

Joshua Chapter 04 Commentary

1 ¶ And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, 2 Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, 3 And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night.

In my mind, I thought that Joshua prepared these men, and they got the stones as they were passing through Jordan. However, now I understand, they were already passed over the river when God gave Joshua the command to get the stones for the monument.

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: 5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel:

Having received instructions from God; Joshua chosen one man from each tribe. "***Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan***" After reading some commentaries I finally got the picture. Pass over before the ark; simply means they were to go back into the river to a place in front of the ark. "***Before the ark***" The ark is facing the land of promise and they are to get the stones, from between the front of the ark and the land of promise.

6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? 7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever. 8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

These stones are to make a visible memorial, of the place, where the Lord provided Israel passage through the river into the land of promise. Notice: the children are to ask about the stones. This tells me that the families of Israel are to make periodic trips to this place, or else the children will never see these stones. When they bring their children to this monument, and the children ask about it, they are to teach their children the meaning of the monument. I would think they would take the time to give a vivid description of how the crossing of Jordan happened, recounting the miraculous parting of the waters, which gave them unhindered entrance into the land of promise. This will be a constant reminder of the miraculous, delivering, power of God.

When you are born-again, you have passed through the river into the land of promise. You also have a memorial, the King James bible, to which you are responsible of exposing your children. Remember, it says "***when they ask.***" What does this tell you? It says to me; I should be using this memorial, so that my children see it, and then they will inquire about it. If your children never see you holding the memorial, reading, and studying the bible, what shall there be to prompt them to ask about the bible?

Some will object and say that the bible is not a memorial. I ask you this question: What is a memorial? A memorial is an object that brings us to remembrance of some past thing or event. What did Jesus teach us in: ***Joh 5:39 "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."*** If a memorial brings you to remembrance of something, then it is also testifying of something. The whole bible is a testimony, a memorial, of Jesus Christ. Now, the scriptures that Jesus was talking about is the Old Testament, because the New Testament had not yet been completed. We shall see the New Testament revealed later.

9 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.

Joshua set up a monument of twelve stones in the middle of the river, where the priest stood. What significance does this have to us? The twelve stones of the visible memorial, set up on land, are representative of the twelve tribes of Israel, which is representative of the chosen people of God upon the earth. These twelve were the sons of one man, chosen by God, to fulfill the purpose and plan of God.

The same thing happened through Jesus, of whom all God's people have being. Jesus was indeed the one chosen, and given the commandment of God, to deliver his chosen people from bondage and carry them to a land of promise, as prophesied by the Old Testament scriptures. He chose the 12 disciples, through whom he laid the foundation stones of the New Testament church, and his lineage is still increasing upon the earth. This monument in the midst of Jordan is representative of the New Testament church, which is all those to whom God the Father gave to God the Son to save eternally.

Why the 2 monuments? They are representative of the complete family of God, those before Christ and after Christ, that shall inhabit the eternal land of promise.

This invisible monument, in the midst of the river, is also a prophetic picture of the New Testament scriptures, that will be revealed after Christ has returned to his throne in heaven, having accomplished all the Father gave him to do. Christ had to come incarnate, before the New Testament could be written.

I believe that it is also representative of God's mercy and grace? How so? The river Jordan was a separator for God's people from where they were and the land of promise. For the children of God to enter the Promised Land they had to go through Jordan. The way they did this was by the miraculous power of God providing them a passageway. Just as God delivered his people from bondage and brought them into the land of promise through Jordan river, so we are delivered from the bondage of Egypt (our inherit sin nature) and the rule of Pharaoh (satan to us) by the shed and atoning blood of Christ, which is miraculously manifested to us in the new birth.

Remember that Christ took the Passover supper and turned it into a memorial feast to bring us to remembrance of Him? As the stones set up were to be a memorial and teaching of God, so the communion ordinance set up by Christ is to us today. Joshua setting up the stones in the midst of the river also shows us the teachings of the law in the Old testament scriptures, and the teachings of Christ in the New Testament scriptures which were not yet revealed to these.

Remember in: ***John 3:3; "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*** It is thus with us upon the earth. When we are "born again" we are brought through Jordan river, Christ's blood, and enter a land of promise, the spiritual land of eternal life and salvation. The veil is removed from our eyes, and we can see both monuments. We manifest this to the world by being monuments, to the world around us, and testifying of the miraculous power of deliverance, and majesty of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

What a wonderful deliverer we have, who has provided miraculous deliverance and a Promised Land for all his people. Those before the coming of Christ to earth, and those after the coming of Christ to earth, all have the hope of the fulfillment of the promise of God, which shall be brought to pass at the end of time. Christ shall return, gather unto himself all of God's chosen people (represented by these two monuments), and deliver them safe into the place of promise, in eternity. Praise and glory be to this one who has delivered us, and has given us the monument of remembrance, in the Old and New Testament scriptures.

10 ¶ For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hasted and passed over. 11 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people. 12 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them: 13 About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho. 14 On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

Remember, the ark stood still while the law church passed through the river. The sacrificial law service must be fulfilled, and the New Testament church established, before the revealing of this invisible memorial.

We see that God indeed caused the people to fear before Joshua, just as he did with Moses. Why were they fearful of Joshua? Because they saw Joshua was the mediator between them and God. They understood; God would use Joshua to instruct them in all they were to do. I believe that the fear they had was a reverent fear, such as the reverent fear we are to have of God today.

15 And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, 16 Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan. 17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan. 18 And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before. 19 And 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.

The miraculous crossing of the river being accomplished, the river returns to flowing, as it did before they crossed over. This signifies to Israel, there is no turning back. Now you must fight and occupy. The same is true for the born-again sinner. You have crossed from death to life and there is no

going back. Why? Because you are given eternal life in the new birth. Therefore, it is our duty to join the church, God's chosen people on earth, and fight the enemies, which dwell in our fleshly nature, who are the current occupants of the inhabitants of the land of promise, and occupy the land of promise under the leadership of Jesus, our Commander in Chief.

20 ¶ And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. 21 And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? 22 Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. 23 For 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: 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 for ever.

Their children asking about the stones is representative of our children today asking us about Jesus, the bible, the Lord's Supper, and all things that represent the New Testament church. Thanks be to God; we have the King James Bible, which provides us the written testimony of the truth of God in the Old and New Testaments (the two monuments), and the testimony of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ!

Praise the Lord! for the prophetic pictures of the Old Testament of the first coming of Christ. Praise the Lord! for the New Testament scriptures and the prophecy of the second coming of Christ, in which we have the promise of being resurrected from the dead and being miraculously carried into the eternal land of Promise. Hallelujah! Amen!