

Focus passage: Joshua 3:7-17

7 The Lord said to Joshua, "Today 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 And as for you, command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, 'When you come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.'"

9 And Joshua said to the people of Israel, "Come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God." 10 And Joshua said, "Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites. 11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan. 12 Now therefore take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man. 13 And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap."

14 So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, 15 and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest), 16 the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho. 17 Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

What stands out to you from this passage?

What leads the way out in front of the people of Israel? What do you think this signifies?

*This is a day 40 years in the making. In what ways is this event different from their initial approach of the promised land? **Refer to Joshua 2:22-24** for one way--the spies report.*

In the beginning of this book, Joshua repeats the phrase "be strong and courageous" several times. Why do they need to hear these words?

*This is not the first time God parts waters for Israel to pass through. As a reminder, **read Exodus 14:10-23**. What parallels are there between parting the Red Sea and parting the Jordan? What is different?*

As Israel cross the Jordan, they are not fleeing their enemy, rather they are walking into enemy territory. They crossed the Red Sea to escape danger, they now cross the waters confronting it. How hard is it to follow God, even when we know he is with us, when he leads us into frightening situations?

*How does God assure them that he is truly with them as they enter a land filled with enemies? What assurances do we have that our God is with us, even in the trying times of life? **Read Romans 8:26-39** to see what can separate us from the presence of God.*

How can you apply this Scripture to your life?

