

A serene sunset scene over a beach. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the upper center, casting a warm orange and yellow light across the sky and reflecting on the water. In the foreground, a stack of five smooth, dark grey stones is balanced vertically on the right side. The beach is covered with many other similar smooth stones, some of which are wet and glistening. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

The Memorial Stones

Joshua 4:1-24

15 March 2026

Joshua 4:1-24

And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying: ² “Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, ³ and command them, saying, ‘Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.’ ”

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; 5 and Joshua said to them: “Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, 6 that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, ‘What do these stones *mean* to you?’ 7 Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever.”



⁸ And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the LORD had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. ⁹ Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there to this day.

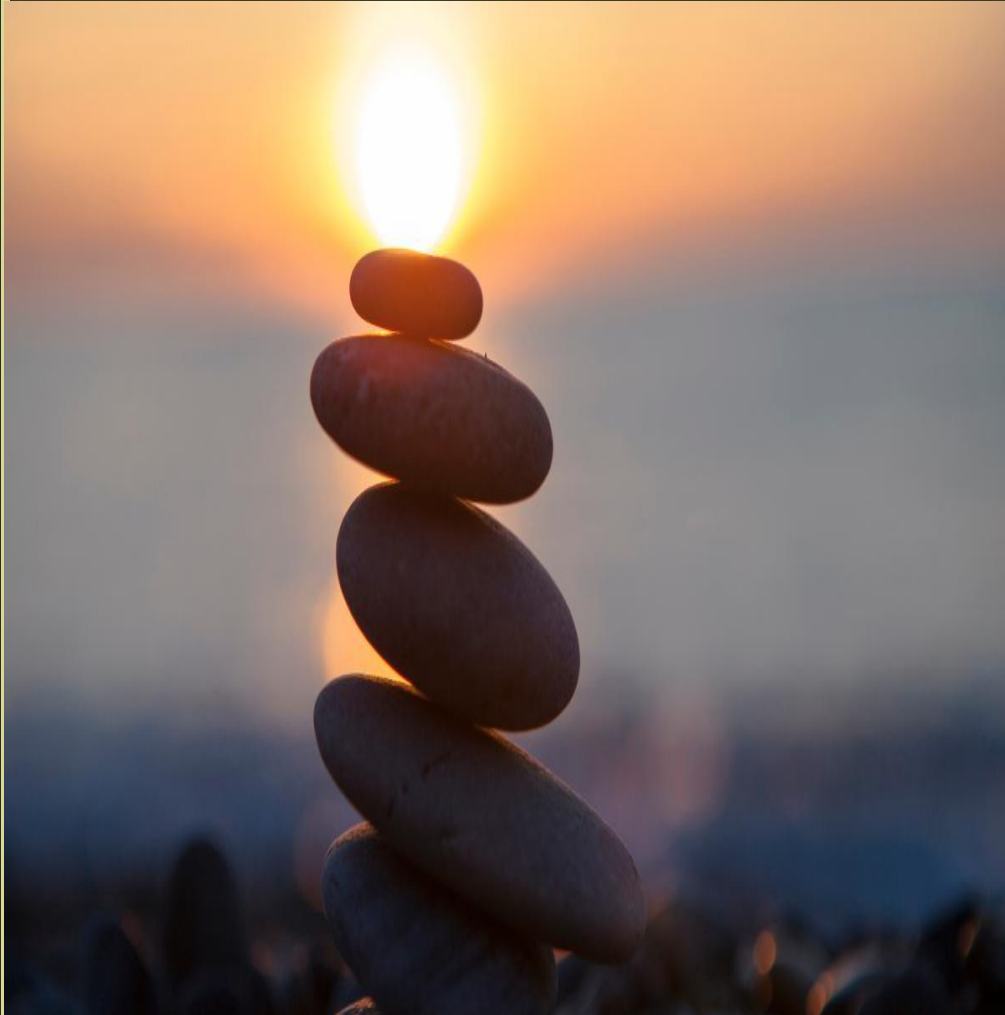


¹⁰ So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. ¹¹ Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people. ¹² And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them. ¹³ About forty thousand prepared for war crossed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. ¹⁴ On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, 16 “Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan.” 17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, “Come up from the Jordan.” 18 And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come from the midst of the Jordan, *and* the soles of the priests’ feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before.

19 Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. 20 And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. 21 Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What *are* these stones?’ 22 then you shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land’; 23 for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, 24 that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”

Preamble



Joshua 4:7b

Joshua 4:7b

“..... And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever.”

-(lasting – NET bible)_ memorial (permanent reminder – GOD’S WORD)
- Hebrew: “**Zikrown**” = a memento (or memorable thing, day or writing) -- memorial, record. (Merriam Webster = serving to preserve remembrance)



“Remember”

*“The notion of remembering in Hebrew is more than a calling to mind. It involves a remembering with concern; it also implies living reflection and, where called for, a corresponding degree of action”
(Woudstra)*

“Remember”

The memorial stones are a “sign” to the future generation so that they remember:

- 1. God’s Power
- 2. God’s Paternal Love
- 3. God’s Presence



God's Power

Joshua 4:6-7

.....⁶ that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' ⁷ Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever."

God's Power

“The title Lord of all the earth here applied to God is not insignificant, but extols his powers above all the elements of nature, in order that the Israelites, considering how seas and rivers are subject to his dominion, might have no doubt that the waters, though naturally liquid, would be become stable in obedience to his word”. (John Calvin)

God's Power

Faith + Obedience = Miracles (& Victory)

God's Paternal love

Joshua 4:1-7

And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying: ² ***“Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, ³ and command them, saying, ‘Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.’ ”***

High Priest's Garment



High Priest's Garment

Exodus 28:15, 17-21

¹⁵ “You shall make the **breastplate of judgment**. . . . four rows of stones: *The first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; *this shall be* the first row; ¹⁸ the second row *shall be* a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹⁹ the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ²⁰ and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. ²¹ **And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.**

“Do This in Remembrance of Me”



“Do This in Remembrance of Me”

Luke 22:14-20

¹⁴ When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. ¹⁵ Then He said to them, “With *fervent* desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide *it* among yourselves; ¹⁸ for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

²⁰ Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, “This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.



God's Presence

Joshua 4:7

⁷ Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before ***the ark of the covenant of the LORD***; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever.”

Purpose of God's Miracle

Joshua 4:21-24

²¹ Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What *are* these stones?’ ²² then you shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land’; ²³ for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, ²⁴ ***that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.***”

Purpose of God's Miracle

- 1. Bring the world into the FOLD of the Lord.
- 2. Bring the God's people and their children into the FEAR of the Lord.

FOLD of the Lord

Joshua 4:24a

²⁴ that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it *is* mighty,.....

Genesis 12:3

God said to Abraham from the very start, “And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

FEAR of the Lord

Leviticus 10:3

³ And Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the Lord spoke, saying:

‘By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.’ ”

FEAR of the Lord in the OT

Proverbs 28:14 (ESV)

Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always,
but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.

Isaiah 66:2 (NKJV)

For all those *things* My hand has made,
And all those *things* exist,”
Says the LORD.

“But on this *one* will I look:
On *him who is* poor and of a contrite spirit,
And who trembles at My word.

FEAR of the Lord in the NT

Philippians 2:12-13

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Working Out Our Salvation

“This is really interesting. You should fear and tremble because God is working to keep you. And I think it means the sheer awesome presence of God in our lives working for us, not against us, should produce trembling. That is amazing. So, the New Testament treats the fear of God as a motive for not turning away from him. We should fear in the sense that we seek refuge from God away from God’s terrible wrath. God’s grace in Christ is the refuge from God’s wrath outside Christ. There is terror outside of Christ, and there is a different kind of trembling inside of Christ.” (John Piper)

No Fear in Love

1 John 4:18

¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

Delighting in the Fear of the Lord

Nehemiah 1:11

¹¹ O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who ***desire to fear Your name***; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”

Delighting in the Fear of the Lord

Isaiah 11:2-3

The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

³ ***His delight is in the fear of the LORD,***
And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

Epilogue

We are to constantly recall and tell of God's wonders and miracles to the next generation as we remember His power, His paternal love and His personal presence in our lives. The purpose is so that the world will see God's power and might and be brought into His fold and that we might fear the Lord, revering Him for His holiness and awesomeness all the days of our lives.

■