

Joshua—Joshua 4

Memorial of Jordan Crossing

I. Additional Scriptures/Notes...

1. Verse 7... MEMORIAL—“**memorial:** [Jos 4:6](#); [Ex 12:14](#), [28:12](#), [30:16](#); [Num 16:40](#); [Ps 111:4](#); [1Co 11:24](#)” [TSK].
2. Verse 9... “It seems from this verse, that there were two sorts of stones erected as a memorial of this great event. Twelve at Gilgal ([Jos 4:20](#)), and twelve in the bed of the Jordan; which last might have been placed on a base of strong stone work, so high as always to be visible, and serve to mark the very spot where the priests stood with the ark. Drs. Kennicott and Shuckford, however, would read here with the Syriac, *mittoch*, “from the midst,” instead of *bethoch*, “in the midst;” and render, “And Joshua took up the twelve stones (taken) from the midst of Jordan,” etc. But this reading is unsupported by any manuscript yet collated; and it appears wholly unnecessary” [TSK].
3. Verse 12... Josh 1:14; Num 32:20-32.
4. Verse 19... GILGAL—“**Gil'gal.** (*a wheel; rolling*). 1. The site of the first camp of the Israelites on the west of the Jordan, the place at which they passed the first night after crossing the river, and where the twelve stones were set up which had been taken from the bed of the stream, [Jos 4:19-20](#), compare [Jos 4:3](#), where also they kept the first **Passover** in the land of Canaan, [Jos 5:10](#). It was “in the east border of Jericho,” apparently on a hillock or rising ground, [Jos 5:3](#), compare [Jos 5:9](#), in the Arboth-Jericho (Authorized Version “the plains”), that is, the hot depressed district of the Ghor which lay between the town and the Jordan. [Jos 5:10](#). Here Samuel was judge, and Saul was made king. We again have a glimpse of it, some sixty years later, in the history of David’s return to Jerusalem. [2Sa 19:40](#). A Gilgal is spoken of in [Jos 15:7](#) in describing the north border of Judah. In [Jos 18:17](#), it is given as **Geliloth**. Gilgal near Jericho is doubtless intended” [*Smith’s Bible Dictionary*].
5. Verse 23... **AS THE LORD YOUR GOD DID TO THE RED SEA—“as the Lord:** The parents must take that occasion to tell their children of the drying up of the Red Sea forty years before: “As the Lord your God did to the Red Sea.” It greatly magnifies later mercies to compare them with those before enjoyed; for, by making the comparison, it appears that God is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Later blessings should also bring to remembrance former mercies, and revive thankfulness for them” [TSK].

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Conquest.

III. Summary.

In this chapter we have the completion of the crossing of the Jordan River and the setting up of a memorial of this great miracle. The twelve men who were selected for the purpose (3:12), are now told to pick up a stone and these twelve stones will serve to remind their children of the miracle they have just experienced. The priests who carried the Ark stood firm in the river until all of Israel had crossed over into the Promised Land. When all had crossed, the Ark was moved and, as soon as the feet of the priests were lifted up on shore, the waters of the Jordan River once again flowed as previously. Behind the Ark marched 40,000 fighting men from Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh. The children of Israel would camp at Gilgal and there would be a memorial there to tell their children about what had happened on this exciting occasion.

IV. Outline.

1. Instructions about a memorial of the Jordan crossing (Josh 4:1-7).
2. A memorial is prepared (Josh 4:8-10).
3. A description of the procession (Josh 4:11-13).
4. Joshua is magnified (Josh 4:14).
5. The waters of Jordan once again flow (Josh 4:15-18).
6. The date of the event is mentioned (Josh 4:19).
7. A restating of the purpose of the stone memorial (Josh 4:20-23).
8. What would be accomplished by the memorial (Josh 4:24).

V. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Two purposes are stated for the drying up of the Jordan River.
02. _____ The rocks selected for a memorial came from the middle of the river.
03. _____ The word “SIGN” is used in this chapter.
04. _____ The one mentioned as being magnified in this chapter was the Lord.
05. _____ This chapter once again mentions the “soles of the priests’ feet.”

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ The memorial was designed to cause people to ask this question: (a) Who did this?; (b) What mean these stones?; (c) no such question is given in the text.
07. _____ Who commanded the priests to come up out of the Jordan: (a) the Lord; (b) Joshua; (c) both a & b.
08. _____ Which of the following groups of men were not among the “about forty thousand” mentioned in this chapter: (a) Levites; (b) Reubenites; (c) Gadites.
09. _____ Who bore the Ark: (a) Joshua and Caleb; (b) the twelve men selected from each tribe; (c) priests.
10. _____ This chapter tells about the feet of the priests standing this way: (a) settled; (b) firm; (c) facing the Lord.

Fill in the Blanks

11. “...that when your _____ ask their _____ in time to come, saying, What _____ ye by these _____?...”
12. The word “SOLES” is found in this chapter at 4:18 and also in Joshua ____:____.
13. “...Israel came over this Jordan on _____.”
14. The forty thousand armed men proceeded to: the _____ of _____.
15. “On that day the Lord _____ Joshua in the sight of all Israel...”

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week’s handout

ANSWERS to Lesson 01-70 ... [01—True, Josh 2:2; 02—True, Josh 2:22; 03—True, Josh 2:6; 04—True, Josh 2:17-20; 05—True, Josh 2:10; 06—Spies, Josh 2:22; 07—Joshua, Josh 2:1; 08—The King of Jericho, Josh 2:3; 09—Rahab, Josh 2:21; 10—Joshua, Josh 2:1, 23; 11—James, Rahab, harlot, another; 12—utter, quit, Josh 2:20; 13—heard, melt, courage, Josh 2:11; 14—scarlet, thread, Josh 2:18; 15—shutting, gate, Josh 2:5.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. **...when all the people were clean passed over Jordan...** (Josh 4:1). This entering into the Promised Land was complete. All that were intended by the Lord to enter did so. This statement, with its particular wording, emphasizes the fullness and completeness of the miracle at Jordan.
2. **...out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm....** (Josh 4:3). There was a deliberate choice made about selecting the rocks. They were to be taken from a certain place in the river. That place just happens to be the place where those who carried the Ark had stood. The significance of which is easy to see. The Ark represents the presence of the Lord among His people. This miracle was caused by the power of Almighty God and it was only through His power that such could be accomplished. The people needed to give glory to God for this great victory and the memorial was based upon that which God, in His great kindness, had done for them.
3. **Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared...** (Josh 4:4, cf., 3:12). There was nothing accidental about this memorial. It was not a passing thought. Certain preparation had been made for the erection of this memorial. We are not told the function these men would perform when they are first mentioned (3:12), but they fit into the plans of God and were used in a powerful way to teach those who would come along in later generations. Each of us, as Christians, have a vitally important message to deliver to those we know and those who will come after us (Mk 16:15-16; 2 Tim 2:2). We function, if we heed our call, in a similar way to these twelve men. Our Lord used twelve men, whom He had prepared, to preach the saving message to all under heaven (Col 1:23). It is our task to do the same in our day.
4. **...that when your children ask...** (Josh 4:6). This text teaches us the fact that the Lord is concerned about the answers we give in response to our children's questions. We need to be ready to give a defense of our faith (1 Pet 3:15). Are we giving the right answers to our children? If we study the Bible and prepare ourselves properly, we will have just the answers that our God would have us to give them.
5. **...these stones shall be a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever** (Josh 4:7). There are certain things that must not be forgotten. The Lord would have us to remember certain things. Throughout the Bible memorials are instituted. The Passover Feast was instituted to remind the children of Israel of their miraculous deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The greatest memorial ever instituted is that which Christians are privileged to partake of each Lord's Day. We are to remember the love of God and Christ in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross of Calvary (Mt 26:26-28; 1 Cor 11:23-29). This simple memorial feast is strengthening to us when we correctly observe it.
6. **And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel...** (Josh 4:12). This is another great opportunity taken in Scripture to emphasize the importance of UNITY. This time of conquest of the land would be undertaken by ALL of the people and none would be exempted from it. Even the folks who would be living on the other side of the river would take part in the work of taking the land. They are placed first in line to begin the hard work. Read Psalm 133 for a beautiful statement of the importance of unity. Cf., Eccl 4:12.
7. **That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God forever** (Josh 4:24). There was PURPOSE behind the events we are reading about in Joshua 3 and 4. It is vital for the people to recognize the power of God in what has just taken place!

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

Q A P Z X S W E D C V F R S C D E R F V
 B N H A Y T G B V F R E D C T E N T H W
 S X C D S E R F V B G T Y H N M J U I K
 K N O W P S O I K M J U Y H N B G T M R
 F V C D M E E W S X Z A Q W S T O N E S
 E D N C I V F D R T G B N H Y U J M A K
 O P A I G U J N O Y T G B V F R E D N C
 W S D X H Z A Q W V E D C V F R S T G B
 Y H R E T W S X C D E E R F V E T G B N
 Y H O N Y V F R E D C R X S N W S X Z A
 T G J B V F F E A R R E D O C X S W E D
 E C V F R T G B N H Y U T I L A G L I G
 L K R M J U T G B V F S E D C V B N M K
 P J E R I C H O J H E G F D S W E D C V
 O Y H N B G T R F V B V F R A E S D E R
 E R F V B G T Y L U J M N H Y T G B V F
 P R F V C D E E W S X Z A Q W S X C D E
 R F V B G T W Y H N M J C H I L D R E N
 U J M N H T T G D R Y L A N D R F V C D
 E R F V B G T Y H N M U J K R F V C D E

[The highlighted words can be found above. They may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. DRL]

Joshua 4:19-24--¹⁹And the people came up out of **Jordan** on the **tenth** day of the first month, and encamped in **Gilgal**, in the east border of **Jericho**. ²⁰And those **twelve stones**, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. ²¹And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your **children** shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What **mean** these **stones**? ²²Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on **dry land**. ²³For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were **passed over**, as the LORD your God did to the **Red sea**, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: ²⁴That all the **people** of the earth might **know** the hand of the LORD, that it is **mighty**: that ye might **fear** the LORD your God for ever.