

The Book of Joshua, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 3: Crossing the Jordan on Dry Ground

Joshua 3:1-4:24

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

Doctrinally, this lesson is about a God who leads His people, who acts when they obey, whose presence is holy, and who is determined that His mighty works be remembered. The ark of the covenant goes before Israel into the Jordan, and where God's presence leads, the people are to follow, keeping a reverent distance, having sanctified themselves, because the One they follow is 'the Lord of all the earth' and He is holy. The crossing is built on a pattern we must not miss: the priests step into the flood before the waters part. God ordains obedience first and miracle second, not because He needs our help, but because trusting, obedient faith is exactly what He is forming in His people. This is the timeless principle for us as well (Romans 15:4): real faith acts on God's word before it sees the outcome.

There is a guardrail to keep here. We draw these as timeless lessons of trusting, obedient faith, not as a charter for reading later realities back into an Old Testament event. We do not turn the Jordan crossing into an allegory of one particular New Testament rite, nor do we bind Israel's ceremonies on the church. What we honor is the principle that faith expresses itself in obedience, that God's presence is holy and must be approached with reverence, and that God keeps covenant. We point reverently forward to Christ, in whom every promise of God finds its yes, and under whose present reign His people are gathered. The land was a real gift to a real people, the firstfruit of promises that come to their fullness not in a future earthly kingdom but in Christ and His church.

Where the lesson finally aims is the heart and the household. God stopped the whole crossing to pile up stones so that children would ask and parents would tell, so that 'all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord.' The goal is not merely to admire an ancient miracle but to take up the sacred duty it lays on us: to revere God's holiness, to step out in obedient faith where we have not passed before, and above all to hand down a living memory of what God has done, so that the faith of this generation does not die with this generation but is inherited, told, and trusted by the next.

Question 1

Student Question:

In Joshua 3:7-13, God exalts Joshua and tells the priests bearing the ark to step into the Jordan before the waters part. What does the ark going before the people, and the priests' obedience preceding the miracle, teach us about how God leads His people and what He requires of them?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The chapter opens with God dignifying His chosen leader: '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' (3:7). The crossing is not only deliverance for the people; it is divine confirmation of Joshua's leadership. Yet Joshua himself points away from his own glory and toward God: 'Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you' (3:10). The leader's exaltation serves to fix the people's eyes on the living God, not on the man.

At the heart of the instructions stands the ark of the covenant, carried by the priests, going before the people into the river. The ark represented the presence and throne of God among His people, and here it leads the way. God does not send Israel ahead to scout a crossing; He goes first, and they follow. This is the consistent shape of how God leads: His presence out front, His people behind, the path made by Him and not by them.

The command in 3:13 is striking and deliberate. The priests are to carry the ark into the Jordan and the waters will be cut off only 'as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests... shall rest in the waters.' God ordains that obedience precede the miracle. He could have parted the river first, but He did not. The priests must believe enough to step off the bank into a flood. This order is not incidental; it is the very lesson God is teaching about faith.

Note also the title given to God twice in this section: 'the Lord, the Lord of all the earth' (3:11, 13). The God who leads Israel across one river is not a local deity of one tribe; He is sovereign over all the earth, the same God who once split the sea. The crossing is a demonstration to Israel, and through them to the nations, of who truly rules. God leads His people, but He leads them as the Lord of all.

The doctrinal note to fix at the outset is that God leads His people by His own presence, calls them to follow in obedient faith, and ordains that their obedience come before they see the outcome. This is not God needing human help; it is God forming a people who will trust His word and act on it. The pattern set here at the Jordan runs all through Scripture and presses on us still (Romans 15:4).

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- How God leads His people by His own presence (the ark) going before them rather than sending them ahead alone.
- Why God exalts Joshua, and how godly leadership points the people to the living God rather than to itself.
- The God-ordained order of obedience first and miracle second, and what it teaches about faith.
- The significance of the title 'the Lord of all the earth' for understanding God's universal sovereignty.

- The timeless principle that real faith acts on God's word before it sees the result (Romans 15:4).

Discussion Prompts

- Read 3:7–13 aloud. How does Joshua redirect the people's attention from himself to the living God?
- Why do you think God required the priests' feet to touch the water before the river parted?
- What does it mean in practice to follow God's leading rather than to scout your own path ahead?

Question 2

Student Question:

The officers told Israel to follow the ark because 'ye have not passed this way heretofore' (3:4). Where in your own life are you facing a way you have not passed before, and how willing are you to keep your eyes on God's leading rather than on a map you wish you had?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The officers gave Israel a reason to follow the ark closely: 'that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore' (3:4). The honesty of that line is bracing. This was uncharted ground. The generation that crossed the Red Sea was gone; these were their children, facing a way no one among them had walked. Their only guide was the presence of God going before them.

There is a deep comfort here for the self-examining heart. We spend much of our lives wishing for a map, a clear picture of how the new job, the new diagnosis, the new season, the new grief will go. God rarely hands us the map. What He gives instead is Himself, going on ahead, and the call to keep our eyes on Him and follow. The way we have not passed before is exactly the way faith is meant to walk.

It is worth being honest about our craving for control. We want to see the whole path before we take the first step, and when we cannot, we often stall, or we manufacture a map of our own anxious imagining and follow that instead. Israel was told to follow a moving ark, not a fixed chart. Faith keeps its eyes on the Leader, not on a guarantee of the route.

Self-examination here is not morbid; it is honest stewardship of where our trust actually rests. The question is not whether we face unknown ways, we all do, but whether, in them, we are following the presence of God or following our own fears. The unknown way is not a sign that God has abandoned us; it is often the very place He means to teach us to walk by faith.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Facing 'a way you have not passed before' as the ordinary terrain of faith, not a sign of God's absence.
- The human craving for a complete map versus God's provision of His presence as the guide.
- The temptation to follow our own anxious imaginings when God withholds the full picture.
- Keeping our eyes on the Leader rather than on a guaranteed route as the posture of trust.

Discussion Prompts

- What 'way you have not passed before' are you facing right now?
- How do you tend to react when God gives you His presence but not the full map?
- What would it look like this week to follow the Leader instead of demanding the route?

Question 3

Student Question:

Joshua 3:13–17 records that the waters were cut off only after the priests' feet touched the brim of the water, and the people crossed on dry ground. What does this God-ordained order, obedience first and miracle second, reveal about the nature of trusting, obedient faith?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The text is careful and exact about the order of events: 'when... the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water... the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap' (3:15–16). The cutting off of the river did not happen until the priests' feet were already wet. The miracle answered the step; it did not precede it. This is the theological spine of the whole passage.

God could have done it the other way. He could have rolled back the Jordan while the priests stood safely on the bank, and then invited them to walk down into a dry channel. He chose not to. He required the priests to walk into a flooding river carrying the ark, trusting His word before they saw His work. The order is the message: obedient faith acts first, on the word of God, and then sees what God will do.

This is the consistent biblical shape of faith. Abraham went out 'not knowing whither he went' (Hebrews 11:8). Naaman had to dip in the Jordan before he was clean. The lepers were cleansed 'as they went' (Luke 17:14). God repeatedly attaches His working to an obedience that precedes the seeing. This is not earning the miracle; it is trusting the One who promised it enough to move.

We must be careful to state this rightly, especially as people who reject any notion of faith-only that never acts. The faith Scripture commends is never a bare mental assent that waits passively for God to do everything; it is a trusting confidence that obeys God's word. Yet neither is it a works-righteousness that earns God's favor. The priests did not part the river; God did. They

simply trusted Him enough to get their feet wet. Faith and obedience are not rivals here; obedience is faith with its feet in the water.

So the timeless principle stands clear and convicting: God ordinarily calls His people to step out on His word before they can see the outcome (Romans 15:4). The dry ground was real, but it appeared under feet that were willing to be wet first. The question this passage presses is whether our faith is the kind that moves when God speaks, or the kind that waits to see the river part before it will believe.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The deliberate God-ordained order: the waters parted only after the priests' feet were already in the river.
- Why God required obedience before the miracle rather than parting the river first.
- Trusting, obedient faith as the consistent biblical pattern (Abraham, Naaman, the ten lepers).
- Guarding against both passive faith-only and works-righteousness: obedience as the expression of trust, not the cause of the miracle.
- The timeless principle that faith acts on God's word before it sees the outcome (Romans 15:4).

Discussion Prompts

- Why is it significant that the waters did not part until the priests' feet were wet?
- How is obeying before you can see the outcome different from trying to earn God's favor?
- Where is God asking you to step into the water on His word right now?

Question 4

Student Question:

The priests had to stand still in the middle of the riverbed, holding the ark, while the entire nation passed over (3:17). When God calls you to hold your ground in a hard place so that others can move forward, how do you respond, and where is He asking you to stand firm now?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

There is a quiet, almost overlooked detail in 3:17 that rewards attention: '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.' While the nation moved, the priests had to stand still, in the middle of the riverbed, bearing the ark, holding their ground until every last person was across.

Imagine the demand of it. The priests did not get the relief of crossing quickly; they bore the weight and held the place. The waters were heaped up nearby; the riverbed was unnatural

ground; and they simply stood, and stood, and stood, while the whole of Israel filed past. Their stillness was the very thing that made everyone else's movement possible. Sometimes the call of God is not to advance but to hold a hard position so that others can pass.

Many of us know this calling without a name for it. The parent who holds steady through a child's long crisis. The believer who keeps showing up for a struggling church when it would be easier to leave. The friend who stands in the gap during someone else's worst season. It is unglamorous, exhausting work, standing in the riverbed while others move on, and it asks for a particular kind of faith: the faith to stay put under weight.

The honest self-examination here is about our willingness to be the ones who stand. We admire those who cross; we less often want to be those who hold the place in the middle. Yet the priests' steady feet were as essential to the miracle as the parted waters. God's purposes often rest on people willing to stand firm in a hard place so that others can go free.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The priests' costly task of standing firm in the riverbed while the whole nation crossed.
- How God sometimes calls us to hold a hard position rather than to advance.
- Recognizing the unglamorous ministry of those who 'stand in the gap' so others can move forward.
- The faith required to stay put under weight when staying is harder than moving.

Discussion Prompts

- What does it cost the priests to stand still in the middle of the Jordan?
- Where has God called you to stand firm in a hard place for the sake of others?
- Who in your life is standing in the riverbed for you, and how might you thank or relieve them?

Question 5

Student Question:

Repeatedly the text centers everything on the ark of the covenant, called 'the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth' (3:11, 13). What does the ark, and the careful distance the people kept from it, teach us about the holiness of God's presence among His people?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Everything in this account orbits the ark of the covenant. It leads the procession, it goes into the water, the river parts before it, and the people are told to keep their distance from it: 'there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it' (3:4). The ark was the visible symbol of the invisible God's presence and throne among His people, and it is treated throughout with a holy carefulness.

That commanded distance of roughly a thousand yards is not arbitrary. It teaches reverence. The people were to follow God's presence, but not to crowd it, not to treat it casually, not to presume upon it. The God who graciously dwells among His people is holy, and nearness to Him is never to be taken lightly. The space between the people and the ark was a daily, visible lesson in the holiness of God.

The titles reinforce it. This is 'the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth' (3:11). The One enthroned above the mercy seat is not a tame household god but the sovereign Lord of everything. To follow Him is a privilege; to approach Him carelessly is dangerous. The whole arrangement at the Jordan trains Israel to hold together two truths that must never be separated: God is graciously near, and God is utterly holy.

We should let this correct a sentimentality that creeps into our own approach to God. We can grow so comfortable with the nearness God has graciously given that we forget the holiness that nearness never cancels. The ark reminds us that the God who invites us to follow Him is the Lord of all the earth, and that reverence is not the enemy of intimacy but its proper frame.

This points us, without anachronism, toward the holiness of the God we still worship. We are not under the ceremonies of the old covenant, but the holiness those ceremonies guarded has not changed. The same God who set a space around the ark calls us to draw near in reverence and godly fear, mindful always of who He is. His holiness is not a barrier to fellowship; it is the very greatness that makes fellowship with Him such a wonder.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The ark as the symbol of God's presence and throne leading His people.
- The commanded distance from the ark as a deliberate lesson in reverence for God's holiness.
- Holding together two truths: God is graciously near and God is utterly holy.
- The title 'the Lord of all the earth' as a guard against treating God's presence casually.
- Drawing the timeless lesson of reverence without binding old covenant ceremonies on the church.

Discussion Prompts

- Why do you think God commanded the people to keep a great distance from the ark?
- Where have you grown overly casual with God, forgetting His holiness?
- How can reverence and intimacy with God belong together rather than compete?

Question 6

Student Question:

Joshua 3:5 says, 'Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.' What would it look like for you to prepare your own heart to meet a holy God, and what in your life might need to be set apart before you can expect Him to work?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Before any of the wonders, Joshua issues a command: 'Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the Lord will do wonders among you' (3:5). Preparation precedes the miracle. The people are not to stumble into God's mighty acts unready; they are to set themselves apart, to consecrate themselves, in anticipation of meeting their holy God. Wonder and reverence belong together.

To sanctify oneself in Israel meant to be ceremonially and morally set apart, to put away what was unclean and ready the heart. The principle beneath the ceremony endures for us: those who would meet a holy God do well to prepare their hearts, to come deliberately rather than carelessly, to clear away what does not belong. God's working among His people is not something we summon, but neither is it something we should approach unprepared.

This presses a practical question on each of us. Do we ever prepare to meet God, or do we only ever rush in? We ready ourselves for interviews, for travel, for guests, for important meetings, yet often come before the living God with no preparation of heart at all. The command at the Jordan suggests that anticipation and consecration are fitting responses to a God who is about to do wonders.

Preparation also means letting some things be set apart, or set aside. To sanctify yourself is partly to identify what does not belong in the presence of a holy God and to deal with it. The self-examination here is gentle but real: what in my life would I need to set apart, or set down, to come ready before the God who is holy? The promise attached is sweet, for to those who prepare, He says, tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The call to 'sanctify yourselves' as preparation for meeting a holy God.
- Drawing the timeless principle of heart-preparation from the old covenant act of consecration.
- Our tendency to prepare for lesser things while rushing unprepared into God's presence.
- Identifying what needs to be set apart or set down before we come before a holy God.

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean for you, today, to 'sanctify yourself' before coming to God?
- Where do you rush into God's presence unprepared, and how might that change?
- What in your life might need to be set apart or set down to meet a holy God?

Question 7

Student Question:

In Joshua 4:21–24 the reason for the memorial stones is given twice: so that future generations would ask and be told what God did, and so that ‘all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty.’ What does this teach us about God’s purpose in His mighty works, both for His own people and for the watching world?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

When the crossing is complete, God gives a striking reason for the memorial stones, and He gives it in terms of the next generation: ‘That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them’ (4:6–7). The whole point of the monument is to provoke a question from children and to put an answer in the mouths of parents.

Then, near the close of the chapter, God widens the lens dramatically: the crossing was done ‘that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever’ (4:24). God’s mighty works have a double purpose. Inward, they teach His own people to fear and trust Him forever. Outward, they testify to the watching world that the Lord’s hand is mighty. Nothing God does for His people is meant to stay private.

This reveals something about the very purpose of God’s acts in history. He does not deliver His people merely for their comfort; He delivers them for His glory and as a witness. The Red Sea, the Jordan, and supremely the cross and empty tomb are not private blessings to be hoarded but public testimonies to be told. The hand of the Lord is mighty, and God means for that to be known.

There is a sobering implication for the church. We are entrusted with the memory of what God has done, and that memory is meant to travel, both down to our children and out to the nations. A faith kept private dies private. God’s design, stamped into these very stones, is that His works be told and retold, so that the next generation fears Him and the watching world sees His hand.

All of this points forward to the God whose mightiest work was still to come. The hand that cut off the Jordan is the same hand that raised Jesus from the dead, and the same purpose holds: that all the peoples of the earth might know the Lord’s mighty hand and fear Him forever. The memorial stones whisper of a God who acts in history so that history will tell of Him.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The stated purpose of the memorial: to provoke children’s questions and supply parents’ answers.
- The double aim of God’s mighty works: His people’s lasting fear of Him and the world’s knowledge of His hand.

- God acting in history for His glory and as a public witness, not merely for His people's private comfort.
- The church's stewardship of the memory of God's works, meant to travel to children and to the nations.
- The forward pull to God's mightiest act in the resurrection, with the same purpose of making His hand known.

Discussion Prompts

- What are the two purposes God gives for the crossing in 4:24, one inward and one outward?
- How does it change things to see God's deliverances as public testimony rather than private comfort?
- Who, beyond your own family, is meant to learn of God's mighty hand through your testimony?

Question 8

Student Question:

The whole memorial was built so that when children asked, 'What mean ye by these stones?' (4:6, 21), their parents would have an answer. What story of God's faithfulness are you actively passing on to the next generation, and who is watching to see whether your faith is worth inheriting?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The genius of the memorial is that it is built to be questioned. God anticipates the day when a child will look at twelve river stones piled on dry land and ask, 'What mean ye by these stones?' (4:6, 21). The whole monument exists for that question. God designed the handing down of faith not as a one-time lecture but as an answer waiting for a child's curiosity.

This places a sacred duty squarely on parents and on every older generation of believers. The stones do no good if the parents have no answer, or worse, no memory worth passing on. The faith of Israel was always one generation from being lost, and so is ours. What we do not tell, our children will not know; what we do not treasure, they will not inherit.

It is worth asking honestly what story we are actually passing down. Children are watching long before they are asking. They learn whether God is real to us by whether He shows up in our conversation, our priorities, our gratitude, our repentance. A faith that is never spoken of at home is a faith the next generation will quietly conclude is not worth inheriting.

The self-examination here is pointed but hopeful. The question is not whether we have done it perfectly, but whether we are doing it at all: are we telling the next generation what God has done? Are we building stones they can ask about, and are we ready with an answer when they

do? Every believer, parent or not, stands somewhere in this chain of memory, receiving from those before and passing on to those after.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The memorial designed to provoke a child's question, 'What mean ye by these stones?'
- The sacred duty of parents and older believers to have an answer worth passing on.
- How children learn whether God is real to us by what we treasure and speak of.
- Every believer's place in the chain of memory, receiving faith and handing it on.

Discussion Prompts

- What 'stones' have you set up that the next generation can ask you about?
- What story of God's faithfulness are you actively telling those younger than you?
- Who is watching your life to see whether your faith is worth inheriting?

Question 9

Student Question:

Joshua 4:23 deliberately ties this crossing to the Red Sea: 'as the Lord your God did to the Red sea.' Drawing on the whole passage, explain how the ark, the priests' obedient faith, the dry-ground crossing, and the memorial stones together reveal the holiness, faithfulness, and saving power of God, and how His command to tell the next generation places a sacred duty on us to hand down what He has done.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Here the passage gathers its full weight. Joshua interprets the whole crossing for the generations to come, and he does it by tying it back to the Red Sea: 'The Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you... as the Lord your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over' (4:23). The Jordan is deliberately framed as a second Red Sea. The God who opened the sea to bring them out of Egypt has now opened the river to bring them into the promise. He finishes what He starts.

Bring the threads together. The ark went first, declaring that God's holy presence leads His people. The priests stepped into the flood before it parted, displaying obedient faith that acts on God's word. The whole nation crossed on dry ground, a real and mighty deliverance by the hand of God alone. And then the stones were piled up, so the story would be told. Holiness, faith, saving power, and remembrance are woven together in one morning at the Jordan, and each declares something true about God.

The holiness is in the ark and the commanded distance and the call to sanctify themselves. The faithfulness is in the promise kept, the land entered, the covenant honored from Abraham to this generation. The saving power is in the heaped-up river and the dry ground, the hand of the

Lord shown mighty to all the earth. No single thread is the whole; together they reveal a God worthy of reverence, trust, and lifelong fear.

And then comes the command that lays a duty on every generation that reads this: tell your children. God did not merely act; He commanded that His act be remembered and recounted, 'that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever' (4:24). To know what God has done and not pass it on is to break the very purpose for which He did it. The stones are a standing summons to teach the next generation diligently (Deuteronomy 6:6–9), to tell the generation to come the praises of the Lord (Psalm 78:4).

We draw these as timeless lessons, not as an allegory to be forced or an old covenant ceremony to be bound. Yet we cannot read of a God who dries up seas and rivers to bring His people into their inheritance without pointing forward to the God who, in Christ, has brought us into a far greater inheritance and means for that gospel to be told to every generation and every nation. The faithfulness rehearsed at the Jordan is the same faithfulness by which every promise of God finds its yes in Christ, and the duty to remember and recount becomes, for the church, the glad charge to make His mighty hand known until He comes. The stones say: He acted; do not let it be forgotten. The empty tomb says it louder still. So the heaviest weight of this passage falls on us as a holy trust: we have been brought through by the mighty hand of a holy and faithful God, and we dare not keep the story to ourselves. The God who stopped a flooding river also stopped the whole crossing to make sure His works would be remembered, and that priority, that the mighty acts of God be told to the children and to the world, is laid on us as surely as it was laid on Israel by the Jordan.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The deliberate framing of the Jordan as a second Red Sea, revealing a God who finishes what He starts (4:23).
- How the ark, the priests' obedient faith, the dry-ground crossing, and the memorial stones together reveal God's holiness, faithfulness, and saving power.
- God's command to remember and recount His works as the very purpose for which He acted (4:24).
- The sacred duty laid on every generation to teach the next diligently (Deuteronomy 6:6–9; Psalm 78:4).
- Pointing forward without anachronism to Christ, in whom every promise finds its yes and through whom God's mighty hand is now made known.
- Guarding against forcing the crossing into an allegory or binding old covenant ceremonies on the church.
- The church's glad charge to make God's saving works known to children and to the nations until He comes.

Discussion Prompts

- Why does Joshua tie the Jordan crossing back to the Red Sea, and what does that say about God?
- How do the ark, the priests' faith, the dry ground, and the stones each reveal something true about God?
- What duty does 4:24 lay on you, and to whom must you make God's mighty hand known?

Question 10

Student Question:

Looking back over the whole crossing, from the wet feet of the priests to the twelve stones piled on the bank, name one specific way the Lord Jesus is forming you through this passage, whether in stepping out in obedience, in reverencing His holiness, or in handing your faith to those who come after you.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

We end where the chapter ends, with twelve stones standing on the bank and a generation charged to remember. The whole sweep of this lesson, from the wet feet of the priests to the dry ground under a nation to the pile of river stones, has been moving toward your own life and your own walk with Christ. The God who led Israel across is the same Lord who leads you, and He is forming you through every part of this account.

Perhaps He is forming you in obedient faith, calling you to step into a flood on His word before you can see the path. Perhaps He is forming you in reverence, recovering in you a holy awe for the God who is graciously near yet utterly holy. Perhaps He is forming you in stewardship of memory, pressing on you the duty and joy of telling the next generation what He has done. The passage does not leave us as spectators of an old miracle; it makes us participants in the same faith.

And this is where the Lord Jesus makes all the difference. Israel followed the ark, the symbol of God's presence; we follow the risen Christ Himself, God's presence in person, who has already gone before us through deeper waters than the Jordan and opened the way into a greater promised land. He does not merely command us to step out, to revere, to remember; He supplies the very life by which we do it, walking with us into our own untried ways and dwelling among His people, the church, as the living presence the ark only foreshadowed.

So name it plainly. Is it a step of obedience you have been delaying until you can see the outcome? Is it a casual familiarity with God that needs to recover reverence? Is it a story of God's faithfulness you have been failing to pass on? Choose one, and take the first concrete step this week. That is how Jesus forms us through this passage, not by leaving us admiring stones on a riverbank, but by leading us, holy and trusting and faithful in telling, into all the ground He has promised, in the strength He supplies.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Moving from admiring the miracle to participating in the same obedient, reverent, remembering faith.
- Christ as the true and greater presence the ark foreshadowed, who goes before His people through deeper waters.
- Christ supplying the very power by which we step out, revere, and remember, rather than leaving us to ourselves.
- Choosing one concrete step, in obedience, reverence, or handing on the faith, and taking it this week.

Discussion Prompts

- Which is the Lord most calling you to this week: a step of obedience, a recovery of reverence, or the passing on of your faith?
- How does following the risen Christ go beyond following the ark that only foreshadowed Him?
- What is the single concrete first step you will take, and how does Christ's presence change how you take it?