

Title: Consecration Before Conquest

Introduction

Before every great move of God, there is a moment of preparation. Before victory comes surrender. Before conquest comes consecration.

The story of Joshua and the Israelites crossing the Jordan River into the Promised Land teaches that spiritual readiness precedes divine breakthrough.

Scripture: *Joshua 3 (CSB)*

3 Joshua started early the next morning and left the Acacia Grove[a] with all the Israelites. They went as far as the Jordan and stayed there before crossing. 2 After three days the officers went through the camp 3 and commanded the people, “When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God carried by the Levitical priests, you are to break camp and follow it. 4 But keep a distance of about a thousand yards between yourselves and the ark. Don’t go near it, so that you can see the way to go, for you haven’t traveled this way before.”

5 Joshua told the people, “Consecrate yourselves, because the Lord will do wonders among you tomorrow.” 6 Then he said to the priests, “Carry the ark of the covenant and go on ahead of the people.” So they carried the ark of the covenant and went ahead of them.

7 The Lord spoke to Joshua: “Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so they will know that I will be with you just as I was with Moses. 8 Command the priests carrying the ark of the covenant: When you reach the edge of the water, stand in the Jordan.”

9 Then Joshua told the Israelites, “Come closer and listen to the words of the Lord your God.” 10 He said, “You will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly dispossess before you the Canaanites, Hethites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites 11 when the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth goes ahead of you into the Jordan. 12 Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe. 13 When the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the Lord, the Lord of the whole earth, come to rest in the Jordan’s water, its water will be cut off. The water flowing downstream will stand up in a mass.”

14 When the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carried the ark of the covenant ahead of the people. 15 Now the Jordan overflows its banks throughout the harvest season. But as soon as the priests carrying the ark reached the Jordan, their feet touched the water at its edge 16 and the water flowing downstream stood still, rising up in a mass that extended as far as Adam, a city next to Zarethan. The water flowing downstream into the Sea of the Arabah—the Dead Sea—was completely cut off, and the people crossed opposite Jericho. 17 The priests carrying the ark of the Lord’s covenant stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel crossed on dry ground until the entire nation had finished crossing the Jordan.

1. The Call to Consecration

- Consecration means to be set apart, purified, and dedicated wholly to God. It is not merely an outward act but an inward surrender.
- The people had to set themselves apart, purify their hearts, and align their lives with God’s will before stepping into His promise.

- Personal purification: The Israelites themselves were to wash themselves and their garments, symbolizing the cleansing of sin and impurity. (Exodus 19, Leviticus 20, Numbers 11)
- Spiritual preparation: God was about to move, but He required a people who were spiritually ready to follow His presence. The priest had to prepare to carry the ark.
- Total surrender: Consecration demands that every ambition, plan, and desire be laid before God.

Before God can use a person or a church mightily, He must first cleanse and consecrate them. The power of God flows through clean vessels.

2. The Presence Before the Power

- In Joshua 3, the Ark of the Covenant went before the people. The Ark represented the presence of God. The people were instructed to keep a distance of about two thousand cubits from it, showing reverence and dependence on divine guidance.
- The assurance of victory was not based on Israel's strength but on God's presence.
- God leads; His people follow. Victory is not achieved by human strategy but by divine direction.

3. The Process Before the Promise

- The Israelites had wandered for forty years. Now, standing at the threshold of promise, they faced one more test—obedience in consecration.
- Consecration tests commitment. It asks whether the heart is more focused on the promise or the Promiser.
- God's wonders follow obedience.
- Preparation precedes possession. God will not give victory to those who are not ready to steward it.

4. The Power of a Consecrated Life

- A consecrated life is one that God can trust with His power. When believers live in purity, humility, and obedience, they become instruments of divine conquest.
 - Consecration brings clarity.
 - Consecration brings courage.
 - Consecration brings conquest.

Conclusion

- Before conquest, there must be consecration.
 - Before the walls of Jericho fell, the people had to purify their hearts.
 - Before revival comes to a church, there must be repentance and renewal.
 - Before victory comes in life, there must be surrender to God's will.

The Lord still calls His people today: "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." The wonders of God await those who are willing to be set apart for His glory.