

Place: Lurgan Baptist 23:11:2010

Reading: Joshua 3:1-17

THE VICTORY OF FAITH

5. FACING THE IMPOSSIBLE

“ The difficult we will do immediately, the impossible may take us a little longer.” Following this slogan, battalions of courageous and hardworking men called Seabees followed combat units into newly conquered territories during World War 2, to build barracks, bridges, roads and landing stripes. Israel might have desired the same human assistance. But accompanying Israel’s army, to enable them to do the impossible was God Himself, and Israel needed the assurance of His presence. For after 40 years of wandering in the desert, thinking they had at last come to their own homeland, they faced what appeared to be an insurmountable difficulty. Now life is like that. Sometimes when hopes are the highest, problems suddenly appear which are as formidable to us as the swirling waters of the Jordan were to the Israelites.

After hearing a message at a Bible conference on how to cope with discouragement, three people greeted the preacher. *A young mother who had not slept the previous night because her husband had walked in, and told her he was divorcing her, a pastor whose teenage daughter was rebelling against God, and a Christian worker whose husband had entered the hospital for treatment of a brain tumour.* One preacher said, **“ the trouble is that we are facing problems that we cannot solve.”** Have you come to your Jordan ? What is the impossible factor in your life ? What is your major obstacle that prevents you from entering into the Canaan life of victory ? Now it’s not hard to imagine what was going through the people’s minds at this very moment. Their journey in the wilderness was all that they had known. Now, the Lord was telling them to go into a land filled with giants, it had fortified cities, and the military people were armed

with something called iron. As the Israelites, waited for the final moment, no doubt they were filled with fear. Here they were standing on the bank of the River Jordan and what had they. Well,

1. They Had the Performance of their God in the Past:

Do you recall what Moses said to them, “ *And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart whether thou keep His commandments or no.* ” (Deut 8:2) Moses was in effect saying, “ *I want you to reflect upon all the ways which the Lord your God has led you in your wilderness experience.* ” My for 40 years, God’s people had been wandering in the wilderness, yet God wonderfully and miraculously cared for them. They had got into the wilderness through the miracle of walking through the Red Sea and then God gave them a guidance system. Imagine, every day for 40 years, they were led by a pillar of cloud. At night they were led by a pillar of fire. They were wandering but God was leading them. Indeed the Lord says, “ *And I have led you forty years in the wilderness, your clothes are not waxen old upon you and thy shoe is not waxen old upon they foot.* ” (Deut 29:5) Forty years and they never wore out.

Now here they were standing on the bank of the swollen Jordan and fear was in their hearts. Behind them was the Red Sea and the wilderness. Before them was an unknown land. Before them was the great need for food and clothing they would surely encounter on the other side, but behind them was the remembrance of all that God had done to take care of them. My is this not one of the best ways to face the unknown future ? Just to reflect on God’s blessing in the past. For God’s help in the past is an encouragement to look for God’s help in the present.

2. They had the Power of their God in the Present:

It’s been said that the only difference between a live wire and a dead one is the connection. My a supernatural source of

strength is available in each generation to enable God's children to cross the rivers of impossibility.

Now last time we focused on the faith of an Individual, Rahab but (Ch 3) focuses on the faith of a Nation, Israel. You see the Book of Joshua is all about "***The Victory of Faith,***" and the glory that comes to God when His people trust and obey. British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli said, "*the world was never conquered by intrigue, it was conquered by faith.*" The theme of the Book of Joshua, is the theme of the Book of Hebrews "*Let us go on.*" (Heb 6:1) and the only way to go on is by faith. Unbelief says, "*Let's go back to where it's safe,*" but faith says, "*Let's go forward to where God is working.*" (Num 14:1-4) "*And this is the victory that overcomes the world even our faith.*" (1 Jan 5:4) The situation in which Israel now found them certainly presented a challenge to their faith. Indeed here in (Ch 3) we note how their faith was **Frustrated, Stimulated, and Vindicated.** Notice here,

(1) THE OBSTACLE THAT FRUSTRATED FAITH

Do you see how the Chapter begins ? "*And Joshua rose early in the morning.*" (3:1) That phrase is repeated three other times in the Book of Joshua. (6:12 7:16 8:10) It indicates that Joshua was no shirkers or slacker, but a worker. Abraham rose early in the morning. (Gen 21:3) Moses rose early in the morning (Ex 24:4 34:4) David rose early in the morning (Ps 57:8) And do you recall what it was said of our Blessed Lord ? "*And in the morning rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed.*"

(Mk 1:35) I have a feeling Joshua got up early in the morning for the reason you and I ought to get up early in the morning also. I have a feeling Joshua had a quiet time in the early morning and began his day with God. You ought to begin your day with God. Every Christian ought to begin his or her day that way. My you ought to see the face of God before you see the face of people. You ought to get alone with God before you go out among people. When you get alone with God, get in His Word and pray at the beginning of

the day, then you set the course for the day. And you get things in proper order. Get your relationship with God right first then you are able to deal with your relationships with other people. So, Joshua is getting ready to go. He gets up early in the morning.

It might help if I point out that the opening verses in (Ch 3) follow immediately upon what is said in (Ch 1) You see (Ch 2) is a kind of parenthesis describing the experiences of the spies. Look back at (1:10) Now what is said in (3:2) takes up the story from there. Now a great deal happened in these three days. But now geographically Israel is beside the river Jordan, quite a daunting prospect I imagine. For look at,

(a) THE PROBLEM THEY FACED:

The people must have wondered "*how does Joshua expect us to cross Jordan ?*" You see there was,

(1) Jordan's Turbulent Waters:

Look if you will at (3:15) This strong rapid current was probably due to the melting of the winter snows of Mount Hermon in the north. Jordan was now a turbulent torrent. The very word "*Jordan,*" means "*descender.*" You see, the river drops approximately 1000 feet as it makes its way from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea. This descent creates a natural current, but during flood time the speed increases greatly. In fact, much of the shoreline is swept away. Thus it would be impossible for the men to cross, much less the women, the children, the livestock and their supplies. Could a more unsuitable time have been chosen for a crossing ? Humanly speaking it was impossible. The obstacle that frustrated faith lay between Israel and the Promised Land. *What is your Jordan ?* What is the obstacle that prevents you from living all that Canaan symbolises ? What is the thing that comes between you and the fulfilment of Gods will ? (1)

(2) Jericho's Threatening Walls:

Which already, could be seen in the distance. (3:16) You see, Israel crossed over the Jordan where it was closest to Jericho. It was about five miles or so to Jericho, but being this close to Jericho meant that the crossing would be observed by the citizens of Jericho. My Jericho was one of the strongest cities of Canaan. *It held the key to Canaan for if Joshua could establish a bridge-head here then the people of the land would be divided.* But Israel might well be forgiven if they were as fearful of what lay beyond Jordan as they were of its rushing waters. It should be not difficult for us at times to recognise our own immediate threatening Jericho, a Jericho that might be the fulcrum on which the whole of our lives turn. It may be a public confession of Christ, an apology that ought to be made, a letter of reconciliation to be written, or the ending of some family feud. My whatever it is, our personal Jericho must be faced and conquered if we're to know the rest of Canaan. There was the (a) but look at,

(b) THE PRESSURE THEY FELT:

You see, there was a moral and a spiritual pressure upon Israel at this time. Look at the pressure they felt,

(1) Morally:

Look at (3:5) He was telling them to get cleaned up, to get themselves right with God, because tomorrow the Lord would do wonderful things for them. Now sanctification in the New Testament is in three tenses. First, there is **Positional Sanctification:** for the moment a person is born again he is sanctified. Second, there is **Progressive Sanctification:** as the believer lives his daily life, yielding it to the indwelling Spirit. Third, there is **Perfect Sanctification:** for when the Lord returns for His church, sanctification will be complete for “ *we shall see Him as He is,* ” and we shall be like Him. (1 Jn 3:2) Thus the Christian has been sanctified, he is being sanctified and he will be sanctified. It's interesting that the first time the term “ *sanctify,* ” occurs in the Bible is in (Gen 2:3) where we read, “ *And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.* ” That

is, God separated the seventh day from the other six days and set it apart for His own particular use. The lesson is not difficult to see here. It instructs us that if God is going to work wonders for us, we must have pure lives.

F. B. Meyer says, “ *Our problem is often that we are not clean enough for God to use us.* ” Is that not so true ? Daily we fill our minds with the filth of the television, we absorb the jokes of the world, we live as near the world as we can. No wonder, God can't use us. 1.

2. Spiritually:

Would they not remember what happened at Kadesh-barnea when a previous generation were brought to the edge of the Promised Land but failed to go in ? Would they not be conscious that if they failed to go forward this time, God would turn away from them completely ? Is there not a sense in which God hems His people in like this ? God sees to it that we are brought to a position where there is no alternative but to cast ourselves utterly in faith on Him. Now they had already said, “ *all that thou commandest us we will do.* ” (1:16) But its one thing to say it in theory, and quite another thing to act upon it, when you're standing by the banks of the River Jordan and Jericho is over there, an unknown quantity and God is saying “ *over you go.* ” This is the position to which Israel were brought, and this is precisely the position God seeks to bring about in our lives. God hems us in on occasions, so that we are put on the spot, and we either cast ourselves utterly on Him, or we fail and draw back. So there was (a) (b) and there was,

(c) THE PATHWAY THEY FOLLOWED:

Look if you will at (3:4) Think of the Herculean task that confronted Joshua. Here was an untried leader guiding an unsettled people into an unknown country. “ *Ye have not passed this way heretofore.* ” I don't know of any phrase that better depicts the adventure of daily living. No-one knows what a day may bring forth. Each day is unexplored territory. But how reassuring to know that God is with us when our

path carries us over new territory. Sickness, pain, bereavement, failure, misunderstanding, financial difficulties, marital breakdown. In days like these we hear the Lord's voice saying, "*Be of good courage, be not afraid.*" (1:9) Now when you think of the problem they faced, the pressure they felt and the pathway they followed, you're beginning to get a glimpse of the (1) But look at the second picture we have here.

(2) THE OBJECT THAT STIMULATED FAITH

Look if you will at (3:3) The Ark is mentioned sixteen times in chapters three and four. It's called "*the ark of the covenant,*" ten times, "*the ark of the Lord,*" three times, and simply "*the ark,*" three times. Well, what was the ark? Let's refresh our memories by turning to (Ex 25:10-22) The Ark was nothing massive. It was used in the worship of the people in the tabernacle in the wilderness. This Ark of the Covenant was a relatively small piece of furniture. It stood about 2 feet 3 inches high, 3 feet 9 inches long, and 2 feet 3 inches broad. In the Ark was some manna, Aaron's rod, and the ten commandments. It was made of acacia wood with an overlay of gold within and without. A crown of gold was made round about it. Four gold rings were on the sides to hold the gold covered staves which were used to transport the Ark. On the top of the Ark was a gold top called "*The Mercy Seat,*" over which the two cherubim stood. And God said, "*And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat.*" (Ex 25:22) This Ark of the Covenant was in effect God's throne on earth. It's interesting that of the seven articles of furniture in the tabernacle, the first described is the ark of the covenant. You see, nothing must come before God. He is above all and must be first. He is Alpha, the first, the beginning.

He is all and in all. By Him all things consist. In things divine, the place to start with is God. Not only is He first, but we must put Him first. We must seek "*first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,*" (Matt 6:33) that in "*all things He might have pre-eminence,*" (Col 1:18)

Now what did the ark symbolise? (Ps 80:1) I think we can say that this Ark symbolised three things. It symbolised,

(a) THE PRESENCE OF GOD: TO GLADDEN US:

Look if you will at (3:3, 11) Now a literal rendering of this verse goes like this, "*Behold the ark of the covenant. The Lord of all the earth is about to proceed before you into Jordan.*" Do you see that title? "*The Lord of all the earth.*" (3:11, 13) This is the first time it appears in the Bible. It is found seven times in Scripture. The reference here is to God the Father, and signifies His absolute sovereignty and universal dominion. He is in charge of everything. Thus it was clear to Israel that Jehovah Himself and not a golden box was present to lead them. The Ark must have been a tremendous encouragement to their faith for it meant that their God was going before them and opening up the way. God had promised Moses,

"*My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.*" (Ex 33:14) And when the nation had marched through the wilderness the Ark had gone before them (Num 10:33) and Moses would say, "*Rise up Lord and let thine enemies be scattered: and let them that hate thee flee before thee.*" (Num 10:35) You see, the presence of the Ark was a guarantee of the presence of the Lord.

When the Philistines heard later that the Ark of the Lord had come into the camp of Israel, do you know what they said? "*God is come into the camp.*" (1 Sam 4:7) Look at what Joshua says in (3:10) "*Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you Behold the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.*" (3:10-11)

Joshua was saying, "*You want to know if the living God is among you? Here's how you will know. The ark of the covenant is in your midst.*" They had the presence of God in the here and now. Is this not one of the most important principles when facing the challenge of the future the unknown territory. To know that the Lord is with us. Now did you notice that important detail in (3:4) They were to keep a distance of about three thousand yards, from the Ark

for this was a holy piece of furniture from the Tabernacle and was not to be treated carelessly. They were to keep their distance. Why ? A number of reasons are given. Some say that the distance symbolically represented the Law which Israel was under, which keeps men at a distance from God. Others say the distance was necessary because the Ark was holy. Still others say, the distance means we should not have an irreverent familiarity with holy things. In other words the distance reminded them of the sacredness of the Ark and the holiness of God it represented. My God is our companion as we go through life but don't treat Him like a "buddy." Have you lost this spirit of respect and reverence for God ? Have we as a fellowship ? God is not "some buddy equal to us," but the Sovereign and Holy Lord of all the earth. A.W. Pink, says, "We scarcely recognise Him He seems to have lost His identity." Yes this Ark symbolised, (a) But it also symbolised,

(b) THE WORD OF GOD: TO GUIDE US:

You see in the Ark were the tables of stone, the ten commandments. (Heb 9:4) Moreover there's an interesting rendering of (3:4) that I want to give you. "Ye have not travelled in this manner heretofore." As A.W. Pink says, this statement has more to do with the manner in which they were being led, than the pathway on which they were being led. You see, the word "way," in (3:4) can not only mean a pathway, but it can also mean the "manner, or mode," of doing something. (Gen 19:31 Is 10:24) So when we couple the "manner," meaning of "way," in (3:4) with the statement in (3:3) about when they see the Ark they are to move, we become aware that this all has to do with the manner in which God is leading Israel. In other words, God was using a different means to lead them now than He had the previous forty years. You see, they not travelled with the Ark in front of them before. Do you recall that previously when they moved, it was the pillar of cloud and fire that had gone in front of them, (Exod 13:21) and the Ark of the covenant was in their midst. (Num 2:17)

But now significantly they were to travel with the Ark not in the midst of them, but in front of them. *You see the pillar of cloud would no longer lead them, they were instead to follow the Ark of the Covenant.* Always before they looked to the cloud in the sky for guidance and paid little attention to the Ark when it was carried by the priests. But now it is different. *They must focus on the Ark and the Ark symbolises the Word of God.* The pillar of cloud and fire was replaced by the Divine Word. My has that not a lot to say to us ? Here were a people led and guided by the Lord. The Word of the Living God was going ahead of them, before them into the Promised Land. Do you not think that this is a beautiful picture ? God's people obedient to the Word, being led by the Word ? I am suggesting that this is a picture of maturity, the picture of a people come of age, and a people come of age does not need spectacular "pillar of cloud and fire guidance." A people come of age will be guided by the Word. Now guidance is a subject which is a problem to many of us.

A lady received a brochure outlining a tour to Israel. She had the time, money and strength to take the trip but wondered if it were God's will. Rereading the pamphlet just before retiring, she noted that the aeroplane for the trip was a 747 jet. She tossed all night, restlessly arguing the pros and cons of fulfilling a lifelong ambition to visit the Holy Land. Awaking in the morning, she looked at her digital clock. It said 7:47. She exclaimed "It must be the Lords will for me to take that tour." Another lady got her guidance like this. She allowed the Bible to fall open anywhere and where her finger landed that was it. One day he finger landed on these words "And he departed and went hanged himself." (Matt 27:5) Dissatisfied with that, she tried again. This time her finger landed on the words "Go and do thou likewise." (Lk 10:37) Well, she was not pleased with that at all. So she had a third go. This time her finger landed on these words, "That thou doest do quickly." (Jn 13:27) I suppose there is something in all of us to hanker after spectacular guidance, a "pillar of cloud and fire," guidance, and of course the more spectacular the

better. If I did not have a lurid past, a dramatic conversion, at least I can have the limelight that follows some startling guidance can't I? Well, we may not openly reason like that, but I am sure that there are subconscious urges from our fallen human nature that push us on like this. Seeking "*the pillar of cloud and fire, guidance,*" but my we have a "*more sure word of prophecy,*" than that. Now you will know that Bible verse that I have just quoted. Look if you will at (2 Pet 1:16-18) That must have been a fantastic experience for Peter. Peter was an eye-witness to Christ's transfiguration. That experience left him stunned. It was incredible, he had seen the Lord in all His glory. But now look at what he says in (2 Pet 1:19-21) Do you see what Peter is doing? He is downgrading the spectacular, and upgrading the Word.

You see the important thing for the believer is not special, visionary experiences, such as the Mount of Transfiguration, the important thing for the believer is the sure word of prophecy that is the Holy Scriptures. This is our guideline. *Is this not a lovely picture?* A people following the Word, captive to the Word, subject to the Word and obedient to all its dictates. Indeed is this not what the Church should be? And do you know what happens when this is the case? Impossible barriers are crossed. Now we're thinking about the Ark. It symbolised the (a) (b) But then, it symbolised,

(c) *THE SON OF GOD: TO GOVERN US:*

(Jn 1:14) For this Ark was a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. Within that Ark were the tables of stone, speaking of our Searching Saviour, who convicts us of our sin. There was the budding rod, which speaks of the Redeeming Saviour who saves us by His life. And there was the pot of manna, speaking of the Satisfying Saviour, who feeds our souls. Now according to the context

(1) *THE ARK HAD TO BE PREFERRED:*

Look if you will at (3:3) The Ark had to go first, carried by the priests, and placed in the centre of the biggest problem, which was Jordan. And the moment those waters were touched by the feet of the priests the miraculous happened. The waters receded, the riverbed dried up and became a highway for the children of Israel. And the Ark rested in the centre of Jordan until everyone had passed over. (3:17) You see, on this day, something had changed. Do you know what it was? ***It was the Position of the Ark.*** Have you got that? Before the ark had been in the midst of the Israelites, but now it was at their head. The ark had always gone with the people, but now the people were to go with the ark. It had to have first place. Tell me, does the Saviour have first place in your life?

Do you recall Paul words? He says, "*For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord.*" (Rom 14:9) Now we have possessed Christ since the day of our salvation, but possession alone does not guarantee victory.

It is not merely the possession of Christ, but the position of Christ that counts. You see, the difference between the victorious Christian and the defeated Christian is not in what they possess. God does not play favourites, giving one believer a larger portion of His Spirit than He gives another. We are all complete in Christ. (Col 2:9) The difference lies in the position the possession occupies in each life. Only when Christ is enthroned as Lord and Leader can we experience His fullness. Now its one thing, to accept the Lordship of Christ as an article of faith and quite another to accept it as a practical, governing force in our lives. Is He Lord? Sure we sing it, "*He is Lord, He is Lord.*" But does He control your actions: attitudes: and affections? Is He Lord at home, at school, at work? Hudson Taylor said "*Christ is either Lord of all or not Lord at all.*" (1)

(2) *THE ARK HAD TO BE PERCEIVED:*

"*And they commanded the people saying when ye see the ark of the covenant*" (3:3) The ark was never to be obscured. Now if the children of Israel had followed directly

behind the priests they would never have seen the ark, because of the mass of people. But so long as they were at least half a mile removed they could keep their eye on the ark. This was the real reason for the space of three thousand yards between the people and the Ark. *God wanted the Ark of the Covenant far enough ahead of those millions of Israelites, so that they would all, always be able to see.* It must never be out of anyone's sight. You see, as they went through the Jordan River, their focus would always be on the Ark. My is this not where our constant focus is to be ? “ *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.*” (Heb 12:2) Do you know what it is to keep your eyes on Jesus moment by moment ?

Do you recall Peter ? (Matt 14:29-30) All went well as long as he concentrated his gaze on Christ but the moment he took notice of the wind and waves he began to sink. Keeping our eyes on Jesus means we depend on Him. We count on His Ability, not our inability. Do you know the Jordan Crossing tells me ? *The Power of God negates the problems of man.* The Ark had to be perceived. My there is no better way to keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus than to have our daily quiet time, to read the Word, to spend time in prayer, to meet with the Lord. Never have a day without meeting your Saviour. Yes, (1) (2)

(3) THE ARK HAD TO BE PURSUED:

Look if you will at (3:3) In our language this is simply a directive to follow Him. It's the message of discipleship. “ *If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.*” (Matt 16:24) Today Christ is our ark. He is Immanuel, “ *God with us.*” He is the Good Shepherd, who leads His sheep. And Christ would never expect us to follow a river that He Himself has not first crossed. Everything He asks us to do is based on what He has already done, it is following a path that already has His footprints. *Does He want us to become more acquainted with the Father ?* Then look at His prayer life. Does He want us to do what is right despite the ridicule of our peers ? Then think of the insults He endured. Does He want us to face death

with the confidence of being welcomed on the other side ? Then think of the Cross. In that film “ *The Hiding Place,*” Corrie Ten Boom and her sisters are in a prison camp discussing their fate with other inmates. There is great deal of bitterness directed toward God. How could the Lord look down from heaven and see this suffering and torture and not intervene ? But Corrie remarked, “ *There is no pit that is so deep, but that God is deeper still.*”

My there is no river that God expects you to cross but that He has already crossed it. We begin with Christ on the journey and He stays a step ahead of us to the end. Our greatest challenge is to keep our eyes on Him. Now wouldn't the Ark have been a tremendous encouragement to Israel's faith. God was going before them and opening up the way. How did it all end ? Well, there was (1) (2)

(3) THE OUTCOME THAT VINDICATED FAITH

It happened just as God said it would. (1:5) Well what happened.

(a) THE PEOPLE STEPPED OUT BY FAITH:

Joshua had said, “ *Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.*” (3:5) This was an absolute promise from God, delivered by His servant to the people. But its one thing to know about the promise, its completely different to believe the promise. But do you see what happened ? (3:15-17) My when you have a God who has performed in the past, and whose very presence is manifest in the here and now, and He gives you a promise for the future, you must believe that promise. You must believe it, even when you cannot see the evidence of it taking place. David Jeremiah says, “ *If you want to be a man of faith, you can't be afraid to get your feet wet.*” (1:2-3) Now its interesting that when God opened the Red Sea, He used a strong wind that blew the whole night before. (Ex 14:21-22) This wind was the blast of Gods nostrils. (Ex 15:8) When Moses lifted his rod, the wind began to blow, and when he

lowered the rod, the waters flowed back and drowned the Egyptian Army.

(Ex 14:26-28) Now listen, when Israel crossed the Jordan River, it was not the *obedient Arm of a Leader*, that brought about the miracle *but the obedient Feet of the People*. My we need to step out by faith and obey His Word and God opens the way for us. The tragedy is that so many of us are wandering aimlessly through life as Israel did in the wilderness. Do you know something ? You can never stand still in the Christian Life. You are either moving forward in faith or going backward in unbelief. Which ? Oh (a) And then,

(b) THE LORD STEPPED IN WITH POWER:

Joshua had said “ *the Lord will do wonders among you.* ” (3:5) And indeed He did,

(1) GOD ACTED AT A CRITICAL TIME:

The time of harvest was when the river was at flood stage My God chose the month March or April, when the Jordan was at its broadest and deepest that His Hand might be the more clearly seen. Is this not the way God often deal with us ? (Is 30:18) “ *And therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you, for the Lord is God of judgment, blessed are all they that wait for Him.* ” (Is 30:18) Our extremity is God’s opportunity. So He allows our circumstances to become critical. Out troubles to reach the high water mark before He intervenes on our behalf.

(2) GOD ACTED IN A SUPERNATURAL WAY:

1. When did God act ?

As soon as, the priests bearing the ark put their feet into the river, that is when God acted. Do you want God to work mightily on your behalf ? Well, are you doing what you can for the cause that you want God to help ? My the priests could not part the Jordan, but they could walk into the

Jordan. And until they did their part of walking, God did not do His part of parting. 1.

2. How did God act ?

Did you notice (3:16) ? The Jordan was stopped at least 15 to 20 miles north of where Israel was, and this cut the waters off all the way to the Dead Sea. Do you know what that means ? There was upwards to a 25 mile stretch of the Jordan River which was stopped by God. But don’t stop there.

There was not only the Parting of the River, there was the Drying of the Ground. (3:17) You see, when a river ceases to flow, its often many days and even weeks before the actual river bed dries out. Can you imagine what it would have been like for several million people and their livestock to cross, if the river bed was not firm ?

The crossing would have aborted, why they would have got bogged down in the muck and mire of the mud. You see, God not only parted the river He dried the ground so they “ *passed over on dry ground.* ” (3:17) What do you suppose the Canaanite spies were thinking about when this unbelievable miracle was taking place ? No doubt the word spread like wild fire. In a matter of hours, every king on both sides of the Jordan River was aware of what was happening. (5:1) You see, this miracle was not only exalting Joshua in the eyes of Israel (3:7) it was showing God’s power to a pagan world. My what a God we have, the very elements of nature being subject to Him.

(Ps 107:32) Job testified, “ *I know that Thou canst do everything.* ” (Job 42:2) Jeremiah says, “ *There is nothing too hard for Thee.* ” (Jer 32:17) The Lord Jesus said, “ *With men this is impossible but with God all things are possible.* ” (Matt 19:26) The Jordan was the obstacle that kept Israel from the Promised Land. ***It was the river of impossibility.*** Are you facing the impossible this ? Is there a major obstacle in your life that’s preventing you from fulfilling Gods will ? My no river is too crooked, no river is too deep, no river is too swift but that God is able to help you through it. “ *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee.* ” (Is 43:2)

**Got any rivers you think are uncrossable ?
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through ?
God specialises in things thought impossible:
He can do just what no other can do**