

Joshua 4

Joshua 4.1-7

V1 – The entire nation crossed over

V2 – Instructions from God? Choose 12 men (one from each tribe) – same instructions as in *Joshua 3.12*

-Where else had they chosen 12 men (one from each tribe)? *Num. 13* – the 12 spies (40 years earlier)

V3 – Instructions? Take 12 stones from the middle of the Jordan

V 4-5 – Joshua carried out the instructions of God

V 6 – What was the purpose of this pile of 12 stones? A memorial

-For whom? The children

-The children would ask about the cairn

Children are always asking questions! "Why are you drinking grape juice in church?" "Why are you putting your money into that basket?" "Why did that person just get dunked under water?"

Can you think about other memorials? Passover, Lord's Supper today, Mizpah (*Gen. 31.49*)

-God frequently set up memorials – especially things that children would ask about

-There is nothing wrong with memorials, as long as they do not become idols

-People make donations to an orphan's home in honor of someone or in memory of someone

-We get donations for our Bible camp each year in honor of someone or in memory of someone

V 7 – Parents were to explain these things to their children

-**What is the attitude of God toward children? Read Psalm 127.3-5**

-**What is the attitude of many people today toward children?** An inconvenience

-**What was the attitude of Jesus Christ toward children when he was on the earth? Read Mark 10.13-16** (found in three of the gospel accounts – Why?)

God could have made our offspring born full-grown – Why not? In other words, why did he want us to have to raise our children? Patience, learning love

-Ask parents of a child with Down's syndrome and see how much they love that child and how much they are thankful to God for that child

-There are many animals that lay eggs or give birth to their young and never see their offspring again – e.g., sea turtles – **Why didn't God make humans like that?**

There was a recent federal study to see if teenage boys ate more food than other age groups – they found that teenage boys could eat a 2000 calorie lunch and still eat a large breakfast and supper

-Yes, kids are expensive, but our lives are so enriched by them

Joshua 4.8-13

V 8 – The stones were not placed in the middle of the river bed, but on the western bank

V 9 – "There to this day" = the writer was living and could testify that the rock cairn was still there

-**What did Joshua do next?** He personally picked up 12 stones and set them in the middle of the

Jordan

-**Who would see them there?** Only God

-**What would have been the effect on the people of seeing Joshua do this?** Admiration

V 10 – **Why did people hurry across the river?** Water was building up/many people were still crossing

V 11 – **After the people crossed?** Priests with the Ark crossed

V 12 – Reuben/Gad/ half-tribe of Manasseh – **Why mentioned?** They wanted land east of the Jordan
-This showed their support of the other tribes

V 13 – **How many were there from these 2½ tribes?** About 40,000 soldiers

Joshua 4.14-18

V 14 – **What else happened that day?** The people gained respect for Joshua

V 15-16 – **Instructions from God to Joshua?** Tell the priests to come up from the river bed

V 17 – Joshua did what God told him to do

V 18 – **What happened when the priests stepped out of the water?** The river started flowing again

Joshua 4.19-24

V 19 – **Where did the people camp?** Gial (c. 2 miles east of Jericho)

V 20 – The 12 stones were set up at Gial

V 21-22 – A lesson from the children who would ask questions for generations

V 23 – So that all people would realize that God was with the Israelites

V 24 – **Who else would profit from knowing about the crossing of the Jordan on dry ground?** All the peoples of the earth (again a reference to God's love for the Gentiles)

Lessons from this chapter:

1. Memorials are important to God.
2. He wants us to teach our children about our faith
-It shows the love that God has for children
3. God will remove obstacles for his people if they are faithful to him.

Revised 2012-09-15