

Crossing the Jordan

Joshua 3 – 4

by Don Falkos

copyright 2016 Donald Falkos Storytelling LLC

The Lord said to Joshua, "Today, the people of Israel will know that I am with you."

At Joshua's command, the people broke camp. The priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant lead the way; they were followed by the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, fully armed, as they had promised Moses; then came all the rest of the tribes of Israel.

The Jordan River was at flood stage. As soon as the priests who carried the Ark stepped into the Jordan, the water stopped flowing and began to pile up several miles upstream. The water beyond that point continued to flow on to the Dead Sea. The priests walked out to the middle of the riverbed and stood on dry ground as the people of Israel crossed over to the other side.

Joshua chose twelve men, one from each tribe, and instructed them, "Go out to where the priests are standing holding the Ark of God. Each of you is to pick up a large stone from that spot and carry it on your shoulder to the other side of the river."

When all the people had crossed over, Joshua said to the priests, "Come up out of the riverbed." As soon as the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant stepped up out of the riverbed, the waters of the Jordan came crashing down, once again flooding its banks.

Joshua used the twelve stones taken from the Jordan to build a memorial at a place called Gilgal. He said, "In the future, children will ask, 'Why are these stones here?' Their parents will tell them, 'This is where the people of Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' And the nations of the earth will be reminded of the power of the Lord."