

*stones and ask for an explanation. What were the two things that the nations would know from their answer(v 24)?*

Seeing the stone pillar reminded them that God was powerful and He keeps His promises. It encourages us to trust and follow whatever God is doing. We don't have to have the water parted before we move because we remember that God is powerful and faithful and loving.

The twelve stones were carried by a member of each tribe. The memorial wasn't to remember what God did for Joshua but for the whole nation of Israel.

*Don't be content to rest on what God has done in your life alone. What has God done in our faith community? How do we jointly share in our victory as the people of God? How can we celebrate God and encourage one another together?*

#### **WRAP-UP**

When the Israelites created a memorial of stones they made a tangible way to remember God's mighty miracles and faithfulness. Joshua led the Israelites through the parted Jordan River, reminiscent of the earlier crossing of the Red Sea. Moses had warned them against forgetting God, especially in times of comfort and prosperity which they were now entering. The stones would remind them. Such reminders also allow us to share with future generations, demonstrating God's faithfulness in our lives. Remembrance not only strengthens individual faith but also builds a collective identity within a faith community, fostering unity and celebration of God's victories together.

#### **MEMORY VERSE**

***24 He did this so all the nations of the earth might know that the LORD's hand is powerful, and so you might fear the LORD your God forever." - Joshua 4:24 NLT***

*Challenge – Stack some stones this week- write down what you see God doing in your life and in your community of believers.*

## **Stacking Stones** Great Things #3

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is finally time for the people of God to enter the Promised Land! This is the moment that generations have longed to see. God parted the Jordan River to make a way for His people to enter into His rest and abundance. But wait! There is something that needs to be done first. They can't let this mighty miracle be forgotten and so God tells them to stack up stones as a memorial. It will be a reminder to future generations because, as unlikely as it seems, we tend to forget how amazing God really is.

### **Ice Breaker**

How good is your memory- do you remember what you had for breakfast yesterday?

### **Key Passage**

**6 We will use these stones to build a memorial. In the future your children will ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' 7 Then you can tell them, 'They remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the Ark of the LORD's Covenant went across.' These stones will stand as a memorial among the people of Israel forever." - Joshua 4:6-7 NLT**

### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

#### **1. For All to Remember**

God does mighty miracles on our behalf. In this chapter of Joshua we see that the Jordan River was parted as the people passed through safely into the Promised Land.

*When they saw the waters parted and the people walked across on dry ground what other miraculous event would they remember?*

Surely the people remembered that 40 years earlier, those who were alive at that time, had passed through the Red Sea with Moses when God rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Now Moses was dead but God's promises weren't. And God had rescued them once again.

*11 "But that is the time to be careful! Beware that in your plenty you do not forget the LORD your God and disobey his commands, regulations, and decrees that I am giving you today. 12 For when you have become full and prosperous and have built fine homes to live in, 13 and when your flocks and herds have become very large and your silver and gold have multiplied along with everything else, be careful! 14 Do not become proud at that time and forget the LORD your God, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt. - Deuteronomy 8:11-14 NLT*

*In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses warned the people not to forget God. Under what circumstances were they likely to forget (v.11)? In what ways does our comfort or our prosperity contribute to us forgetting God? How would erecting a memorial, "a pillar of stones" serve to counteract that?*

*3 Tell them, "Take twelve stones from the very place where the priests are standing in the middle of the Jordan. Carry them out and pile them up at the place where you will camp tonight." - Joshua 4:3 NLT*

It is easy to put our confidence in our ability to succeed, produce and prosper when things go well. But in our pride, we can forget that every good gift is from the hand of God, and He has given us even our skills and ability. Sometimes we need a tangible reminder of what God has done for us. But not only for us, that pillar becomes a sign we can point to as a witness to the next generation of God's mighty power in our lives.

*Do you have any stones to stack? Have you trusted God in ways that cause the next generation to ask...Why do you forgive, why are you generous, why do you read God's word and pray? What can you share that shows God's faithfulness to you and how did it impact the way you live?*

## **2. For Us to Remember**

*9 Joshua also set up another pile of twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the place where the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant were standing. And they are there to this day. - Joshua 4:9 NLT*

There is no explanation as to why Joshua set up a second stack of stones in the riverbed. When the waters returned, they would be covered. There are different possible explanations. One is that Joshua made this his personal act of worship, recognizing God's mighty miracle.

*Our worship of God doesn't not have to be a public display. Joshua knew his pillar was there even if it wasn't seen. Do you ever take time to worship God privately and recount all of the ways He has acted on your behalf over your lifetime?*

*28 This encounter took place in Bethany, an area east of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing. - John 1:28 NLT*

*In the very location where Joshua set up his stones, John the Baptist would later be baptizing in the Jordan. It would have been near this site that Jesus was baptized. Think about what the crossing of the river represented to God's people and what happened at Jesus' baptism as the Spirit descended and the Father pronounced "This is My Son". What parallels do you see in these two events?*

## **3. Remembrance Encourages Us**

*21 Then Joshua said to the Israelites, "In the future your children will ask, 'What do these stones mean?' 22 Then you can tell them, 'This is where the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' 23 For the LORD your God dried up the river right before your eyes, and he kept it dry until you were all across, just as he did at the Red Sea when he dried it up until we had all crossed over. 24 He did this so all the nations of the earth might know that the LORD's hand is powerful, and so you might fear the LORD your God forever." - Joshua 4:21-24 NLT*

*Joshua told the Israelites that future generations would see the*