

Stand Still In Jordan



by George C. Clark, Sr.

“When you have come to the brink of the water of Jordan, you shall stand still in Jordan.”

Joshua 3:8



After forty years of travel through *“that great and terrible wilderness”*, the children of Israel stood at last on the bank of the Jordan River. They arrived in spring, when melting snows from the mountains of Lebanon were pouring into the Jordan River valley, transforming the usually tranquil Jordan into a raging torrent. Physically speaking,

the outlook for crossing the river was not good; nevertheless, the moment for which they had longed for forty years was now at hand, and there was no turning back. The Lord’s humble servant, Joshua, commanded the priests who were entrusted with the bearing of the ark, *“When you are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, you shall stand still in Jordan.”*

We can only imagine how difficult it was for those priests to wade into the Jordan River bearing the heavy ark of the covenant upon their shoulders. And to make the situation even more difficult, they were commanded to stand still in greatly disturbed water, for, as we have just read, the Jordan went on a rampage, overflowing its banks during Canaan’s spring harvest season (Josh. 3:15). The crossing would have been easy, had it pleased God to heap up the violent waters before the priests stepped in; yet, that was not God’s order for that particular occasion. His command, given through Joshua, was, *“Get down in Jordan and stand still.”* When they did that, God made a way for them to cross where there had been no way.

It is in such pressure-packed moments that the unexplored and unconquered territories of our lives may be won. If, in obedience to the heavenly orders, we will launch into the deep with Christ, then we can fearlessly cross over the Jordans of our lives. He knows all the dangers of the stream and stands ready, as the Captain of our salvation, to guide us safely over. It is true, Jordan will swell; but that only presents us with the opportunity to use our faith. Child of God, you should be comforted by this thought: When the waters of Jordan begin to rise around you, know that the Promised Land is not far away! Amen!

Stand Still In Jordan

by John David Clark, Sr.

Upon the banks I stood and cried,
the swirling current stalling me.
I yearned to reach the other side,
where rest and joy were calling me.
Again the gentle voice I heard,

“Go in the waters wild, and stand.”
And feebly trusting in His word,
with timid steps I waded in.

And as I stood, the flood before
became a trickle! Disappeared!
With joy, I reached the other shore;
with awe, I pondered what I’d feared.

He had not asked me to compete
with angels, men, or creatures low,
nor asked for strength nor wisdom deep,
nor asked of me to stop the flow.

Now safe, to me the truth was shown.
I had been asked for nothing more
than child-like faith to stand alone,
and wait, and hope upon the Lord.

How many times we find ourselves in an angry stream of life, its currents swirling around us with so great a pressure that it seems almost impossible to stand! Indeed, it is not at all an easy task to *“stand still in Jordan”*, especially in time of harvest, when disturbed waters are overflowing all their banks. It is so much easier to wade around and keep in motion than to stand still in swirling water. It is so much more like man to stir about in the current than to calmly maintain his place in Christ and watch the whirlpools twisting about him.

There was only one way for Israel to enter Canaan, and that was by crossing Jordan. And there was only one way to cross Jordan, and that was by standing still until God stacked the waters up in a pile, leaving an avenue for their journey. My dear friend, the greatest moment of your life, with its most glorious triumph, lies just beyond the Jordan of your life; still, you will never reach the goal unless you learn to *“stand still”* and let the candle of your soul be rekindled by the torch of God’s Spirit. The boisterous waves roar and the spray moistens your eyes; still, faith views the other side as a haven of rest.

Naturally, the Canaanites stand on the opposite bank and laugh. They agree that there is no need for alarm. So did they at the time of

Joshua's crossing. They felt sure that he would have to wait until the spring freshet fell before his army could cross. Their laughter, however, solidified in their throats when they saw the approach of the Israelite army. God was fulfilling His promise to Joshua. Unbelievable! The host obediently marched across the dry river bed and camped that night in the Promised Land. Note that when the Israelites had crossed over, Jordan closed in behind them, making retreat impossible. There is no provision made for a believer to go back.

Now, my reader, when the winds howl over your Jordan, and the floods come, do you become nervous? Do fear, doubt, and unbelief take away what little peace you do have? We read in 1John 4:18, "*There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment. He who fears is not made perfect in love.*" Child of God, can't you perceive that there is perfume in those storms of yours, perfume coming from the flowers on the eternal shore? Can't you see Christ, our High Priest, stepping down into the raging torrent of life's voyage and with bruised feet wading out into the waters for you? Oh, how many need to catch a glimpse of this and get ready!

Many floods would flow themselves out without harming us if we thoroughly understood the meaning of the promise of Isaiah 43:2, "*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.*" How many times have we given up and failed to win a great victory, when only a few more moments would have ended the fury of turbulent Jordan!

The ark, borne upon the shoulders of the priests as they "stood still in Jordan", symbolized the presence of God. And what other assurance did Israel need for a safe crossing? While it is true that Satan may be given power to make the streams of life rise in fury, God, at the same time, has power to pile them up and give us a safe passage. "*When the enemy shall come in like a flood,*" said Isaiah (59:19), "*the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.*" But we must *stand still in Jordan* before we are worthy to see it.

Life at times seems to be all rivers, and they

all swollen; yet, the all-important thing is to have God with us. If we have Him, we need not ask "How many more rivers have we to cross?" or "How high are they above their banks?" If we have God's presence in our life, we can march peacefully onward behind the true prophets of God, who are not afraid to get their feet wet in Jordan. Every sincere child of God, I am inclined to believe, wants to see the ministers of God shoulder the ark and step into the Jordan to bring forth the fulfillment of God's promise: "*It shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the LORD of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above, and they shall stand upon an heap*" (Josh. 3:13).

Let us not fail to notice the word "rest", as used here. The feet of the priests had to "rest" in the waters before the crossing could get under way. Beloved, are you too restless or nervous for God to manifest Himself mightily to you? Would you like to know the calmness of resting in the swelling streams of life? If so, God will show you how. He can pile the flood up in a heap.

These are easy times to be serving God. Anyone struggling to live a clean, holy life in these days is clearly unprepared for the tests of fire that are yet to come. If such is the case in your life, my friend, may we counsel you, in the words of Jeremiah the prophet (12:5), "*If in the land of peace, wherein you trusted, they wearied you, then how will you do in the swelling of Jordan?*" If you are among those who in this time are unstable and inconsistent in faithfulness to Christ, I must warn you, my friend, that you are already in deep spiritual trouble and will surely fall when the flames of persecution roar. To such brethren in his day, James wrote (4:7-10), "*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be afflicted and mourn, and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble*

yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." I know Jesus will do this. He did it for me. And he will do it for you. He knows how to soothe a worried mind, to give quietness for complaint, and confidence for unbelief.

May God grant unto you, my reader, this quietness and confidence when you approach the swirling brink of your last Jordan crossing, the crossing that places us in Paradise with God, as the composer beautifully penned the following lines:

1.

When I come to the river at ending of day,
When the last winds of sorrow have blown,
There'll be somebody waiting
to show me the way;
I won't have to cross Jordan alone.

Chorus:

I won't have to cross Jordan alone;
Jesus died all my sins to atone.
When the darkness I see, he'll be waiting for me.
I won't have to cross Jordan alone.

2.

Though the billows of sorrow
and trouble may sweep,
Christ the Savior will care for his own.
'Til the end of the journey, my soul he will keep;
I won't have to cross Jordan alone.

3.

Oftentimes, I'm forsaken and weary and sad,
when it seems that my friends are all gone.
There is one thought that cheers me
and makes my heart glad:
I won't have to cross Jordan alone.

Note: *This song was sung at
George C. Clark's funeral, April 22, 1989.*

WRITE FOR FREE SAMPLES OF OUR GOSPEL TRACTS:

ORDERS

P.O. Box 99 BURLINGTON, NC 27216-0099

Visit us on the Web at www.isaiah58.com