

# What's Worth Remembering?



## How to Remember what Matters

### A. Establishing Memorial *Joshua 4:1-3*

1. **Memorial:** something that keeps remembrance alive! (*Dictionary definition*)
2. **Biblical Memorial:** A way for future generations to participate in the great acts that God has done.
3. The raising of stones as a memorial is common in the Old Testament: *Josh 7:26; 24:26-27; Gen 28:18-22; 31:45-47; 1 Sam 7:12*
4. God tells Joshua to take stones from the Jordan to make a memorial. *Josh 4:1-3*

### B. The Purpose of Memorial *Joshua 4:4-6*

1. These stones taken from the middle of the riverbed were evidence that the river had actually stopped flowing.
2. **Stones from the moon** are evidence of man's achievement of going to the moon.
3. **The Tomb of the Unknowns:**  
"Here Rests In Honored Glory  
An American Soldier Known But To God"

### C. What Do These Stones Mean to You? *Joshua 4:6-8*

1. The stones are NOT sacred—the history/memory is.
2. When memorials lose meaning—the people lose the memory and truth of history.
3. The post modern 'memorials' are based on 'cathedrals of consumerism.'
4. The miracle of crossing the Jordan, like all of God's miracles **MUST NEVER** be forgotten.

### D. The Power of Remembering *Joshua 4:9*

1. There are TWO different memorials in this passage!
2. The NIV translation supports only one. NIV :9
3. In verse :9 Joshua is adding his own memorial in addition to God's command.
4. The stones of verse :9 would mostly remain covered by the Jordan river.
5. There are some memorials that are visible [*the stones at Gilgal*] and others that remain covered [*the stones in the Jordan*].
6. Some are for a nation to remember—others for only a few people or just one person.
7. John the Baptist and Joshua's stones!  
**See Matt 3:7-9 on back of handout.**

### Joshua 4:1-9

**:1** And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying:

**:2** "Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe,

**:3** and command them, saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.' "

**:4** Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe;

**:5** and Joshua said to them: "Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel,

**:6** that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?'

**:7** Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever."

**:8** And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the LORD had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

**:9** Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there to this day.

(*See Matthew 3:7-9*)

**On back of handout)**

## 7. John the Baptist and Joshua's stones! (Continued)

As we conclude this message and look to meaning of 'memorial' we find an amazing connection between Joshua's stones and John the Baptist.

**First off**—it appears that John the Baptist was baptizing people at or very near the VERY place where Joshua placed his stones in the river!

**Joh 1:28** "These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing."

[Bethabara signifies "the house of passage", and is thought to be the place where the Israelites passed over Jordan, to go into the land of Canaan, Joshua 3:16. (Gill)]

**Secondly**—it also appears that John the Baptist may have actually referred to Joshua's stones when he speaks to the Pharisees and Sadducees:

**Mat 3:7** But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

Mat 3:8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,

Mat 3:9 and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham **from these stones**.

**So what stones was John the Baptist referring to?** They could have been just any stones in the water or stones along the bank of the Jordan. But God does not make mistakes in how things take place—there are divine reasons for the sequence and placement of Biblical events.

I believe that John the Baptist was referring to Joshua's stones and saying to the Pharisees and Sadducees, "No matter who you are—God is able to raise up His children just as He brought His children across this river by divine miracle."

The point for our study today is simply that like John the Baptist—we can draw meaning and strength from remembering [*memorial*] the mighty acts of God. We need to remember what God has done for us in the past to give us strength for the present and hope for the future!