

WHAT DO THESE STONES MEAN?

Joshua 4

People need reminders of significant moments in our past.

We erect **monuments** to help us remember great events of our history.

The Arch of Triumph in Paris

The memorial at Arlington National Cemetery, depicting the raising of the U.S. flag on Iwo Jima.

Memorials to the courageous soldiers at the Civil War battlefields

At Chapultepec Park in Mexico, every young Mexican boy is reminded of the “boy hero” who gave his life to protect his country from the North American invaders.

Kennedy memorial on the Plaza in Dallas

These monuments are **built to remind future generations of what has happened in the past**, and to teach us important lessons about the future.

Some of us had the privilege of growing up in a Christian home, with **godly Christian parents** and some even had godly Christian grandparents.

They taught us the principles of God’s Word.

They told us stories of how God provided for them when they were out of work, when they had no money, and you couldn’t count on the government to provide it.

But **GOD was there!**

Their stories help us hang in there, when the going gets tough for us.

Some of us didn’t get it from our parents, but we learned it from the example of a **godly mentor**.

Someone who could tell us how it worked for them.

2 Tim. 2:1-1 “Pass it on!”

How do we remind ourselves of what God has done for us?

It’s important that we never forget what God has done for us.

It’s important that we teach our children what God has done for us.

Sometimes a monument—a memorial stone—can help us to remember.

CROSSING THE JORDAN 3-5:1

God's power over the flooding Jordan is demonstrated
as He stops the water's flow,
and causes the people to cross over on dry land.

THE EVENT 3:1-17; 4:10-18

Following the ark 3:1-6

Cutting off the water 3:7-13

Crossing on dry ground 3:14-17

Restoring of the flood 4:10-18

It’s important that Israel never forget what God did for them.

It’s important that Israel teach their children what God did for them—so THEY will never forget!

THE REMINDER 4:1-9, 19-24

Remembering the event **4:1-9**

They build a memorial of twelve stones taken from the river.

So they will never forget what God has done for them!

One man from each tribe was appointed to carry a stone for the memorial.

Each tribe would be reminded that God brought THEM across the Jordan. 1-5

The pile of stones will be a sign for them.

What they DO with that pile of stones will affect their destiny for generations!

The pile of stones motivates the children of future generations to ask what it means. 6

Their question will provide a teaching moment

–an opportunity to tell what God did for them:

How He cut off the flow of the Jordan, so the ark, and the Israelites with it, could pass through. 7

They obey the Lord's instruction and build the memorial. 8-9

Joshua leaves a personal reminder at the exact place where priests stood with the ark.

It wouldn't have been visible normally

When the river is low, it will be visible

When the river is high, submerged memorial will remind them of how serious conditions were when God cut off the flooding river, and of what a great thing God did for them.

Those who were present will remember it's there.

Teaching their descendants 4:19-24

Joshua sets up the monument at Gilgal. 19-20

He instructs them to use the memorial to teach their children. 21-24

The memorial is to be used for the education of their children.

Children must learn how God has dealt with His people in the past, so they will continue to trust Him in the future.

God commits the responsibility to "pass it on" to parents.

It isn't the church's responsibility to teach our kids what God has done!

It's up to US to teach our kids!

The schools can't do that for us—not even Christian schools!

God wants US to tell our kids what He has done for us, so they will learn that they can trust Him too.

Therefore God gives them a memorial, as a reminder.

When they ask: "What do these stones mean?" . . . 21

Tell them what God did for us.

In their case, when He dried up the Jordan. 22-23

Tell them why God did it. 24

God did it so all peoples might know how powerful He is.

That they might know **what a mighty God we serve!**

That's why scholars work so hard to discredit the feat!

Notice the kings of the area's confirmation of the greatness of what God did **5:1**

They realize how significant it is!

God did it so **Israel will remember what He has done and fear Him.**

To confirm their reverence for God.

As they look ahead to the uncertainties of tomorrow, the giants are still ahead.

The memorial reminds them of what God just did for them in the flooding river.

One of the most tragic statements concerning this epoch in Israel's history:

Judges 2:8-10 *After Joshua and that generation died off, another generation arose that didn't know Yahweh, nor the works He had done for Israel.*

In spite of the memorial, they forgot.

Parents didn't tell their children what God did for them, and they forgot!

What reminders do WE have of what God has done for US?

How do our kids find out about what God has done for us?

As we face struggles that come our way today or tomorrow, we can draw on reminders from the past to trust Him in the present.

It helps to Remember when God met our needs.

Remember when He intervened to protect us.

Don Campbell: Lewis Sperry Chafer, when he believed God was leading them to start DTS.

In a moment of uncertainty, contemplating the incredible burden of starting such an undertaking,

A lawyer in Scotland approached him, asking about plans for a library.

Griffith Thomas had just died and they were hoping to buy his library.

The lawyer volunteered to pay for it.

He also offered to pay \$2,000 per year for Chafer's support (in 1924!)

Whenever times were hard, Chafer was reminded of the lawyer.

If God could provide that way, we can trust Him to supply our needs.

I have a reminder like that a couple of times a year when we visit SLC.

There is a huge monument on the south end of the SL valley.

It reminds us of how God provided hundreds of thousands of dollars.

If God could do THAT, we can trust Him for the small amounts we need.

When has God's presence, His protection, His provision been evident in our life?

Do our kids know about it?

What reminders have WE established to remind US of what God has done for us?

What reminders have WE established to remind our children (grandkids) of what God did for us?

What evidence do our kids see at our house of God's work in our life?

Is there something in our house or yard that might motivate our kids to ask, "Why do you have that there?" "What does it mean?"

So we can tell them what God has done for us?

It seems impossible that in a couple of generations people could forget what God has done for them!

But isn't that exactly what's happening in our country today?

Couple of generations ago there were atheists, but at least they knew which God didn't exist!

Today people don't even know Who they don't believe in!

Our changing value system is changing our thinking—and it's changing our kids' thinking!

Notice the warning in **Deut. 8:7-14** Sound like anyone you know?

Are we leaving reminders for our kids (grandkids) of what God has done for us?

If we don't teach our kids what God has done for us, we're setting them up for spiritual meltdown!

Another purpose for the monument was *proclamation*

Our reminders from the past can tell others about God's work.

Our monuments from the past can show pagan peoples around us what God has done for us.

How do WE spread the word about what God has done for us to people in our community?

God's purpose in blessing His people

is NOT *just* our comfort and welfare!

He blesses us so that others will see what God has done and acknowledge His greatness.

What reminders do WE have?

How do OUR kids find out what God has done for us?

Is there a monument in our house to help us remember what God has done for us?

Do we talk about what He has done for us?

How do we communicate to our kids, our grandkids, our friends/neighbors what God has done for us?

If WE don't pass it on, a generation is going to come that doesn't know OUR God!

Just building a monument isn't enough!

Israel had a monument.

But they ignored it!

We have to talk about what it means!

Are WE going to pass it on?