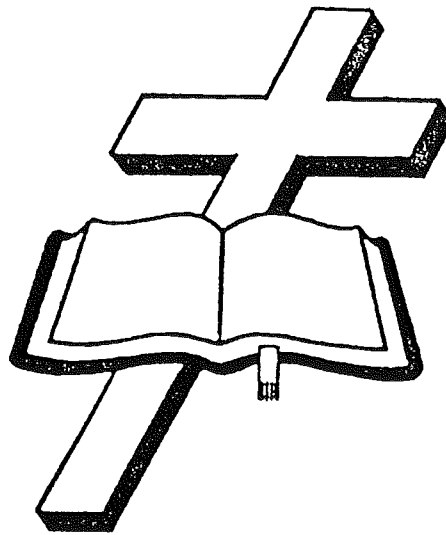


MINISTRY AT GILGAL

(How The Twelve Memorial Stones Still Speak To Us Today)

Joshua 4:1-24



THE STONES AT GILGAL:

- ◆ Remind Us Of God's Power
- ◆ Remind Us Of God's Presence
- ◆ Remind Us Of God's Plan

“What Mean These Stones?” (Joshua 4:6, 21)

Bill Kirk

“MINISTRY AT GILGAL”

Text: Joshua 4:1-24

Subject: “Voices From The Riverbed” (or) (What The Stones In Gilgal Are Saying To Us Today)

Remember

(Why Joshua Is In Your Bible:)

- #1. To pour courage and faith into your heart.
- #2. To show us how the Lord goes on before us.
- #3. To reveal to us how the past is past and behind us.
- #4. To encourage you in every season of life.
- #5. To provoke us to march forward and gain ground.

(The Main Theme Of Joshua Is:)

“Be strong and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest”. (1:9)

- ◆ In chapter 1, “Characteristics of a Courageous Spirit”
- ◆ In chapter 2, “The Legacy of Rahab”
- ◆ In chapter 3, “Crossing Over Jordan”
- ◆ In chapter 4, “The Ministry of Stones In Gilgal”

Questions?

Question: Pastor, why did God tell Joshua to erect a memorial?

Question: Why two memorials (one in the riverbed and one in Gilgal)?

Question: Pastor, what do the stones mean to us today?

Question: How do the memorials minister to every heart that is here this morning?

Question: How do they overcome the carnal nature that seeks to dominate us?

Question: Why did the people “hurry over” the riverbed when Joshua said “go” (v. 10)?

Question: How do the stones lead us on from victory to victory?

Question: How did the stones in Gilgal affect the Israelites?

Question: How do they affect you and me?

Question: And what difference does it all make in our life today?

Introduction

- ◆ In chapter 4:1, All the people clean passed over Jordan.
- ◆ In verse 2, The Lord spoke to Joshua specific instructions.
- ◆ In verse 3, Have 12 men each take a stone to Gilgal.
- ◆ In verse 4, Joshua called the 12 men.
- ◆ In verse 5, “Put a stone on your shoulder and carry it”
- ◆ In verse 6, “The stones will be a sign or a memorial to provoke your children to ask this question”,
“What mean these stones”?
- ◆ In verse 7, “Tell your children two things”: #1. The waters of Jordan were held back (and)
#2. The Ark of the Covenant was carried over Jordan
- ◆ In verse 8, The Israelites did as Joshua had instructed them.
(And in verse 9, The Second Memorial)

“And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the Covenant stood: And they are there unto this day”.

Fact: The first memorial was placed at Gilgal.

Fact: The second memorial was placed in the riverbed of Jordan.

(Notice verse 7.) “...These stones shall be a memorial to the people of God forever”.

(In Other Words)

- ◆ God wants us to remember something.
- ◆ God doesn't want us to forget something.
- ◆ God wants the stones to preach to us the importance of remembering:

(Exodus 13:3) “**Remember** the day you came out of Egypt”

(Deuteronomy 7:18) “**Remember** well what the Lord did to Pharaoh”

(Leviticus 26:42) “**Remember** my covenant with Jacob”

(Ecclesiastes 12:1) “**Remember** the Lord in the days of your youth”

(Deuteronomy 8:18) “**Remember** the Lord thy God; for it is He who gives you power to get wealth”

(Psalm 103:2) “**Bless** the Lord, O my soul, and **forget not** all his benefits”

(Pastor)

- ◆ What's the answer to the two questions listed in (v. 6) and (v. 21): “**What Mean These Stones**”?
- ◆ What do they mean to us?
- ◆ What are they saying to us?
- ◆ Why are they memorials?
- ◆ How do they help us, equip us, build us, speak to us, strengthen us and minister to us today?

(This Morning)

“Riverbed Reminders”

“Memorial Memoirs”

“Stone Secrets” From The Riverbed Of Jordan....

#1. The Monument At Gilgal Reminds Us #1:

- ◆ That God's power is sufficient to address every difficulty and obstacle in your life. (Repeat)

Fact: The stones placed at Gilgal were carried over by twelve selected men.

Fact: Each man carried a large stone eight miles from Jordan to Gilgal.

Fact: Gilgal would be the camp and center of operation for God's people.

Fact: This monument of twelve stones would be a constant reminder to Israel:

- #1. That God had opened the Jordan River.
- #2. That God had brought them safely over.
- #3. That God had brought life out of death.
- #4. That God had turned barriers unto blessings.
- #5. That God had more for them in the days ahead.

(Remember)

- ◆ The stones set up at Gilgal were placed there at Israel's first night of lodging.
- ◆ Gilgal was the place where Israel returned after their victories in battle.
- ◆ Gilgal was the place of refreshment, replenishment and restoration.

- ◆ Gilgal was Israel's place of rest and spiritual encouragement.
(And every time Israel came into camp)
- ◆ The stones would remind them of God's power at the river.
- ◆ The stones would remind them that God is responsible to open up impossible and impassable routes.
- ◆ The stones would remind them (everyday) that God is in charge regardless of their battles.

(Why Is Joshua 4 And The Stones In Your Bible?)

- #1. To excite us to trust the Lord all the more!
- #2. To excite us to remember the faithfulness of God!
- #3. To excite us to take note that God is at work!
- #4. To excite us to believe that God hasn't changed over time!

The Monument At Gilgal Is Talking To Us (What's It Saying?)

- #1. That God has great love for His people.
- #2. That God keeps His promises to His people.
- #3. That God goes on before His people in victory.
- #4. That God never fails His people.
- #5. That God is going to finish His work in His people.

(What's The Danger At Gilgal?)

- ◆ To forget and lose the awe of the meaning of the stones.
 - Fact:** Gilgal gradually lost its influence.
 - Fact:** Over time, the Jews sinned at Gilgal.
 - Fact:** Hosea condemned the people at Gilgal. (4:15; 9:15)
 - Fact:** Amos echoed Hosea's words in (Amos 4:4; 5:5).
- ◆ "God, help us to remember and stay close to Gilgal".

#2. The Monument At Gilgal Reminds Us #2:

- ◆ That there is a Divine Presence when passing through deep waters. (Repeat)
Question: What did the priests carry into the Jordan?
Answer: The Ark of the Covenant (or the presence chamber of God).
Question: What did the priests (with the Ark) do in Jordan?
Answer: (v. 9) They stood still while the people passed over.
Question: How long did the Ark stay in the riverbed?
Answer: (v. 1) Until every person was clean passed over.
- ◆ The people were walking over.
- ◆ The priests were waiting patiently. (and)
- ◆ The Ark was a silent presence to ensure the safety of every Israelite.

(Remember)

- ◆ There were hundreds of thousands of people. ◆ There were healthy people, and infirmed people.
- ◆ Some were strong, and some were weak. ◆ Some wanted to run, others couldn't run.
- ◆ Some led the way, others lagged behind.

But Notice The Ark

(Which Represented The Presence Of God)

- ◆ Not until the last loiterer has struggled to shore, does the Ark move from its place.

(Why Not Move?)

- #1. To remind us that, God is not shaken by what shakes you.
- #2. To remind us that, in all of our activity and exhaustion, God is not anxious at all.
- #3. To remind us that, in the midst of a turbulent and swollen river, the Ark holds back the water and is a point of rest.
- #4. To remind us all of (Isaiah 43:2) once again:
“When you pass through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not over flow thee”.

The Monument At Gilgal Was A Reminder (To The Jew And To Us)

- #1. That the Lord stepped into the Jordan with His people!
- #2. That the Lord is not nervous over your Jordans you are up against!
- #3. That the Lord has something in mind for you at your Jordan impass!
- #4. That the Lord will make a way where there seems to be no way!

(Why So Encouraged?)

- ◆ Because Gilgal testifies to you that the Ark (The presence of God) is with you in your journey (even in the middle of your troubled waters!!!)

#3. The Monument In Jordan Reminds Us #3:

- ◆ That there has been a break with the past, and we have died to sin completely. (Repeat)

(2 Monuments Are Listed In Joshua 4)

- #1. The monument at Gilgal reminded the Jews of God’s power to take them from Egypt to the Promised Land.
- #2. The monument in the river of Jordan itself, reminded the Jews that their old life was buried and their is new life in following the Lord.

(Notice v. 9) “And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan”

Fact: Joshua was led by the Lord to do this.

Fact: Joshua himself, set up the memorial in the riverbed.

Question: Why did Joshua set up this memorial?

Answer: To be symbolic of death to the carnal sinful man (what was behind and past).

Question: Where did Joshua set up the memorial in the river?

Answer: (v. 9) “...in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the Ark of The Covenant stood”.

(What A Revelation To Us All)

- #1. That every time Israel looks in the Jordan, the stones remind them that they passed through the place of death.
 - #2. They have received new life because the Ark has overcome the power against them.
 - ◆ Whereas Gilgal gives us faith to trust God at those swollen river times. (Testing around us)
 - ◆ The stones in Jordan give us faith to trust God that Jesus has crucified the power of sin to rule us. (Temptations within us)
- (Notice) ◆ There was no provision made for retreat after the Jordan River was crossed.
- ◆ Once the waters returned, there was no turning back.

Question: Why did God return the water after Israel crossed over?

Answer: To tell us that we’ve been delivered from the world, the flesh and the devil (once and for all) with no turning back.

(In Other Words)

- #1. Sin has no more dominion over you.
- #2. The flesh nature has no authority to rule you.
- #3. In Jordan, you died to sins power to call the shots in your life.
- #4. Your old, sinful, past life has been buried once and for all.
- #5. You can overcome every temptation by faith in what Jesus has purchased for you.

#4. The Monuments In Both Jordan And Gilgal Remind Us #4

- ◆ That God expects us and invites us to believe Him for intervention both here and now in Binghamton, New York.

(Read V. 24)

“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”

- ◆ “All the people of the earth” includes you!
- ◆ “The Lord your God forever” includes now!

(It's An Invitation From God)

- #1. To believe in His power at your Jordans.
- #2. To see Him with you in your Jordans.
- #3. To experience power over sin and death to the selfish carnal nature at Jordan.
- #4. To allow God to further His great work inside of you this morning.

Conclusion

Question: How did the people of God cross over Jordan?

Answer: (v. 10) “...and the people hastened and passed over”.

(In Other Words)

- ◆ The people hurried over with haste.
- ◆ The people took advantage of the open window of grace and opportunity.
- ◆ The river was held back for a limited time.
- ◆ There was no hesitation to go from the wrong side to the right side of Jordan.

Question: Why hurry over the riverbed?

Answer: (2 reasons that provoke us all to action)

- #1. They were anxious to forget the slavery behind them (in Egypt).
- #2. They were anxious to obtain the good land before them (in Canaan).

What A Message To Us All:

- #1. Is there anything that the Lord is calling you to forsake and leave behind?
- #2. Is there something dragging you down that God has been dealing with you about?
- #3. Are you having to decide whether to stay where you are or chose to cross over and obey God?
- #4. Are you tempted to live in the past, instead of bury the past in Jordan?
- #5. Are you willing to “hasten” and “hurry over” to cooperate with God this morning?
- #6. Have you forgotten past victories God has granted you (and you need faith to encounter a pressing Jordan)?
- #7. Do you need to go back to Gilgal today to be replenished, renewed and restored?

AMEN!

Bill Kirk, Pastor

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