlot.

So they go in there and they tell her what all they're there for and tells her not to say anything to anyone about them being there and why they are there.

All right? So they, she makes a place for them up on the roof where they'll stay the night. Now, but I want you to notice something here.

[18 : 51] Something tremendous. In verse number 8 of chapter 2, before they were laid down, in other words, before they went down to sleep, she came up unto them upon the roof and she said unto the men, I know that the Lord, and she uses the word Jehovah here, I know that Jehovah hath given you the land and that your terror is fallen upon us and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

For we have heard how the Lord, how Jehovah dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt and what you did unto the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side of Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.

And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you. Now, look at this statement.

For Jehovah your God he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath. That's a heathen saying that. Amen?

Notice something here. God has been busy. God has been at work behind the scenes. In everything he did amongst the people of Israel, the renown of that spread.

[20 : 27] No doubt when Egypt was struck with plagues, the renown of Moses and then the God of Moses who caused that began to stir. And now when they came to the Red Sea and it seemed like there was no hope because the armies of Pharaoh were marching and advancing behind them to put them to death, God parts that sea and they walked through that place kicking up dust on dry ground.

and then God buries the army of Pharaoh after Israel had passed. They had heard that and now fear has stalked them.

They're shaking in their boots because they know the only thing they could consider, the only thing they could get the conclusion to the whole matter is that the God of Israel, Jehovah, is truly the God of heaven and earth.

He's demonstrated that by his power. Wow! Isn't that amazing? I think it ironic that in all that has happened the heathens recognize Jehovah, the God of Israel, as God and they're afraid.

But the people of Israel, they still haven't learned the lesson. Amen? Now, God's people, but they're hard-headed Baptists. Amen? Had to be.

[22:00] Yeah. Yeah. So, Rahab hides them. She makes a bargain with them. And, you know, I'll not say a word, but please make this promise to me that as you come in, that you will spare me and my family.

All right? And so, they make that agreement with her. They go back to the camp and they rehearse in the ears of Joshua what had taken place.

Verse 23, the two men returned and descended from the mountain and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun and told him all things that befell them and said, Joshua, truly, Jehovah hath delivered into our hands all the land, for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

Great news. Now, chapter 3. So, the news has come. God's faithfulness is now being put to the test.

Beginning to see shadows of that faithfulness and the fact that the people are quaking in their boots because of them. They know they're coming and they're fearful. So, there's a preparation that has to be made.

[23:22] All right? Preparation has to be made. Let me ask a question, though, before we get there. You know, I think about the fact that the heathens were fearful.

The renown of Jehovah and what he's done and his power that he possesses and his presence with the people of Israel caused them to fear greatly.

The natural question, I think, that needs to be addressed for us as God's people, as Christians, as the church, is what type of influence have we as a church had in the area around us?

Now, don't misunderstand what I'm saying here. I don't think the people should be quaking when we walk down the street. Amen? But what I'm saying is this. God, in His work with His people Israel, had a renown.

The heathens of the nations around them were aware of what took place. They were influenced by that. A good question for us is, how, what kind of influence, or have we had any influence on the area around the church here, to the point where the people would be interested enough to come and then be drawn to a saving relationship with God.

[25:05] A number of years ago, I went to a, some kind of a conference, I forget what they called it, it was in Punk City, a church, and some people, some of the staff from one of the largest churches in California, very well-known, you'd know the name of the pastor if I told you, his people came to hold this seminar, and you know, it's the ins and outs and what to do and what not to do in ministry type thing.

And I got to listen to some of that and I got to thinking about something, and I asked the question, I raised my hand, asked the question, and I said, let me ask you this, you've got a large, a very large church, very large campus, presence, in the town in California in which you reside.

What difference has your being there made in the community around you? Silence.

Thinking caps went on. And here's what they said. I was amazed. I said, well, pastor, you've got to understand. You know, we live in a very depressed area.

You know, right across the street begins a high crime area, drugs and prostitution and all that stuff. You just got to understand. I said, where do most of you people come from?

[26:41] Oh, they drive for miles to come to church here. Yeah. I mean, 40, 50 miles. to come to church there.

But what about the people right around them? You see, they had a big influence and a lot of it because of the radio programs.

People flocked to be there and say, I've been in their services, that kind of thing. But they were not reaching the people that were there, that God had put them in the midst of.

So what about Highland Park Baptist Church? Let's get down where the rubber meets the road.

Amen? What kind of influence are we having on the people out here?

Do they see us? Do they know what's going on? Do they see, most importantly, do they see the presence of God at work and the power of God at work in the midst of Highland Park Baptist Church?

[27:50] Now, there's a lot of churches that are thriving today on excitement.

You know, you go to their services and the very first thing they have to do is build up the excitement. I mean, get it going, as if that's a sign of spirituality.

reality. But the sad thing is we've got to do those things seemingly because the power of God is not resonant among our people.

Yeah. Yeah. To the extent that when we go and stand or sit down and talk with somebody about Christ, it doesn't seem like the Spirit of God's bearing witness very much.

We want to do all kinds of things to try to bring them in, but we just don't want to go and do it ourselves, which is the biblical way of doing it. They call it lifestyle evangelism where you just go to your acquaintances, your friends, and as you're interacting with them, lead that into a discussion about the relationship to Christ.

[29:11] Have the people out here seen that. I remember when we went to Bosnia, mission trip to Bosnia, they kept telling us, you think you got to recognize this.

It's going to be unlike any other place you could go because of the Orthodox Christian background and all of that, Muslim influence, that this is going to have to be a long-term, talking 10-year relationship here, if anything is going to be accomplished.

And what it really takes is people to go on the field and just meet folks and introduce yourself and interact with them from time to time and just make friends with them to the extent because it takes a long time for them to learn to trust you.

Can't be mechanical, can't be clinical, it's just got to be friend on friend, becoming friends, and then being able then to begin dealing with them about the Lord Jesus after they trust you.

Same thing with I don't care where you go. Amen? Any more today preaching? And you know, statistics prove the pastor is the one that is the least influential in reaching people.

[30:40] Yeah. I heard somebody say one time, shepherds don't beget sheep. Sheep beget sheep.

Amen? Yeah. What a truth. Most influential people in other people's lives are the friends and acquaintances they trust. Those are the ones that can talk to them about Christ.

Christ. All right? How influential are we? All right? In the lives of the people in the midst of where God has placed Highland Park Baptist Church.

Now, look at the preparation. Because the preparation has to be done here. They're going to experience some things they've never experienced before of God.

God's done a lot in their midst. But now, remember he says up here, you're going to, you know, you've never been this way before.

[31:42] From this point, you've never been here before. I'm going to take you to places you've never been. You're going to experience things of me you've never experienced. So there's a preparation that has to take place.

Now take note with me what that preparation is. All right? Now, look at verse 5.

Now, he tells them, you're going to experience some things.

Joshua says in verse number 5. All right? Joshua said unto the people, sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

Now, they've come to the place where they are from Shittim. They come to the river Jordan. They lodge there for three days.

[32:55] It's a three-day preparation time. You see, they've got to get their hearts right. They've got to get themselves ready to experience what God wants them to experience in the days ahead.

The things He's going to do in them, through them, and to them. All right? Sanctify yourself. Literally means, of course, to be set apart, more so here, to be consecrated.

And in reality, what it is here is that they've got to free their minds from anything that would hinder them from being able to focus on what God is doing here and what He's going to do.

They've got to be able to watch and see with spiritual eyes and spiritual minds and a spiritual heart to be able to really comprehend all that God means and all that He's doing here.

Sanctify yourself. Get yourself right. Get yourself ready. You've got to have a right spirit in order for me or in order for yourselves to be able to comprehend and apprehend what it is I'm going to do here.

[34:19] All right. Really three days not a whole lot of time for an outward sanctification here. It's more for an inward sanctification. Turning their heart toward God in faith and trust to be able to with a right heart and mind accept the supernatural things God's going to do here.

All right. Because there's got a purpose in all of this and they've got to grasp a hold of what the purpose is. Now, notice what he says. Sanctify yourselves.

For tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you. The word wonders is the idea of extraordinary works.

Extraordinary. Don't you wish you could be there on the sidelines? Amen? To watch this firsthand. Tomorrow the Lord will do wonders.

among you. All right? So you've got to have that inward sanctification. Trusting God to do what it is he's going to do.

[35 : 31] Boy, we've got to get there. Amen? We've got to get there. To be able to say, God, I know who you are. I know who you are.

And I acknowledge that. God, I need to have my heart, mind, my spirit in such a way that I know without a doubt that I can trust you.

Whatever you do. Have you ever had times in your life where you questioned God? Why did God let that happen to me? Let's see.

It's to be a part of our hearts and mind need to be in a place where we can say in our heart and our spirit, all right, I can trust God in this.

I can trust him in it. Yeah. Yeah. Now, that comes first and foremost from emptying ourselves of ourselves, dying to ourselves, so that we have no will in the matter, but our will is whatever the will of God is.

[36 : 55] And being satisfied with that. Oh, there's the kicker. Amen? It's one thing to try to bring ourselves to the point where we're saying, okay, I recognize whatever God does is right, whatever God does is good, but boy, sometimes I sure don't like it.

Amen? It doesn't matter if we like it or not. Amen? Yeah, it doesn't matter. Our spirit needs to be to the point where we can say within our heart, this is the will of God, I know that's the will of God, I know God has a purpose in that, and I'm satisfied with that.

And the reason we can be satisfied in that is because we know what Romans 8 28 means. We know that all things work for the good eventually to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Amen? Well, God, I thought this was supposed to work out for my good, but it sure stinks. Amen? That's good Baptist theology.

Yeah. Yeah, it's not good. It doesn't feel good, but God, I know it's your will. No. What is it? What is it?

[38 : 17] Paul says over in 1 or 2 Thessalonians? Something to the effect, no, this is not an exact quotation. Yeah.

1 Thessalonians 5.18, In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Amen? Oh, me. Yeah. In everything, good, bad, ugly.

Amen? Just like the movie, the good, the bad, and the ugly. Amen? Give thanks. Thanks. Because this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

And God always has a purpose in that. We don't know what it is sometimes. We don't need to know. We just know that God's in control if we yielded to Him. And He's got a purpose.

[39 : 17] He's going to work in that, and I'm glad He's going to work that purpose out. I can rejoice in that ahead of time. I might not even see what that purpose is, but I can rejoice because I know I can trust Him in that.

Amen? Yeah. Trust Him. That's part of consecration. Coming to that place. Dying to ourselves.

Laying this thing in a proper perspective and recognize the presence of God at work. Now, take note following, if you will.

Verse 10. Oh, verse 9. Let's start there. Verse 9. Joshua said unto the children of Israel, come hither. I love that. I love the word hither.

Come hither. Where was I? Can't find that word.

[40 : 19] Anyway, yeah, verse 9. Come hither and hear the words of the Lord your God. Come hither and hear the words of Jehovah. Starting place. Amen? That's the starting place of experiencing the work and power of God is hearing what He says.

Because we've got to do it exactly the way God says to do it. As a church, that's our starting place. We've got to hear what God says and then proceed.

When you hear what God says and you know with confidence what that is, you can proceed without any question, without any doubt, without any confusion. Amen? And that's what has to happen.

Now, come here, come hither and hear the words of Jehovah, your God. We can personalize it that way. Amen? Your God!

Listen to Him. Hear His words. Joshua said, Hereby shall you know that the living God is among you.

[41:25] Some of you, Israel, have questioned that. Is God really in our presence? Is He really with us? We suffered so much in the wilderness. What's going on here?

Where's God? Joshua said, Come here, listen. You're going to know from what happens here that the living God is among you.

Not just God, but the God that's alive, the God that's active, the God that's present with you and actively busy in your life, individually and collectively.

Know that He's among you. And that He, without fail, will drive out from before you the Canaanite, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Gergesites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites, and all the other sites.

Now, verse 11, Behold the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the earth, passeth over before you into Jordan. Then He instructs them to take up the twelve stones, all right, so that they can put a tribute, memorial, to what God does on the other side of the river.

[42:42] Now, because He said what God's going to do, God's going to divide the water. when those priests that bear the ark, which is the presence of God, steps in the brink of that river, which was at flood tide, by the way, those waters are going to separate.

And the great thing about that is, you know, they're going to separate, they're going to walk up on dry ground through the riverbed to the other side. those waters were abated far enough away that they were not a distraction to the people of Israel when they passed over.

I like the Cecil B. DeMille's movie of the Ten Commandments, it was on here a while back, and they passed through the Red Sea, and boy, it's about as far, it seems like it's about as far as from that speaker right there to that speaker right there, and the people walking in there fearful that that's going to fall.

Now, here in particular, it was far enough away that it did not become a distraction to them. They just all walked through on dry ground. Now, the power and miracle working of God.

Now, they were to walk behind it 200 cubits distance, one cubit is about 18 inches, so you can figure what the measurements are there, over 2,000 feet, maybe 3,000 feet, all right?

[44:20] They were standing, walked behind a 3,000 feet distance. The reason being is because they had to be far enough back where they could see it, see where it's going, because, and here's the key for us, folks, remember God had said, you've not been here before.

The Ark of the Covenant was going to cut the road. All right? They were not to look for a road that it was going down because it was going to cut a new road.

The Ark of the Covenant, the presence of God, was going to make that way that He wants them to go in. You're to watch and look at the Ark, the road maker, if you will, and see the path that you're to take.

Just follow it. You don't need to worry about where the road's going to be. Just follow the Ark.

Amen? Follow the presence of God. Now, you and I, we follow the map.

That's the Scriptures that God speaks to us through. Illuminates our hearts to. And then we do that by the direction of the Spirit of God to see what God says and show where God wants us to go.

[45:47] Amen? Oh, that's imperative. It's imperative. But for that to happen, our hearts have to be right with God.

Now, they came to the River Jordan, verse 13, following, they stepped into that flooded river.

The waters departed, just like God said they would. Now, what's the results?

chapter 4, two memorials were established.

Joshua had already instructed some of the leaders of the twelve tribes to pick up a rock and carry it across with you. When you get to the other side, pile those up as a memorial.

[46:47] but Joshua himself took twelve stones, had to be smaller ones, amen, and put them in the middle of that riverbed or put them in the riverbed where the priests were standing for the Ark of the Covenant as a memorial.

Here's the key. Boy, why did he do that? I'm not quite so sure why in the middle of the river, but the one on the other side, Joshua said to them, you do that so that in days to come, when your kids see that, you can explain to them that's a memorial to remind us and speak to us of what God had done

in demonstrating his power to us in parting the river Jordan.

Oh, our kids, our grandkids need to see, need to be reminded, need to be told about the experiences we've had in seeing the presence and power of God at work in our churches, in our lives.

Because so many kids today have never experienced that. Amen? Don't know anything about that. If we're going to go from one generation to the next, experiencing God.

Now, the results, God's proved his faithfulness. people have experienced the power of God through a demonstration of his presence with the people, his love for them.

[48:50] You know, recognize that the Ark of the Covenant is representative not only of the presence of God, but remember what's inside that, that broken law that's covered with the blood of the sacrificial animals.

it's a picture of love and grace as well, that directs and leads the way for God's people. Now, look at verse number 24 of chapter 4.

Well, verse 22, let's start there. Then you shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry ground. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you until you were passed over as Jehovah your God did at the Red Sea, which he dried up from there before us until we were gone over.

That all the people of the earth might know the hand of Jehovah that is mighty, that it is mighty, that ye might fear the Lord your God forever.

Now, look at chapter 5, verse 1. Came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the other side of Jordan, westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea, heard that Jehovah had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their hearts melted, neither was there any spirit in them anymore because of the children of Israel.

[50:38] Wow. What kind of influence are we? Do we have the power of God at resident within us through the spirit of God? Because we've sanctified ourselves and yielded.

Church, I adjure you, prepare yourself for the journey that God's got for you. Brother Don's gone. You're looking for God's direction. Prepare yourself for whatever journey it is that God's got for you. And in all of that journey, experiencing the presence of God and His power, to see Him take you through experiences you've never been before.

God wants to do that. Amen? Prepare. Prepare your own lives, prepare your own hearts.

That's where it's got to begin. Every life sanctifying itself before God, or being sanctified before God. getting the heart ready and right and focused.

[51:59] And then to do that collectively as well as a church. Amen. Amen.