

stones

It was impossible to imagine a moment like this. Families stepped cautiously onto the dry riverbed, children clutching parents' hands as cool, firm sand pressed beneath their feet—ground where rushing water had roared only hours before. At the center stood the priests, steadfast, the Ark of the Covenant heavy on their shoulders: the visible proof that the Lord Himself had passed before them.

They crossed. For the first time, bare feet touched soil promised to Abraham generations earlier—land spoken of in stories by fathers who died without seeing it. This was no longer wilderness. This was inheritance.

Stunned, the people pitched tents beyond the Jordan's reach. When the last straggler reached the far bank, Joshua summoned twelve men, one from each tribe.

The crowd watched them turn back toward the river, walking once more into the parted waters where the priests and Ark remained rooted in the midst.

Confusion rippled through the families. Children tugged at mothers' tunics—"What are they doing?"—their small voices carrying the question everyone held silent. The act felt weighty, deliberate, public. Whatever unfolded mattered deeply.

The river still waited, held back by divine command. The priests stood firm. And now, before the waters returned, something enduring was about to be lifted from the depths—stones from the very place God's presence had stood, chosen to bear witness long after the current resumed its course.

stones

remember

Crossing the Jordan came with new instructions for the people of Israel.



answer the question

What were the four rules of engagement from our last lesson?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

homework

So all Israel crossed safely on dry ground, and for the first time, stood on the land of Promise. What a moment! Truly, take it in.

decode the text

Read | Joshua 4:1-5

The entire nation made it safely across the Jordan River. The priests, however, still kept their feet planted where they'd been the whole time. Examine the instructions concerning the stones. Exactly what did the Lord say to do?

Read | Joshua 4:6-7

Consider the following questions: What was the purpose of the stones? Who would ask questions about the stones in the text? Who should answer that question?

Read | Joshua 4:8-11

The stones taken out of the river were put in the middle of everyone. They were visible, outward, public. But, then, Joshua picked up stones of his own. What did he do? Be specific.

When the river water was released to return to it's normal flow, what would happen to this pile of rocks?

This step of faith by Israel to cross the Jordan was a huge moment, one that should be etched on the hearts of everyone always. We have those moments in our walks with the Lord. They don't come all the time, but when they do, we should stop. Why is it important in these moments to have both a private and public memorial?

wield the sword

May the Lord's faithfulness and goodness be always on the forefront of our minds, so we can tell of all He's done!

Write | Psalm 71:15-16

MEMORIA

person

David

The Bible is full of remarkable stories of memorials. Some are entirely public, and some are entirely private—but some, like our text in Joshua 4, serve as both at the same time.

As you explore the following examples:

- Person: who is the story about
- Event: reason for memorial
- Devotion: Private worship
- Declaration: Public Testimony

Jacob

Woman



L STONES

memorial stones

event

2 Samuel 6

devotion

2 Samuel 6:12-14

declaration

2 Samuel 6:15-16

event

Genesis 28:10-18

devotion

Genesis 28:18

declaration

Genesis 35:1-7

event

Luke 7:36-50

devotion

Luke 7:36-38

declaration

Luke 7:44-50



memorials THAT magnify

The people had pledged their allegiance to Joshua. They had vowed to follow him, urged him forward with the very words God had spoken: Be strong and courageous. Yet now, standing on the dry ground of the Promised Land for the first time, something shifted in the hearts of the people.

The Lord had made a way. They crossed the raging waters just as He said they would. Joshua was a promise-keeper that day—leading the people forward before the way was visible. Memorial stones lay all around them, silent witnesses to an Ebenezer moment they would never forget.

And it was there—after the crossing, after the step of faith, after the stones were set—that the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel.

The quiet servant, the steady leader, was lifted by God Himself. The people looked on in awe, as if seeing him clearly for the first time. From that day forward, they feared the Lord and honored the one He had appointed.

Is that not the way of it? Our greater-than-Joshua, Jesus the Savior, walked the same path of humble service.

“...He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!”

Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

On the greatest day of remembrance—the day of the cross—Jesus, the faithful Servant who led us through the impossible, was lifted high. The Father Himself exalted His name above every name. In that moment of ultimate obedience and apparent defeat, glory broke through.

On days of remembrance in our own lives—when His power and mercy are displayed in our homes, our struggles, our stories—we bow lower still. For in the splendor of His glory, we finally see ourselves more truly—and Him rightly exalted

decode the text

Read | Joshua 4:15-18

Pause here—this is a powerful scene. Consider the priests and the people in this moment. What is the significance of the Jordan returning to its place once the priests stepped out, leaving no visible path behind Israel? Jot down observations or thoughts drawn directly from the text.

Read | Joshua 4:19-24

This is an important Biblical place to note. Gilgal served as Israel's primary base camp and headquarters during much of the conquest of Canaan, from which they launched campaigns. Tuck this place and definition away for later.

wield the sword

These last verses should sound familiar. The Lord repeats this instruction—first in verses 6–7 and again here—underscoring its importance. These stones of remembrance, these memorials of faith, stand the test of time. They cannot be moved by flood or fire and form a foundation that will endure forever—a foundation your family needs.

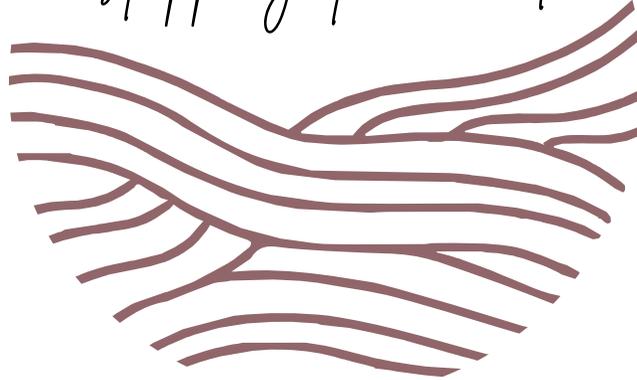
Read | Deuteronomy 6:5–9

The stones of remembrance point to God's faithfulness and the responsibility of those who lived it. Why is it essential that your children hear about the Lord and your faith directly from you? How do you think your example and words shape their understanding of God's faithfulness in a way that no one else's teaching can fully replicate?

Write | Isaiah 38:18-19

What do these stones mean to YOU?

stepping forward



Twelve stones stood on the riverbank, just rock pulled from the middle of the Jordan where feet once stood on dry ground. The Lord commanded Israel to build a monument that would trigger conversation.

“When your children ask you...” Not the priest. Not Joshua. You.

The command was personal. The responsibility was not outsourced to leaders, teachers, or future historians. It fell squarely on fathers. On mothers. On the ones entrusted with living souls under their roof. God placed the stones there so the next generation would have to ask—and so you would have to answer.

We may know the stories. We may recite the Red Sea. We may explain manna and water from the rock. We may teach timelines and rehearse miracles. Knowledge of ancient acts is not enough. The stones demand something far more intimate: your own crossing.

When your children ask you what these stones mean, can you speak of where you stood when God cut off your Jordan? Can you point to a moment when the river was raging and the Lord made a way? Can you testify, not in theory, but in scars and memory?

Your children need a witness. They need to hear how God carried you through the flood. How He disciplined you when you wandered. How He provided when there was no margin left. How He exposed sin you tried to bury. How He restored what you thought was lost forever. How He proved Himself faithful—not in someone else’s life, but in yours.

If the only stories they inherit are ancient history, the stones will feel distant, cold, irrelevant. But if they hear how the living God met their mother in grief and their father in failure, the memorial stands. It breathes. It speaks. It points them to the same God who is still parting waters today.