

BATTLES BEFORE BLESSINGS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Scriptures from New International Version unless noted

REMEMBER WHEN

"If we forget the past we don't know who we are, we don't know what we are, and we certainly don't know why we are."

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

God considers history to be a vitally important subject.

When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan the Lord said to Joshua, 'Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan from right where the priests stood and to carry them over with you and put them down at the place where you stay tonight.' So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, and said to them, 'Go over before the ark of the Lord your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever.' So the Israelites did as Joshua commanded them. They took the twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, as the Lord had told Joshua; and they carried them over with them to their camp, where they put them down. Joshua set up the twelve stones that had been in the middle of the Jordan at the spot where the priests who carried the ark of the covenant had stood. And they are there to this day.

Joshua 4:1-9

When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land He has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe His commands, His laws and His decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Deuteronomy 8:10-18

Proper Memorials Include:

1. A clear understanding of God's purpose

So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, and said to them, 'Go over before the ark of the Lord your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, to serve as a sign among you.'

Joshua 4:4-6

2. All of the parties involved

'Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites.'

Joshua 4:5

3. A prominence that attracts questions

'...to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask...'

Joshua 4:6

The Purpose of Memorials:

1. Memorials help us to celebrate God's miracles

- *Memorial Event*
- *Memorial Symbol*

2. Memorials help us to capture teachable moments

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

What are your memorials?

What do you celebrate?

What are the marks of God's incredible working in your world?