

The Last Days

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Church's role in the last days, the significance of Israel, and the need for a martyr church, using the paradigm of Joshua 3 to illustrate the need for spiritual preparation and faith.

Duration: 1:13:17

Scripture: Joshua 3:17, John 14:6, John 16:13, Romans 6:4, Romans 8:9, 2 Corinthians 6:14, 1 Timothy 3:15

Topics: "Last Days"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker, a Vietnam veteran and head of the French work of Youth with a Mission, opens the doors for the speaker to speak for five days on apostolic foundations. When faced with angry responses, the speaker questions the audience's actions and urges them to put their doubts aside. The speaker emphasizes the need for the power of the risen and ascended life to overcome opposing forces, which can only be found in the place of death, symbolized by going down into the Jordan River. The Israelites in Joshua chapter 4 are cited as an example of making a decisive break with the religious wilderness and entering the land of promise.

Transcript

Is this really happening? Well, if my mother could only see me now. I'm a blessed man, and I'm a privileged man, and a grateful man to have been given this opportunity to share. I think it's the first of its kind that I've had this kind of a context with emphasis on revival, which several churches have combined.

And maybe I'm becoming respectable and acceptable now. But thank you, and I appreciate the labors, Don's labors, and all of the pastors and those who have come together to arrange these days. So, tonight I have an ominous sense in my heart.

Well, some of us are already aware that we have reached an hour where messages, per se, are passe. That somehow we've run the gamut, and sermons and homiletics and preaching of that kind somehow, how whatever purpose it has served for now, somehow it's no longer appropriate for the hour and the place where we now stand. The only kind of preaching now that would be appropriate is that preaching that constitutes an event.

The word of God that performs something, that sets something in motion, that affects something of consequence, particularly as we face the impending end of the age. Do you use the phrase, the last days?

If you don't, you need to employ it, and not as an artifice, but as a reality, the sense of impending coming to the conclusion of an age. And we know that this age is going to end in apocalyptic collision, powers of darkness and light, and a final paroxysm of violent contending for this creation of who, in fact, is going to be its Lord.

And that this is going to be such a time, and the Church plays a remarkable and pivotal function in this final scenario. And that the Jews, who have been quiescent, out of the picture, dormant, apostate, somehow are coming up again into the consideration of God. Not only in Israel, in that troubled nation, but worldwide we're going to see ramifications and the effect upon Jews as they are uprooted, moved, and brought to a final time of sifting before they are brought again into the place of God's intention.

Now, please get this morning's tape, a remarkable statement on Romans 11, that I'm just so grateful, may the Lord do as much tonight, but that will give you an incisive understanding of the significance of Israel and the place of the Church, appointed by God to be the salvific agent in Israel's restoration after centuries-long apostasy. Am I getting too fancy? Good. So, Lord, precious God, we were trembling in that back room, not because we're nervous, but because we sense something in the air.

There's something tonight that's ominous, that's weighty, that we're called not just to hear a message, we're called to some kind of transaction. There's something that you want wrought that will affect this community and beyond it that has to go forth somehow with the word and the response. So, Lord, mercy upon us again.

Mercy upon me, Lord. These people think that I'm some kind of a pro, and they don't know. The trembling and the terrible sense of frailty in these prophets who are the sons of man, so aware of their humanity, their limitation, so feeling strange always, never at once ever comfortable as if, yes, but always, how did I get into this, and where am I, and what am I doing, and, Lord, how? So let it be.

But out of that, my God, may this people receive your word and even more hear your voice. We thank you for this privilege. Come, my God, bring the conclusion.

You're the great alpha and the omega, and you've led us on a charted course through these days, and we've not understood every segment of it. Some of it yet remains strange, and we've not been able to somehow factor it in, but we trust you for the whole flow of it, the whole continuum, from the beginning until the conclusion now tonight. So we're grateful you're the alpha and the omega of our faith.

And may your soul be blessed. May you be gratified. May you be entirely delighted with the proceeding of this night because it goes forth by your word and your spirit.

We're privileged, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, if you're--anyone's hearing me for the first time? Oh, you poor souls.

Culture shock. See, the others have already been initiated. So you've got to take the whole thing in one night.

But then it gives me occasion to say a little word about my books, all of which are extraordinary. What shall I say? Who knows that better than I? Because I know how divinely inspired every one of these books is. The Holocaust book, we have only three copies left.

You'll have to contend and fight for it over at the table. But we want to reserve it for those who have a particular passion and burden for Israel and for the Jew, and have always pondered how it is that God has allowed his covenant people to suffer such a tragedy as the Holocaust indeed was. But more than that, need to know that I believe that there's another one yet coming that will eclipse the former and for which the Jewish community has no anticipation at all.

But the Church needs to know, needs to anticipate, needs to prepare. And so it's in this book. And other of the books serve purposes of their own.

The Spirit of Truth, the title speaks for itself. The Church is the ground and pillar of truth. If we're not jealous for the truth, if we are not the truth itself in fact, if we ourselves become actors and performers and lose integrity, what can be hoped for in the world? So we need to love the truth.

And, of course, the truth is painful before it's glorious. You need to love it or you'll not welcome it. An apostolic conversion, a little Holy Ghost gem, the verbatim transcript of a message given in despair with a congregation in California that seemed to have it all together but somehow had silently contracted with God this far, no further.

And God wanted to go further. And this is the word he put before them that brought them down on their faces. I've seen people go down on their faces but have not seen them dig into the woodwork, into the floor.

They did that that night and they've been changed ever since. So we have this. All of these books are in several languages.

And I have not lifted a finger to promote any of it. So I have to assume that God himself, by seeing through their foreign additions, recognizes the word as something appropriate for the church of the nations. This is the most recent.

It's a classic already. We're getting such response from apostolic foundations, a kind of cosmic overview of the faith. The word apostolic, like the word prophetic, needs to be jealously guarded and cherished because they are the foundation of the church.

And if we lose sight of that or the word prophetic comes to mean something in our generation, less or other than God's intention, we're on the way to deception. Likewise, the word apostolic. So the book contains chapters on apostolic character, apostolic perception, apostolic proclamation, the principalities and powers of the air about which few know anything, the subject of eternity which few take into their consideration.

This is a gem. In fact, I'm appreciating it so much as I'm talking about it. I think we'll double the price.

So this is the last opportunity to get these books, none of which are available in bookstores. Okay. You want to turn to Joshua, Chapter 3. Does this light bother anyone? Is it too glaring? It is? Yeah.

Okay. Better. You don't mind if I take my jacket off because I'm going to be working.

I can't think of a more propitious text than Joshua 3, because we stand tonight as the church in a place appropriate or equivalent to where Israel stood as it waited before the Jordan before crossing over. Do you have that sense that we're at a threshold, that everything till now has been preparation and that we're

being fitted for something? And before we can embark to the fulfillment of that something, which is altogether awesome and will cost much for many of us and for some of us, even our lives. I'm not dismissing martyrdom in the last days, not in remote China, but, I mean, right here, Canada, the United States, Western countries, that the issues are going to be so fierce that the requirement of the sacrifice of life in the hostility that will come upon us will not be an unusual factor.

The fact of the matter is that the church, to be the church, needs to see itself as a martyr church. Whether or not the life is required, we have long ago resolved that should it be required, yes, we're already living as martyrs. Martyrdom is not a mode of dying.

Martyrdom is a mode of living. And what we perform and what we express in a final moment is the sum of all the moments that preceded it. Martyrdom is a mode of being, an attitude that your life is not your own.

That you don't hold it dear as unto yourself. It's purchased, it's bought with a price for God, for his glory, for his honor, whatever the requirement upon ourselves. Have you come to that? Well, that's why you have to wait three days at the banks of the Jordan before crossing over.

You need to ponder what crossing is going to mean. This isn't some kind of mindless logistic of getting the people over on the right side so they can then take the land. Wait three days, assemble yourself, wait there at the banks.

That's the same number of days that Jesus was himself in the grave. There's something about three that has a symbolism, a significance, that we need to consider that we are not able to articulate. So let's look at this text.

Early in the morning, Joshua rose and set out from Shittim with all the Israelites, and they came to the Jordan. They camped there before crossing over. At the end of three days, the officers went through the camp and commanded the people, when you see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God being lifted or carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place, follow it, so that you may know the way you should go, for you have not passed this way heretofore.

Yet there shall be a space between you and it, a distance of about 2,000 cubits. Do not come any nearer to it. Then Joshua said to the people, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow.

The Lord will do wonders among you. To the priest Joshua said, Take up the Ark of the Covenant and pass on in front of the people. So they took up the Ark of the Covenant and went in front of the people.

The Lord said to Joshua, This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel so that they may know that I will be with you as I was with Moses. You are the one who shall command the priests who bear the Ark of the Covenant. When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.

Joshua then said to the Israelites, Draw near. Hear the words of the Lord your God. Joshua said, By this you shall know that among you is the living God who without fail will drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Jebusites.

The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth is going to pass before you into the Jordan. So now select twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. When the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the Ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the

Jordan flowing from above shall be cut off.

They shall stand in a single heap. When the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant were in front of the people. Now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest.

So when those who bore the Ark had come to the Jordan and the feet of the priests bearing the Ark were dipped in the edge of the water, the waters flowing from above stood still, rising up in a single heap far off at Adam, the city that is beside Zarithon, while those flowing toward the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea, were wholly cut off. Then the people crossed over opposite Jericho. While all the priests were crossing over on dry ground, the priests who bore the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord stood still on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan until the entire nation finished crossing over the Jordan.

Well, this is written for our instruction upon whom the ends of the age have come. This is accurate history, but it's also a paradigm. It's also a pattern, a model of some way in which God and his wisdom apportions a significant crossing prior to the taking of the land.

Israel has been milling about for 40 years in the wilderness, and many of the carcasses of the unbelieving and the faithless have been falling away. A whole generation has been raised up who never came up out of Egypt but were born in the wilderness. They had never passed through the Red Sea.

But before they could come into the land, this is the requisite thing. There's a crossing over of the Jordan. I don't know if you know what the word Jordan means.

It means a descent unto death, a going down into death. And there's no coming into the land, and there's no taking the land without first passing through this. But what is the order of God? The priests have to bear the Ark and go in front of the people.

When they see the Ark being lifted, they are to follow after. So I don't know how to translate this, but I know I'm intuiting. My spirit is telling me that this is the paradigm for this last day's preparation for the people of God who have been too long in the wilderness, too long on the wrong side, to now prepare to cross over.

And you stay there for three days and look at that Jordan. Usually it's a very modest river, but this is the harvest season, and the waters now overflow their banks. Now what is ordinarily tranquil is menacing.

God doesn't call you to cross when it's convenient. He calls you to cross when it's perilous. But there's an order of God, the priests first.

And I think we're going to find out who, in fact, they are. It may not be the ordained ministry, the clergy. I pray God that it will be.

But it may well be that there are those who have not that kind of training or formal background who are appointed by God to be in front of the people and be the bearers of the Ark of God. The Ark of God, what shall we say, is symbolic of the Lord himself. It's something contained, the presence, the righteousness, the holiness, the tablets of the law, the rod that butted, the pot of manna encased in gold.

It's a central, pivotal place of Israel's worship. It's very God, his presence. To have the Ark is to have the Lord.

And he goes in before us. Hasn't he already done that? He's already gone down and into the place of death, and he's opened a way for us that's dry. Death, where is thy terror? Death, where is thy sting? And grave, where is thy terror? The Lord has gone before.

The Ark of God has gone into the Jordan and into the place of death. But the question is, have we followed after? Which side are you on tonight, and which side do you prefer to be on? To cross over now through these perilous waters, trusting that they will stay in banks that permit your passage and will not collapse and inundate you and wash you into the Dead Sea, is itself a tremulous faith. And the one who needs to have it most is the one who goes in first and comes out last.

No priest, no entry, no parting of the waters. We can't make it until those who bear the Ark go before us. And when you see them lift the Ark, when you see them rise above their conventional religious performance and move out into realms in which we are aware of a conspicuous sense of God with them, their word, their presence, there's an aura, there's something of a priestly kind.

God is with them. They're bearing the Ark. They're lifting it up.

It's visible to us who these priests are. They must precede us, and they must have a faith to put their feet in those waters, perilous now as they are at flood stage, because until they will, the waters will not part. And so in first with the Ark, right into the midst of that place now made dry and waiting for all Israel to pass through, and how slow and cumbersome the people of God are.

What an agony to wait as you see this palpitating mass of water ready to break its confines and inundate and flood and sweep into death those who are taking the risk of crossing over the dry ground if it will remain dry. But if you have not the faith for this, have you the faith for the parasites and the Gergashites and the Amorites and all the host of Canaanite demonic hordes that have always opposed the people of God and need now to be finally routed? Because the issue of the taking of the land is not just a comfortable place for us to settle, but to establish for the king his place of sanctuary and dwelling at Zion. The ultimate end of the taking of the land is a place for God, who is the creator of the heavens and the earth, to have for himself a tabernacle and a sanctuary out of which the law of the law shall go forth to the nations and the word of the Lord out of a Jerusalem and out of a Zion that has been taken from the Gergashites and regained from the powers of darkness by a people of faith who have crossed over.

Something happens in the crossing. Something happens when you descend into death. It's not just coming up onto the underside.

You're not the same one who entered the banks that comes up at the other edge. You've passed through death and therefore you have entered into life. Resurrection life, for that is the requisite enablement for the taking of the land.

Religious well-meaning intentions will never suffice. It's enough to have you bumble around in the wilderness, but it's not a provision for the taking of the land. Can you understand that? How am I doing in trying to spell out, trying to feel my way in what is the spiritual application of the text that the Lord has quickened for me upon arrival in Dunville? Do you have a heart for this? You priests, first one in, last one out.

And not only in, but stand still and rest in the center of that Jordan. And if we're nervous about tonight's meeting, how will we do then? Rest is a statement of assurance in God. Rest is more than, what shall I

say? It's an ultimate kind of spiritual condition that you don't come to automatically.

It's a consequence of a life lived in God that has obtained a knowledge of Him and a trust that no matter how things are unknown and fearful and yet undescribed and what will await us on the other side, we yet can rest in Him who bids us cross over. If there's agitation, if there's restlessness, impatience, fearful timidity, I think the waters will close in upon us. So who's been fitted for this? Who's been through trials? Who has had to meet God in crisis conditions where if God be not God, we've had it.

Where if there's no resurrection, we of all men are most to be pitied. The priests are the tested servants. The priests have a history.

The priests know their God and He has given them a word and a strange word and that's all He needs to give them. They don't need further explanation. They can rest in that word.

You shall stand still in death. You shall stand still in the midst of death. Everything around you is fearful, full of trepidation, waters ready to break their banks, dangerous enemies awaiting you in the land that exceed you in stature, who are fierce, who are opposed to God.

Nevertheless, you stand still. We don't know what crossing will mean, but we don't have to know. There's a God who is with us, the Ark of God, being born by the priest of God, and that suffices for everything.

You see how we're in this together? No individual virtuosos who are going to swim across the Jordan or take their own route. It's the people of God acting in concert according to the requirement of God and the pattern of God and the wisdom of God. First priests, then the people.

And that's, in fact, the way that Jericho itself is going to be taken. This same ark is going to be toted around that city whose walls were double thick and, what's the word, invincible, impenetrable, and the jeering and the howling of those pagans on these stupid Israelites walking around and kicking dust into each other's teeth every day in the heat of it, blowing trumpets, the priests with their trumpets, with the carrying of the ark and the people following behind. What a motley crew.

What an unimpressive people. And seven times on the seventh day? And don't shout until you hear the trumpet. Everything requires a discipline, an order, a stateliness, a procession, the priests, the people, the soldiers, the trumpets, the ark.

So the means by which the Jordan was crossed is the means by which the Jericho is taken. I don't think we're ready for this. We're too individualistic.

We don't even know what place in the line we ought to be walking. Are we content to follow these priests? Because, after all, we've seen them in their humanity, and we're not altogether impressed. And what if they're mistaken? What if they're wrong? This is the way we are.

And that's why the land is not taken. That's why we're still stumbling around in the wilderness. That's why we're on the religious side rather than on the resurrection side.

And that's why the Canaanites and all of these, the host of powerful demon entities and principalities and powers are thumbing their nose at us. They're ensconced. They're in power.

They're in the place that God must have if he's going to rule over his creation from Zion. But who's going to displace them? Only the ordered people of God, in the discipline of God, moving in the time of God,

according to the requirement of God. Having waited three days by these banks and thinking all these thoughts, what is it going to cost me? What happens when we cross? What will happen at Jericho? What about these other fierce peoples? How shall we overcome them? Maybe it's a mistake.

Maybe we can settle on the wilderness side and have some kind of church services and other kinds of things. And we don't want to give up this manna because when we cross over, the manna ceases. Manna is not the statement of our spirituality.

Manna is the statement of our immaturity. Manna is the provision of God for those who have not yet the faith to live from the land. It's going to cease the day we cross.

And what happens on the day of crossing? Circumcision. Wow, how we have been trying to put that off. Is that really necessary? It's painful and humiliating.

And it's at the nexus of our sexuality and our power and our manliness. But God says, until you have been circumcised, cut the foreskins with a sharp knife. And so many of them were cut that they called it Gilgal, the hill of foreskins.

Because there's no Passover. You can't eat at Passover. You can't have a sacramental meal unless you're circumcised.

It's okay to knock about in the religious wilderness as the uncircumcised and go through the lifting of a plastic cup and a wafer, no sweat. But when the communion, when the sacramental covenantal meal is your enablement, when it's your life, when it's your power, when it's being imbued with the reality of what God is in himself, by the eating and drinking from that Passover table, you can't come to that table except to be circumcised. You better think this over.

Maybe you need more than three days to weigh it up, what this is going to cost, what this is going to require. Can't we go on? Can't Ishmael live? Can't we go on with the present configuration of things? Maybe tone it up a bit? Bring in a revival speaker? We want to improve, but we don't want to be radically transcendent. We don't want to be an army of God.

We would rather be, you know, well-meaning pusitors. Dear saints, if ever I know anything in my spirit, I know that the hour has come. That's a perfect parallel to this text for the church in the world.

It's time to cross over. It's time to descend into death. It's time to move from the mere acknowledgement of the truth of the doctrine of resurrection to the appropriation of its life and power, or there'll be the taking of nothing.

So I flayed the church this morning, and I said, you have not needed resurrection till now. What for? To perform services and programs? You only need the enablement of the power of the risen and ascended life when you're taking the land against fierce and opposing forces. And that power and that enablement is only to be found in one place, the place of death, in going down and into a descent into Jordan.

It's a dry ground. The waters have been parted. Will you follow? So in chapter 4, the Israelites did in verse 8, as Joshua commanded, they made a memorial, they took up stones from the middle of the Jordan 12, according to the tribes of Israel, and placed them where Joshua had designated, that they will always remember this location.

This was the place of crossing. This is where we made the decisive break with the religious wilderness to come into the land of promise. That break has got to be made.

And we need to recognize that where we have been up till now is not that land. It's the place of preparation, of training and learning. Now we're being required for an obedience of crossing and taking.

The Lord is now the captain of the host and not some sappy Jesus who does our bidding. He's got a sword in his hand and there's a design and something that must be performed that completes the age. So in verse 10, the priest who bore the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything was finished.

That the Lord commanded Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua, the people crossed over in haste. As soon as all the people had finished crossing over, the ark of the Lord and the priest crossed over in front of the people. In verse 14, on that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel and they stood in awe of him as they had stood in awe of Moses all the days of his life.

For in verse 23, the Lord your God has dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you crossed over as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea when he dried up for us until we crossed over so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty so that you may fear the Lord your God forever. Those who had not passed through the Red Sea, who had not been baptized unto Moses in the water and in the cloud, need now to do that in passing through this Jordan, preparatory to their call. I can't say enough for the two great sacraments I've been talking to Don about this, baptism in water, baptism in the spirit.

These were the two provisions of God for Israel to bring them from Egyptian slavery and wilderness into a land of promise. There's no taking the land without these two profound, that's okay, provisions of God. Have you had either one? I'm not so persuaded that every baptism is valid.

If you only saw that, understood it as a religious ordinance, as a religious requirement, I don't know that it was more than getting wet. Unless you recognized that it was a going down and into, a death and a burial, that you might be raised with him unto newness of life, how then could it effectually perform what God intends through this great sacrament? We have done despite to the holy sacraments of God, both the Passover, the Lord's table, baptism, and baptism in the spirit. We thought that the baptism in the spirit was the distinctive of the Pentecostals and the Charismatics, and we could let them do their thing, but there was no implication for ourselves.

O you dear saints, I think I can say with full assurance, unless we have the full enablement of God, both in the resurrection life in which we are joined, by joining him in death and burial, and have also been baptized in the cloud as well as into the sea, we're not fit, we're not enabled to take the land. We've got to get over our fundamental and evangelical, what's the word, distaste and fear over that questionable realm that seems to be murky and often is. If it's that powerfully requisite, what will the enemy do to make it questionable and distasteful and spurious and something to be dismissed, but have those who purport to have it so deport themselves as to turn us off, to make it questionable.

But isn't it time to grow up? Isn't it time to come of age? Isn't it time to recognize that God has called us to things of such a weight and of so momentous a kind that we need the full enablement of God, the full equipping of God? Paul said, I speak with tongues more than you all, and I don't believe he ever spoke in tongues publicly. It wasn't the gift of tongues that Paul was speaking about. He was speaking about his

private, personal, devotional life, something that I know myself in my experience and would not give up for anything.

Maybe you need to follow me sometime at a university encounter, as I have been in many universities in America and overseas, and be led by the hand from one meeting to the other, from student union buildings to classrooms to dormitories to fraternity houses, with the hostility of Jewish students and their rabbis and secular atheists ready to chew me up and spit me out, and to be exhausted speaking four, five, six times a day, to have a debate with a philosophy professor at the Jewish fraternity house, and to move away from the table, and they were serving steak, and find a place to prayer, feeling so absolutely inadequate. And in that prayer, after I had spoken all that I know to speak in my own language to God, I moved into the realm of spirit and spoke mysteries unto God, and my spirit was being edified and built up. When I came back to that table and opened my mouth, in five minutes, that philosophy professor excused himself and left the building.

And I went on until two o'clock in the morning, with Jewish students in such demonstration of the power of God that you would think I would be boasting if I told you. I walked into one meeting, exhausted, having already had three or four, and in the five minutes from leading from one building to the other, under my breath, I'm praying in tongues, in the spirit. And when I get to the next room, I open my mouth, and instead of fatigue and exhaustion, something comes forth in power.

And in that meeting, some Vietnam vet came staggering in, half-crocked on drugs, and fell to the floor, and sat through the entire rest of the presentation, and when I finished, I opened for questions and answers, and there was the usual angry, hostile response. And this unbelieving, crooked-out Vietnam vet, who is now the head of the entire French work of Youth with a Mission, and has opened the doors for me in Lausanne to speak for five days on apostolic foundations, for which reason, by that transcript, we have this book. When he heard the angry reprisals, he stood up, shaking, and he said to these men, what are you guys doing? Don't you see? Don't you understand? God is here and got saved, and has risen now to such a place of prominence as to open many doors for me in the world.

Oh, dear saints, I'm not touting Pentecostalism. I'm one of the severest critics of the charismatic movement that could be found. But I know the legitimacy and the preciousness of this baptism in the Spirit, of passing through the cloud as passing through the sea, or we cannot possess the land.

Your crossing over, your going down into death, includes a death of your fear and your trepidation and your timidity and your fundamental and evangelical notions by which you have kept this requirement at distance. The very going down into the Jordan, the very following of these priests will deal with that and bring it to the death that it deserves. And when you come up on the other side, you'll come up in the fullness of his life and power.

So have you crossed over? Supposing that the word came tonight, supposing that you're the Israel of God, and you've been in the wilderness long enough, supposing that God is now speaking and saying it's time now, not three days, but 30 minutes or whatever this time is, to consider what God is requiring, would you be as obedient as the Israel that has preceded you? Will you get up? Will you move? Will you follow the ark when you see it lifted by the priests? It's time to cross over, in my opinion, and to follow the ark of the Lord and come in and on and into the resurrection site. The Lord has dried up and parted the waters by the ark of the Lord having gone in before you, and it's time now to follow after. The Canaanite kings will tremble when they know that you have passed over, that you're on the other side and you're in another

place and represent something to them that is fearful and foreboding, for they know that their end is imminent.

They've had too long a sway already and were not at all threatened or challenged so long as the church was on the wilderness side doing its religious thing. But once a people cross over, they know it's the beginning of the end. God has opened the waters for this people.

So if you want to remain on the wrong side, you can, but you'll be intimidated all your life. Instead of intimidating them, you'll be intimidated as you largely too often now are. Fearful powers of darkness.

It's unfamiliar. You don't have a confidence. You want to just play it safe.

There's a confrontation coming that needs to be faced, but it needs to be faced in the power of God, which is the life of God, the resurrection life, that will only be imputed and conferred and given to those who come into the baptism of the sea and of the cloud. We've been too long on the wrong side. The Lord is lifting the ark.

It's time to cross over and become the army of God and take the land. It's time to take the kingdom, to assert the accomplished triumph of God over an already defeated and disarmed foe, to establish Zion for the coming of the king and of his kingdom through the power of his life obtained in union with him on the dry ground of the Jordan. Well, I have a little note here for myself to turn to page 368 of this remarkable book that has come into my hands by Albert Schweitzer, 386, a German theologian that I have avoided because his reputation somehow discouraged my reading him, but when I read the man himself, I can't say enough in gratitude for the remarkable perception of the faith that this man had and of Paul at the turn of the century.

His whole understanding is that the Holy Spirit is not some kind of enablement to improve our meetings or to refresh our denominations. The Holy Spirit is the *modus vivendi*. It's the operating enablement of the resurrection life, and the resurrection life is already the statement of the kingdom of God.

We're already in the kingdom. We're already evidencing the kingdom. We're already living in kingdom enablement to exhibit the heavenly quality and character of the kingdom by the life of the king that is now ours in union with him through... I didn't understand that you were being invited to join him in death and burial, that you might be raised with him unto newness of life.

You need either to go into those waters or to appropriate what those waters meant that you did not understand and now have the faith both to desire and to obtain. The experience of which Paul sets before us, the gateway to the eternal is the dying and rising again with Christ. If the elect who belong to the kingdom of God are already in the resurrection mode of existence, their redemption is an anticipation and a participation in the kingdom while still in their natural life.

Through union with Christ, a hidden daily dying and rising again by which they become new men raised above the world and above their own natural and human limitation. Is that descriptive of you? You can almost say that the issue of the success of the word of God tonight is the question of whether it's true of me. If this is only a man speaking out of his own humanity, well, it could be an interesting novelty but not a requirement.

But if it's a man speaking out of that union and out of that life, if it's the word given of the Lord and empowered of the Lord to convict and to penetrate and to require a response, then we're not hearing a

sermon. We're at the threshold of an event. If the preaching of such a requirement compels and must be performed on the basis of resurrection, what will the obedience require? So this union with Christ becomes actual, a manifestation of the spirit of the being in the kingdom of God because flesh and blood cannot inherit that kingdom.

Flesh and blood cannot take that kingdom. Flesh and blood may have some play and sway in the wilderness religious side, but on the other side in the taking of the land and the establishing of the Lord Zion, it has no place. Flesh and blood cannot.

Only the life of God. So our belief in the kingdom of God must return to what the early church understood in the sense that we expect its realization not from deliberate organized measures but from a growing power of the spirit of God. What? This was written in 1906, 1910? Sounds like it's written today.

It's contemporary. Organization cannot succeed. Human measures cannot succeed, but only the growing power of the spirit of God, the spirit of the kingdom of which we become partakers in the dying and rising again with Christ in the true way of working for the kingdom of God without which all other ways are vain.

Well, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that this message tonight is itself a lifting of the ark. It's itself a requirement and a call to consider and rise up and follow after and come down and in and through and onto the other side. I'm finished, but I'm asking.

I'm going to give an invitation. You think I'm going to let this last message pass without giving you an opportunity to follow the ark that has been lifted before you tonight? You who know you're on the wrong side and have been there too long, comfortable and convenient and not requiring, now are hearing an ominous note of a very serious call that requires your death, requires your going down and into a Jordan of death, that you might come up on the other side as the army of God enabled through that union with the ark of God who is in the midst of that Jordan to take the land. Are you willing? You're not going to work this through in your mind, and you're not going to resolve your difficulties, your hang-ups and the problematical things that have kept you at a distance.

Those things will be resolved in death, burial, and union themselves. It's being baptized into Christ that confers not only the power of his life, but the meaning of baptism itself. And here we think that we can induct, by long explanation, candidates for baptism when the reality of what is to be understood is part and parcel of the going down into death itself.

So I want to give you an invitation to follow the ark. It's time to cross over. It's time to make a symbolic, physical step.

And I don't take invitations lightly, nor do I give them lightly. But I think I have a confidence to say that if God has given me the burden for this word and is in it and is waiting your response, that anyone who will get up and come down and into this Jordan will not return to their seat the same. Something will be transacted that waits for your action to follow what has been lifted and to come after.

It will not wait on further explanation. It waits for a people who have had a gutful of being too long on the wrong side and who sense that there's an hour whose time has now come that is moving us from religion to participation in the kingdom of God and its very taking. So I invite you, whatever your fear, whatever long-standing reluctance to come up and out and into the Jordan of the Lord.

He's waiting. The ark of God is here. He's gone before you.

He's taken the sting out of this death. But he requires you to enter it. It's the end of your religious intention, your religious ambition, your hopes for success as you would have defined it or your denomination defines it.

It's for the Israel of God who are jealous for his glory and know that unless we cross over there's no taking of anything. And if we remain on the wrong side after such an invitation, we face the increased intimidation of the powers of darkness who know that you were invited and refused to cross and will say, we know who you are. Jesus we know and Paul we know but who are you? You moral and spiritual coward whose comfort and convenience is preferable to the risk of following the ark.

Come on saints. God has selected Dunville. This is a piece of Canada.

This is Canada. And something has got to break. Something has got to give.

You'll not be the same. You'll have another heart, another attitude, another disposition of spirit. You'll see things differently.

You'll understand differently. Your whole framework of life, though nothing physical, will change. Your business remains, but it remains differently.

It's not a first priority. It's only enablement, a secondary thing for the true purpose of being in the army of God. I'm going to pray for these people and bless them and seal them in their consecration.

This is real saints. This is not some hokey, last kind of thing to gratify a speaker. This is divine transaction.

If I know anything in 36 years with God and a generation of his service, I know that this is a fateful, ominous night for Dunville, Canada and perhaps for Canada itself. So Lord, precious God on high, to the degree, my God, that this has been your word and your call, that you have used this historic text to show us that we are in approximately the same place as Israel long before us and that it's time now to cross over. I ask you to receive these children in and through who have followed the arc of this word born by this priest and bring them up on the other side, Lord.

Precious God on high, bring to death of that death that only a Jordan can perform, of those things we can't even identify that intimidate us, that make us fearful, that make us timid, that keep us from being the people of God and the army of God. Bring it to death. Ambition, fear, we don't have to identify it.

We have only to be obedient and come and you will perform that work. You have already performed it. It's a dry ground if we'll but enter.

So Lord, in Jesus' name, seal every soul that has come before you tonight and raise up from among them priests who go before the people who are willing to be the first ones in to catch the static, the reproach, have to face the fearful thing of a Jordan at flood stage because if they will not go before us, there's no following. May we see the arc of God being lifted by the ministers of this community more than we have had opportunity to recognize till now because they have played it safe, have performed what is expected admirably, but we have not seen in them and with them the arc of God being lifted. They should be the first one down at this altar tonight before anyone else is invited, the priest first to enter.

So my God, let tonight be historic, an event, something transacted. Bless these children. Prepare them for circumcision.

Cut away the flesh, my God, that has been so long a hindrance and give them with that cutting, my God, in the work of your cross, a sensitivity to the most high, to those things that lie too deep for words. I bless these children, Lord. Take them in.

Seal them. You know them by name and let them be fitted into the army of God, each one in his place. Fill them with your spirit.

Let them be fools for Christ's sake and be willing to give up the control of their own tongue and speak foolish things that make them an object of reproach and uncertainty because they have died to constraint. They have died to how they appear to others. They want only to be your fool.

Come, my God, and liberally endow them with the spirit of the living God. Overflow their banks in everything that is arid, parched, and dry, inundated, my God, with the Jordan of your spirit. Let those waters come back and flow over those that have passed through that they might be the men and women of the spirit, the children of the resurrection.

I bless them. Seal them. Thank you, Lord.

Holy One on High, we bless your great name. Thank you, my God, for the hour that has come beyond messages. Thank you for the event that has come to Dunville, Canada that will be consequential for all the earth.

Thank you, Lord. You who have come forward, give the Lord praise. Give him thanks.

Express gratitude. This is liberation. Hallelujah, to come out of the muck of wilderness living, knocking about in those things that are pointless and profitless to be called into the significance of the Kingdom of God and the taking of the land.

Give him thanks for the privilege. Thank you, my God, for the enablement. Thank you, Lord.

Oh, bless these children, my God. Break every fetter. Loose the restraint, my God.

Let your spirit and your life flow through these vessels, Lord, we pray. Thank you, my God. We have been in bondage too long over this stupid dispute of a denominational kind over the issue of the Holy Spirit.

He is too precious. His enablement is too significant to be dismissed as a denominational distinctive. It's the provision of God for the army of God.

And I ask you, my God, to bestow these children, to fill them, my God, with that spirit and that glory even now. Glory to God. Open their mouths, Lord.

Loose them. Thank you, my God. From fear, from intimidation, from timidity, from unnecessary restraint, from religious intimidation, let there be the unabashed and wholly given over sons and daughters of God.

Oh, I bless these children. This precious young man. These ministers.

Oh, my God. The day will begin. Just as the last message was unfolded, but the beginning, the day will begin.

For as many who have seen and heard the offering whistled and have followed after you. Thank you, my God. Oh, I bless them, Lord.

Bless them, my God. Seal their hearts and give them the joy of heaven. A first-proof covenant who have heard your word and have received it as being your word and have responded obey and cross.

Seal them. Let Dumbledore be not tempted by their presence. Let their pastors have to run to keep up with them as they live at the heels of those who are supposed to be priests but have kept their seats.

Holy God, seal them. Seal this, my God. Oh, Lord.

Holy, holy unto the Lord this night, this transaction, this call, this cross. Hallelujah. We give you the praise, my God.

And we await our first Passover as the circumcised of the Lord. Oh, we will come to your table with a new velvet shirt. There will be no more of that stale, studded moment of holding the plastic cup and the little waker waiting for the signal.

There will be a coming with the light that can't escape. We'll eat from the table of the Lord. And we'll eat from the lamb where the manna is no more.

As you've given us the faith for a new year, a new appropriation, a new heritage. I bless you, sir. Seal them.

Seal this night. Thank you, God. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Thank you, my God. Oh, break in and break through.

Restrain conventional, tidy, gun-filled heaven. Shake, my God, what needs to be shaken. Bring the reality of the divine perspective to bear on the unsuspecting.

Thank you, my God. Enable us to see as you see that we might act for you. Oh, my God, may we not come before you ashamed in the day of your appearance.

And we are told and assured somehow that we bless you for a privileged call to seal every soul who has responded. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Amen. Amen. ...that when fought by your spirit in any way come back to you void, but accomplish every purpose whereunto it was sent.

Bless these children who have come forward with a fresh revelation of the Lord as the captain of the host with his sword drawn. May we see you in a new way, Lord, we who have made you a patsy and a convenience for our life. May we see you in the awesome majesty of your lordship, sword drawn, for the time has come to take the land.

And may you give us your direction from that place and know that we are on holy ground. So we thank you, Lord. Seal this.

Put it in the archives of heaven. We thank and give you praise for the conclusion that you have given in these days as holy ghost event. Bless the fearful, bless the timid, bless those who could not bring themselves to come up and out and across.

My God, give them another opportunity. May they not be like the half-tribes of Manasseh and forgot the other who did not cross over Ephraim and ended up becoming herders and in the time of Jesus involved with pigs. My God, may there not be a melancholy fate for those who refused to cross.

Even tonight, my God, at their bedside, however reluctant they may have been here, let them not close out this day with saying, Lord, forgive me for my reticence. And now I want to be included with those who came. I want to be in with the people of God.

Receive me. Whatever that means, whatever the implications, I'll rest in that. I'll trust you.

Oh, bless these children, Lord. And we thank and give you praise for your great love and leadership in Jesus' name. Amen.

God bless you. You are dismissed. See the books while they're yet available tonight.

Anyone who wants personal prayer, I'm willing and available. And there's Mike and other of the ministers that are here. Anything in particular?

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/29/SID29072.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/art-katz/the-last-days/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net