



*Pointers and questions on*

# JOSHUA 1-12

## Session 3

**3:1 –4:24**

### Crossing the River Jordan

#### Summary

- 3:1-13** Joshua and the people make final preparations for crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land.
- 3:14-17** In circumstances similar to the crossing of the Red Sea, the Israelites cross the Jordan on dry land, even though it is the high-water season, and set foot for the first time in Canaan.
- 4:1-24** On the far bank, at Gilgal, the Israelites build a memorial to their crossing, consisting of twelve large stones taken from the bed of the Jordan.

#### Questions to get you thinking

1. In 3:3-4a what do you think is the significance of the fact that the ark of the covenant, carried by the priests, had to go in front? Are there any lessons here for us?
2. Why had the people to keep a distance between themselves and the ark (3:4b)? Can we learn something from this about the danger of over-familiarity with the things of God? How would such over-familiarity show up in our lives today?
3. Camping by the Jordan before crossing it gave everybody a chance to have a good look at it. It was in flood at this harvest season (3:15), due to the melting of the snow on Mount Hermon to the north, and must have made them wonder how they would get across. Has God ever led *you* to challenges that, in prospect, seemed impossible? Talk about them.
4. You have never been this way before (3:4). What aspects of life are you currently facing that you have never faced before?
5. Look at the command Joshua gives in 3:5. We might have expected him to say, Sharpen your swords and check your shields. Comment on the priority of spiritual over practical preparation when we face new situations.
6. Why had the priests to actually walk into the water before the miracle occurred (3:13-17)? Why couldn't God have dried up the Jordan while they stood on the bank? Any lessons here for us?
7. Comment on the statement, The living God is among you in 3:10. Is it still true? If so, how should it affect our attitude to everyday life and its challenges?
8. What do you think is the significance of the phrase the Lord of all the earth in 3:13?
9. Chapter 4 records the setting up of a memorial to the miraculous crossing. How important is it to take active steps to recall God's past intervention in our own lives? What purpose does it serve?
10. Look at 4:6b-7, 21-24. If you have children, what past spiritual events do *you* tell them about?
11. The priests carrying the ark were the first ones into the Jordan and the last ones out (4:10-11, 18). Does this tell us anything about spiritual leaders and their role today?
12. What, according to 4:24, was the purpose of the miracle at the Jordan?
13. The crossing of Jordan was virtually a repeat of the Red Sea crossing (4:23). Do *you* need any repeats?

