

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE AND MOVE ON LESSON 3 PART B

Series Subject: Accept the Challenge and Move On

Lesson 3: Campaign Canaan/Beachhead Established Josh. 3:1-4:24

Lesson 3 Part A: Picture of Faith Josh. 3:1-17

Lesson 3 Part B: Product of Faith Josh. 4:1-24

Today's Study: Product of Faith Josh. 4:1-24

1. Commemoration of Faith Cairn #1 Erected Vv. 1-9
2. Crossing the Jordan Vv. 10-14
3. Continued Flow of Jordan Vv. 15-18
4. Camping at Gilgal/ Cairn #2 Erected Vv. 19-24

Time is available only for a brief discussion of review questions from previous lesson.

INTRODUCTION

1. A Brief Recap of Lesson 3 Part A

Our current main topic "Campaign Canaan/Beachhead Established" is covered in Joshua chapters 3 and 4. In chapter 3 we discussed the "Picture of Faith"; in chapter 4 we will discuss the "Product of Faith."

The "Picture of Faith" is clearly seen in Josh. 3; it was powerfully illustrated, vividly presented and astoundingly exemplified; it dynamically demonstrated the awesome, amazing power of the only living and true God who acts on behalf of His people. He is the "El Shaddai", the "God Almighty"; He will do what He purposes to do, overpowering all opposition. (Example Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; etc.)

(a) Wakened to the Task Josh. 3:1

We begin the chapter with Joshua's outstanding example as a leader. One of the first things noted is that he was an "early riser." Obviously, Joshua was not a loafer; he was not a person given to indolence (such is discouraged in the Bible... Prov. 6:9; 10:5; etc.). Rising early was a strategy Joshua frequently took advantage of (Josh. 3:1; 6:12, 15; 7:16; 8:10). He was wholeheartedly committed to his service and willingly exercised care and pain in performing his task.

(b) Walk of Faith Josh. 3:2-13

After waiting for so many years, Israel was about to enter the Promise Land. It was the land they long desired; promised by God to Abraham (Gen. 11:27-12:3; 13:14-18; 15:7, 18; 17:1-8; 50:24; etc.). It was the land they greatly anticipated, the land of ultimate happiness and realization of all their needs. It was the land of good things and generally referred to as the land of milk and honey.

Camping on the east side of Jordan means there was only one way for them to enter the Promised Land and that was by going across the Jordan River. Crossing the Jordan River especially early spring when all the banks were over flooded, was impossible, at least humanly speaking, and such was a major problem facing Israel; their only way of crossing was by the miraculous power of God and as it relates to Israel they needed to exercise faith in God.

In their preparation to cross the Jordan River, we saw a series of information relayed by (a) God to Joshua (Josh. 3:7-9) (b) by Joshua to (1) the people (v. 5) (2) to the priests (v.6) (3) to the people (Vv. 9-13) (c) by the officers to the people (Vv. 3-4).

Josh. 3:3 Amplified Bible

“When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God being borne by the Levitical priests, set out from whence you are and follow it.”

God’s promises are sure, 2 Peter 3:9; (a) His Words are reliable, Matt. 5:18; (b) His promises are of infinite value, 2 Peter 1:14. What he says will come through; the way of victory is the way of faith.

Heb. 11:6 ESV

“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.”

(c) Walk of Faith Josh. 3:14-17

Some 40 years before, Israel failed to move forward; instead they doubted and rebelled against God’s will (Num 13-14). As a result of their lack of faith and rebellion against God’s will they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years and all males 20 years and older perished in the wilderness. (Num. 32:11-13).

Once more Israel was put to the test and they knew that in order for them to enter the Promised Land they had to cross the Jordan River and that faith was absolutely necessary. The Promised Land represented a new life, a victorious life but Jordan was an obstacle to the inheritance of their promise.

We saw in lesson 2 that Rahab not only believed but put her faith into action as proven in Scriptures (Josh. 2:3-22; Heb. 11:31; James 2:25). Upon this occasion (Josh. 3) Israel was strongly united on all fronts and their faith in God was firmly established as they moved forward defying the overflowing Jordan they reaped the awesome reward of a successful crossing of the overflowing Jordan River. It was faith in action and they walked the walk of faith!

Several versions to the song: **We've Come This Far By Faith**. The following was done by Carlton Pearson

Chorus

We've come this far by faith
 Leaning on the Lord
 Trusting in His Holy Word
 He never failed me yet
 Oh! Can't turn around
 We've come this far by faith

Don't be discouraged
 When trouble comes into your life
 He will bear your burdens
 And remove all your misery and strife
 And that's why

Just the other day
 I heard a man say
 He didn't believe in God's Words
 But I can truly say the Lord will make a way
 Because He, never fail me yet.

2. Precious Memories

Irrespective of our struggles, set backs or whatever negative experiences of the past, we all have precious memories and the assurance of God's presence as we move forward. Among the lingering memories, the most outstanding is the day we had our personal encounter with God!

Contact with Jesus Christ on a personal level has dramatically changed our lives for better and it deemed us to continue abiding in him and him abiding in us (John 15:1-8). It is all by His amazing grace and mercy that we are what we are in Him; in Him we have a glorious hope (Titus 2:13) and beloved, He is able to take us all the way through (2 Tim. 2:12)!!

"Through many dangers, toils, and snares
 I have already come.
 'Tis grace hath brot'h me safe thus far
 And grace will lead me home."

Joshua 4 is a reflection on the awesome demonstration of God's power and the peoples' faith in Him. As we noted in the previous lesson the conditions of the

Jordan River at the time of the crossing, made this miraculous event even more astounding.

The memorials served as great witnesses to the power of faith in God. As believers we have a memorial in the cross of Jesus Christ; mercy there was great and grace was free, it was there our burden souls found liberty!!

At the Cross, at the Cross where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heat rolled away,
It was there by faith I receive my sight,
And now I am happy all the day!

Another area of importance for Israel to remember is seen in the command to **follow the Ark, follow at a specific distance and stay focused on it as it leads.** As Christians we **daily** follow Jesus Christ; **daily** reverence Him, and **continuously** keep our eyes on Him! Beloved! The way of the cross leads home!!

3. Product of Faith Josh. 4

(a) Most of the information in this chapter was discussed in our previous lesson but are noted as reminders of the goodness of God to His people.

As noted above the emphasis in Joshua 4 focuses on the “memorials.” The memorials vividly remind of not only the power of the living and true God but the “Product of Faith;” showing the results of completely trusting “in Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” (Eph. 3:20 KJV)

(b) Faith in God Brings Results

- (1) It Secure Salvation in Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Rom. 5:1, 18)
- (2) It Assures Success (2 Chron. 20:20)
- (3) It's Our Fundamental Duty (John 6:28-29)
- (4) It's a Defensive Weapon (Eph. 6:16)
- (5) It's a Most Essential Element in the Believers Life (Heb. 11:6)
- (6) It's Fundamentally Essential in Prayer (James 1:5-6)

(c) Today's lesson from Josh. 4 will focus on four main pointers:

- (1) Commemoration of Faith Cairn #1 Erected Vv. 1-9
- (2) Crossing of the Jordan River Vv. 10-14
- (3) Continued Flow of Jordan Vv. 15-18
- (4) Camping at Gilgal/Cairn #2 Erected Vv. 19-24

Josh. 4: 1-7 LASB

“When all the people had crossed the Jordan, the Lord said to Joshua, ‘Now choose twelve men, one from each tribe. Tell them, take twelve stones from the vey place where the priests

are standing in the middle of Jordan. Carry them out and pile them up at the place where you will camp tonight.’

So Joshua called together the twelve men he had chosen – one from each tribe of Israel. He told them, ‘Go into the middle of the of Jordan, in front of the Ark of the Lord your God. Each of you must pick one stone and carry it out on your shoulder – twelve stones in all, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. We will use these stones to build a memorial. In the future your children will ask you, what do these stones mean? 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 also set up another pile of stones in the middle of Jordan, at the place where the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant were standing. And they are there to this day.”

A. Commemorating Faith ... Cairn #1 Erected Josh. 4:1-9

1. All Israel Safely Cross Over Jordan

“... when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan ...” (Josh. 4:1 NKJV)

(a) The Israelites were now on the west side of Jordan!! This was their initial entry into the Promised Land!

(1) Now they are finally there what’s next?

- Does this call for an all-out celebration . . . a grand jubilee for several days?
- Is it time to plan a series of vacations exploring the wonders of the new land or some other sort of entertainment?
- Some may have wondered, what is life like in Canaan? Will all the goodies be easily possessed?

(2) It was a land of great potentials but for Israel there were battles to be fought and most importantly they must continue trusting God.

- It was God who had taken them thus far and it was only Him who could see them through.
- The challenges ahead will definitely get bigger but so will be the blessings!!

(b) **This was not the end of the campaign to conquer and possess Canaan but the beginning.**

(1) There was yet much to be done but God guaranteed His abiding presence and victory over all enemies (Josh. 1:1-9).

(2) Within the Church (Universal) there are many for whom water baptism are the ultimate goal, it is the end of service for them. In reality, baptism is the beginning of a lifetime of commitment and total dedication to God. (Actually when we repented and accepted Jesus Christ was the beginning of this wonderful experience).

- See my study: “The Righteous Pursues Holiness,” Chapter 3 Lesson 3 pages 1-4 and note “Duties after Baptism.”
- **We are not saved by works but “unto good works.”** (Eph. 2:8-10)

- It is incumbent upon us to be gainfully occupied in the Master's business (Luke 19:11-27, NB v. 13; Mark 16:15; Eph. 5:16; etc.)

(c) Note carefully: "All the people had completely crossed." (Josh 4:1) *Several lessons, however, at this time we will note one.*

(1) **Everyone crossed over to the other side of Jordan, thus entering the Promised Land!**

- **EVERYONE!!**

- The weak and feeble
- The young and tender
- The aged and sickly
- And of course those who were not physically fit
- And maybe there were some doubters who just went along with the flow but somehow were deeply moved by such awesome demonstration of God's power!!

- This crossing was well planned and effectively implemented but the entire transaction must have taken an overall loving, tender care and compassion especially among so many people.

(2) In **some** cases within the Church (Universal) this care and compassion is not always evident; maybe for a while but eventually that original warm welcome and acceptance often gradually fades.

- Soldiers ought to help other soldiers but in the Christian Army some fellow soldiers are destroyed.
- Some may enjoy a "honeymoon period" but in some situations when age and other factors set in, great changes are experienced.

- **Illustration**

The account was noted about a faithful mule that after many years of service as he aged his master placed him in a deep pit intending to bury him alive. Whenever dirt was poured on the mule he would trample on it and continued until he was able to get out of the pit.

- Everyone is important and must be accepted and covered with unfeigned love, we must sincerely love one another with a pure heart, fervently. Let us love and care for one another as we travel through this Pilgrim's land.

2. God gave the orders

"... the Lord spake unto Joshua ..." (Josh. 4:1 KJV)

(a) It's all about God!!

(1) He speaks ... we obey; He guides ... we follow, etc.

(2) Israel was His people, He has been working on their behalf and as a result their faith in Him increases, He is glorified and all nations stand in awe of Him!!

(b) God gave orders for the preparing of the memorials (Josh. 4:2-3)

- (1) A representative from **each tribe** was to select 12 stones (one for each tribe) to erect the memorial.
 - (2) This instruction was given before (Josh. 3:12) and was about to be executed.
 - (3) The men were to carry the stones to the place where they would set up camp for the night.
- (c) In our previous lesson we noted the importance of hearing from God which should always be our daily priority (Note Josh. 3:7-8, 9-13).
- (1) Note Eleazar's assistance to Joshua (Num. 27:12-23, NB Vv. 19-23 ... read the chapter for context)

Num. 27:21 ESV

“And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall enquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before the Lord. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he and all the people of Israel with him, the whole congregation.”
 - (2) The importance of seeking God, hearing from Him is also noted in Gen. 25:22; Judges 1:1, 20, 27; 2 Sam. 2:1; 1 Chron. 14:14; Psa. 78:34; etc.
- 3. Note Joshua's continued obedience (Josh. 4:1-5)**
- (a) He immediately obeyed God (Josh. 4:4-5)
 - (1) Obviously the men who were previously chosen (Josh. 3:12) had crossed with the others and were awaiting further instructions.
 - (2) He sent the men out to the middle of Jordan where the Ark was held and secured the stones needed to erect the memorial.
 - (b) Unity is strength . . . note carefully the comprehensive representation (Josh. 4:2, 5)
 - (1) One man out of each tribe . . . someone from each tribe would have something to tell of the glory and goodness of God.
 - (2) The proclamation of this message of the living and true God was not for the Levites but for each Israelite.
 - God's unsearchable greatness is to be willingly proclaimed, example see Psa. 145, NB v. 12

Psa. 145:10-12 Amplified Bible

“All Your works shall praise You O Lord, and Your loving ones shall bless You [affectionately and gratefully shall Your saints confess and praise you]! They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom and talk of your power, **To make known to the sons men God's mighty deeds and the glorious majesty of His kingdom.**”

 - This comprehensive representation also includes the East Jordan tribes
 - All Israel had a story to tell and we have a story to tell to everyone
It is a story of truth and mercy
A story of peace and light
- 4. Significance of the Memorial (proposed to be erected at Gilgal)**

(a) The **crossing of the Jordan River** was to be remembered because it had deep religious significance.

- (1) For Israel it was a remarkable new depth of dedication
 - They exercised the willingness to move forward leaving their previous place of dwelling (Josh. 3:1).
 - Although they were not sure how they would cross the Jordan River they were prepared to remain on the banks for three days (Josh 3:2).
 - They were willing to cross Jordan below the heaped-up waters (Josh. 3:16)
 - The will of God was fully known to them and they wholeheartedly obeyed.

(2) **THERE AT LAST!!** On crossing Jordan they were now in the Promised Land and while great challenges were ahead they knew whom they had believed and were fully persuaded that He was able to see them through!!

Rom. 4:21 Amplified Bible

“And being fully convinced that what He had promised He was able to perform.”

(Read the chapter for context, NB Vv. 13-25)

(b) **In essence, the purpose of the memorial was to be a witness to the power of God.**

- (1) God wanted Israel to always remember the One to whom they were dedicated (Josh. 3:5); and they must, at all times, give great esteem to the One who delivered them from bondage.
- (2) God wanted any evidence concerning Him to be accurate.
 - As a result He requested the memorial to be erected while the facts were fresh in the minds of all those who had been involved.
 - Note also the twelve men were **chosen men** of each tribe (Josh. 4:4).
 - **KJV...** “... twelve men, whom he had prepared”
 - **NIV...** “twelve men he had appointed ...”
 - **LASB ...** “twelve men he had chosen ...”
 - The twelve men were appointed for that work and commanded to be ready.

(3) **How this memorial was to serve as a witness of God’s power?**

(In regards to the one to be erected at Gilgal)

- **It would serve as a witness to their posterity (Josh. 4:6-7)**
 - When their children enquired about the memorial, they were to share the miraculous work of God making a way for Israel to cross by cutting the flow of the Jordan River
 - They were to inform their children of the presence of God leading them as the priests bore the Ark which symbolized the presence of God.

- They were to teach them about the great things God had done so that the work of God would not be forgotten among future generations.

- Here we have another example of a call for “Parental Duty”
 - To Teach their Children (Deut. 6:7)
 - To Instruct them Along the Right Way (Prov. 22:6)
 - To Provide for Them (2 Cor. 12:14)
 - To Exercise Jurisdiction as Parent (1 Tim. 3:4)
 - To Genuinely Love Them (Isa. 49:15; Titus 2:4)
- Note carefully also Psa. 78:1-8
 - **Beloved our children are our opportunity and responsibility for Christian education**
 - Psa. 78:4 NKJV
 “We will not hide them from our children, Telling them to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.”

- We will not get in details (not possible) but there is a deep concern in regards to a personal awareness of God among our beloved youths.
 - The problem is not new (a) the Book of Joshua was written about 1390BC and Judges 1000Bc (approximate dates). (b) One reason the memorial in Josh. 4 served as a reminder to educate future generations of God’s miraculous power and care for His people (Josh. 4:6-7, 19-23). (c) After Joshua’s death there arose a generation who was ignorant of God (Judges 2:10) . . . we can decide on an approximate date but the fact remains there was a breakdown in the system resulting in a departure from God (Judges 21:25)
 - God is never without a witness (1 Kings 19:18; Acts 14:17) and we do have some young stalwarts serving God but far too many are perishing because of a lack of knowledge of the living and true God (Hosea 4, NB v. 6; Rom. 10:1-13, NB v. 3; etc.).
 - While we do need good programs, utilize technology, etc. we also need to consider Jer. 6:16; 2 Chron. 7:14; **Deut. 6:7**; etc. not as a show-piece but genuinely seeking God and walking in the light of His Word.

- **God expects us to be witnesses to our children and teach them the way of faith!!**
 - As noted above Israel failed even though the command to teach their children was also the very center of God’s law, note carefully **Deut. 6** and highlight verses 4-9 (*Noted above*)

- **Prov. 22:6 NKJV**
 “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”
 (See also John 21:15; Deut. 4:9; 31:13)
- **Teaching the Christian faith is the responsibility of parents (the family).**
 - Unfortunately too many think it’s the sole responsibility of the church or Christian school and in so many situations some churches do not have an effective Christ centered and nurturing program in place.
 - Parental guidance is important because the fact remains that children learn so much by our example; therefore the home offers the most effective place to pass on the Christian faith to the next generation.
- **Secondly, the memorial served as a witness to the power of God to all other nations.**
 - The Canaanites heard of the wonders wrought by God on behalf of His people and it created fear of Him and convincing Rahab of the fact that He had to be the living and true God (Josh. 2:8-11)
 - The flow of the Jordan River was cut off when the feet of the priests that bore the Ark of the Covenant touched the water (Josh. 3:1-15). This further authenticates the reality of the living God’s presence and care for His people and served as a testimony to all nations.

Josh. 3:10-11 ESV
 “And Joshua said, ‘Here is how **you shall know that the living God is among you and that He will drive out from before you** the Canaanites, the Hittites Behold, the ark of the covenant of the **Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan.**”
(Read Vv 9-14)

5. The Memorial in the Jordan River

*There are many interpretations as to the significance of this memorial (cairn) in the Jordan River; however, I will avoid the debate and briefly present some notable pointers (**“cairn”**: **is a heap of stones piled up as a landmark or as a memorial**)*

(a) A second memorial (Josh. 4:9)

- (1) We observe that it was set up at the place where the priests stood with the Ark in the Jordan River (v. 9).

- (2) These stones were not the same as those carried **out of Jordan** by the twelve chosen men. These stones may have been larger and may have been visible when the river was low.
- (3) Joshua by erecting this memorial gave a **strong personal witness** to God's presence and power.

(See our brief discussion below on "Bearing a Strong Testimony to Our Faith")

(b) The significance of this second memorial (in the Jordan River)

- (1) As it relates to Israel it represents a "before" and "after" situation to **all Israel**.
 - Charles H. Wallace, an English theologian and teacher, noted: "Every tribe was represented by a stone on either side of Jordan. The two cairns represented a complete Israel in the wilderness, and a complete Israel in the Promised Land."
 - For Israel the forty years of unbelief and sinning in the "Wilderness Wandering" is now buried and left behind and out of sight. This is typical of our experiences when we confess our sins (1 John 1:9); we must now forget that which is buried and press forward!!

Phil. 3:14 Amplified Bible
 "I press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward."

(2) Israel's deliverance

- God had brought them out of Egyptian bondage with a specific type of deliverance.
- He had given a second type of deliverance to those who had sanctified themselves (Josh. 3:5) and were willing to completely obey Him.
 - Those who believed and obeyed the promises of God were realized.
 - As noted above, their "Wilderness Wandering" was now over and they were finally in the Promise Land.
 - **Trust and Obey . . .** the Refrain
 Trust and obey, for there's no other way
 To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

(c) **Bearing a Strong Testimony of Our Faith**

- (1) It is essential for us to bear a strong testimony to our faith.
 - Having a genuine faith in God is a witness that God has worked in our hearts and lives.
 - Anyone with such an experience will know what it means to trust God and have total confidence in His power to help.
 - It is Jesus Christ who has empowered us to triumph over the trials, temptations, problems and obstacles that confronts us.
 - It's not of self but by faith in Jesus Christ we are conquerors . . . overcoming: . . .

- . . . the passions of the flesh
- . . . the crave (lust) for the bright lights of the world.
- . . . the crave for the indulgences of the world
- . . . the crave for the elegance of the world
- . . . the stimulating pleasures of the world
- 1 John 2 NB Vv. 15-17

(2) Beloved, the power to overcome comes from God!

- God has given us the power to become more than conquerors because of our faith in Him (Rom. 8:28-37)
- Faith in God brings power into our lives (Matt. 17:20)
- Faith in God works because it is focused on God, who is all powerful (Psa. 62:11)
- When a person's faith focuses upon God, God honors that person (Heb. 11:1, 6)
- God works on our behalf as we believe, in the same way we base our faith upon the Word of God (Mat. 9:29; Mark 9:23)

(3) **The Hymn: Just A Closer Walk With Thee**

Verse 1

I am weak but Thou art strong
 Jesus keep me from all wrong
 I'll be satisfied as long
 As I walk, let me walk close to Thee.

(4) We are to bear a strong witness to our faith in God.

- We are to arouse people to trust God, to have faith in Him.
- **Mark 16:15 Amplified Bible**
 "And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach and publish openly the good news (the Gospel) to every creature [of the whole human race]."
- See also Acts 1:8; 4:20; 5:20; 22:15; 28:19-20; 2 Cor. 4:1; Titus 2:15; 2 Tim. 1:8; etc.

B. Crossing the Jordan River Josh. 4:10-14

The crossing has been discussed in previous lesson (Lesson 3 Part A) as well as referred to above. What we have in these verses (Josh. 4:10-14) is a brief recapitulation.

*In previous lesson we use the topic "Picture of Faith." In that picture we saw the obedient faith of the people which resulted in the amazing wonderful, breathtaking and miraculously orchestrated event of the crossing of the Jordan River. This crossing was done at a time considered impossible especially with over two million people, but God honors those who honor Him, thus we have the "Product of Faith." Beloved, faith in God does bring results!! **"Faith is the victory that overcomes!!"***

1. **The priests were obediently faithful (Josh. 4:10)**
 - (a) Their obedient faith was acted out . . . practically demonstrated!
 - (1) There was no hesitation, no display of doubts, neither were they intimidated by fear, despite the challenge facing them.
 - (2) They were ordered to be the first to march into the overflowing Jordan River.
 - (3) It may be that they were stunned and somewhat concerned as they observed the raging river but were not deterred . . . they moved forward!!
 - (b) They faithfully endured because of their obedient faith.
 - (1) They courageously stood in the middle of the river until the entire process was completed which included the passing of the people, selecting of stones for both memorials and waiting until the memorial was erected in the Jordan River.
 - (2) We do not know the duration of the process but these servants of God, stayed in their place until the transactions were fully completed.
 - (3) This is commitment, they were steadfast and unflinching in their loyalty to God and His will.
 - (c) The presence of God!!
 - (1) The priests and the Ark pointed to the presence of God.
 - (2) **Possible only by God!** Israel was able to have a safe passage through what was considered impossible and successfully entered the Promised Land ... **only because of God!**
 - (3) As we continue on our "Pilgrim Journey" challenges will be experienced but God is with us even to the end!!
 - With love and strength for each new day . . . He will make a way . . . He will make a way!!
 - Read prayerfully and carefully Isa. 35; 43:1-21, NB Vv. 2, 19.
 - (4) Another outstanding thought, noted: God is in the midst, as long as we continue in faith and obedience.
 - **The priests with the Ark stood in the middle of Jordan; the center of what was a turbulent and defying situation but God in the midst assures victory!!**
 - Some references indicating God is with us in the midst of our experiences:
Psa. 23:4 NKJV
"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff they comfort me."
➤ In the midst of the fiery experiences (Dan. 3:24-26; 1 Peter 4:12)
➤ Protected even in the midst of the most treacherous situation (Dan. 6:22; Acts 12:7; 27:22-24)
➤ When believers meet (Matt. 18:20)
➤ To give hope to the fearful, disappointed and despondent (John 20:19)

- He is the **Head** of the Church and the **Centerpiece** of its activity (Rev. 1:13)
- The priests and the Ark stayed until all were safely across!! (2 Tim. 1:12). Christ promises to be with us **always!!**

Matt. 28:20b Amplified Bible

“... I am with you all the days (perpetually, uniformly, and on every occasion) to the [very] close and consummation of the age ...”

- Oh beloved, He is thee with you ALL THE TIME no matter how challenging it may be He is there and will see you through!!
He was there all the time
He was there all the time
Waiting penitently in line
He was there all the time

2. The people were obediently faithful (Josh. 4:11)

- (a) This group was more in-tuned with God’s will than their ancestors who perished in the “Wilderness Wandering” (notable all males who were 20 years and older when they doubted and rebelled ... see Num. 13:1-14:12; 32:8-13)
- (b) This group under Joshua’s command was obedient, submissive and believed God.
 - (1) They were not intimidated by the previous spies’ report of the giants in the land.
 - (2) They were not fearful of the great and mighty warriors and great walled cities.
 - (3) Neither were they side tracked by the great challenges posed by the overflowing Jordan River.
 - (4) They were not creating an uprising or a rebellion against leadership (Num. 14:10) but they had pledged their full allegiance and were willing and ready to obey all commands (Josh 1:16-18).
- (c) The people had an obedient faith (Josh 4:11)
 - (1) They did exactly what they had been instructed to do.
 - (2) “The people hastened and passed over” (Josh. 4:10)
 - The people recognized the value of time.
 - Time was precious because they were doing the will of God.
 - Unnecessary delay would only hinder the progress and they had much to accomplish in one day.
 - Their haste could also be looked at as a positive indication of their willingness to obey as commanded.
 - (3) It was a “mixed multitude” (Ex. 12:38; Num. 11:4) that left Egypt and although a generation had passed away (Num. 2:8-11), it was a possibility that there were still some doubters and disputers among the people. As they

crossed the Jordan River it's possible there was a mixed attitude among them . . .

- Some hastened because they were afraid the water would return upon them ... weak in faith.
- Others hastened because they were not willing to tempt God to delay withholding the waters longer than necessary.
- Others because they were eager to enter Canaan, it was something they deeply yearned for and greatly anticipated these many years.
- And others may have hurried only because others were hurrying so they followed the crowd.

(d) The people were well taught!

Note in verse 10 the following:

"... everything was finished that the Lord commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua ..."

(1) See Deut. 3:28; 31:3, 7, 2.

(2) Joshua did all that was possible for Israel to constantly focus on and prioritized the fact of God's position in their history . . . this was to be recognized as a matter of greatest importance.

(3) The people were well instructed in the things of God. They realized that the past, present and future established a powerful bond with God.

(4) Unfortunately, the willingness to learn and apply was (is) not always evident among God's people.

One example briefly noted...

- Read Isa. 28, note Vv. 9-14
- As seen in the passage, these people were saying to Isaiah: "He is speaking to us like school teachers speak to small children." (v. 9)
- Note also v. 10. Observe they were also complaining that the prophet was guilty of repeating what he was teaching although we all know that repetition in teaching is beneficial.
- Because of their attitude, Isaiah prophesied that they would be taught by a foreign nation (Assyrians who took them into captivity 722 BC ... see 2 Kings 17) and they would teach them in a way they would like even less (Isa. 28:11).
- You will note the emphasis Joshua and his officers placed on repetition and the result was evident in the people's readiness and willing responses to all commands.. You may say Joshua taught: **"... precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little." (Isa. 28:10 ESV)**
(***"precept"***: an authorized order; command; ***"line"***: rule)
- The people under Joshua's leadership were responsive to all instructions and such amazingly wonderful accomplishments realized throughout his

leadership! Indeed God is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him!!

3. The East Jordan Tribes were obediently faithful (Josh. 4:12-13)

- (a) These were the two and half tribes that chose to remain on the east side of Jordan; consisting of the tribes of the Reubenites, Gadites and half of Manasseh.
- (b) They did exactly what they had been instructed to do.
 - (1) The agreement was to leave their families on the east side of Jordan and fight with their fellow Israelites until Canaan was conquered. (Num.32; Josh. 1:12-18).
 - (2) They crossed over in front of the other tribes; they took the lead just as they had been instructed by Moses.
- (c) They were referred to as mighty men of valor (Josh. 1:14)
 - (1) They served as “shock troops”; soldiers trained to carry out sudden assault.
 - (2) They were among the elite or special forces.
- (d) These were forty thousand soldiers (Josh. 4:13).
 - (1) The warfare in Canaan was to take several long years and these soldiers would be away from home.
 - (2) Taking this in consideration, there had to be other soldiers who were left on the east side of Jordan to maintain and protect their homes, families and land.
- (e) Another thing to note: These soldiers displayed what it means to be “covenant keeper.”
 - (1) For one thing it is a resounding example of their continued unity which itself is strength, presenting a united front against the enemies.
 - (2) It was also a means of encouraging the other tribes as they moved forward in conquering and possessing the Promised Land.
 - (3) A few Scriptures worth noting at this time: Ex. 19:5; Deut. 33:9; Psa. 103:17-18; 132:12; etc. *(You may want to read the context of these references)*

4. Joshua was obediently faithful (Josh. 4:14)

- (a) A one paragraph coverage on Joshua

NOTE:

In preceding lessons I have made a more detailed coverage of the person Joshua especially in lesson 1. As our study progresses we will continue to see other great truths in regards to this outstanding leader.

“Joshua” I have seen him as a highly decorated general/commander who genuinely exemplified what it means to be a wholehearted dedicated servant of God who led his people by precepts and practical living all the days of his life. From when we first heard of Joshua (Ex. 17:9) to his farewell address (Josh. 24), he was a man of faith, unflinching commitment and loyally obedient to God.”

- (b) Indeed, he was a man who had an obedient faith.
- (1) As a leader, Joshua had to set the example of faith and trust in God.
 - (2) He had been obedient and faithful to God; therefore, God fulfilled His promises to Joshua (Josh. 3:7-8; 4:14).
 - Joshua was honored by God in the eyes of the people (Josh. 4:14)
 - Because of this miracle – the crossing of the Jordan River – the people revered Joshua just as highly as they did Moses.
 - The people’s loyalty to Joshua was maintained throughout all his life.
 - (3) This is a very important practical lesson we all need to remember: **“God’s approval of a man usually brings respect to him from God’s people.”**
- (c) **Another very important practical lesson: “Genuine Faith Results in Action.”**
(Details not possible but note the following)
- (1) “Belief” and “Faith”
 - **Belief** is defined as: “An acceptance that a statement is true or that something exists” *(A few synonyms are: faith, trust, confidence, etc.)*
 - **Faith:** “Complete trust or confidence in someone or something *(a few synonyms are trust, belief, confidence, etc.)*.”
 - They are interrelated which makes them very close in meaning.
 - Faith includes our beliefs, but goes deeper, in other words it is bigger because **“faith” requires action**. If our faith doesn’t move us to do something or say something – actually take some kind of action – it is not really faith at all (James 2:17).
 - (2) **Beloved, when we believe God, we will obey Him!**
 - If you believe a person, you will act upon what he says.
 - That’s because you accept the person as being true.
 - If what a person says calls for action on your part and you believe what he says you will act as required (Matt. 7:24; John 14:23; James 1:22-23; etc.)
 - If you do not believe the person, then you do not act.
 - Beloved, our faith in God, means we do exactly what He says.
 - The Israelites believed God, they were confident that He would show them how to cross the Jordan River.
 - When God showed them the way they willingly obeyed God. Despite the conditions of the Jordan River they walked the walk of faith and crossed the river.
 - If we have faith in God we must obey Him.
 - We must do exactly what He says.
 - Our faith in God is proven when we obey Him, demonstrated by our actions.
 - As noted before, “faith without works is dead.” (James 2:17).

- True faith is an obedient faith; it follows God and willingly obeys Him!!
- See Matt. 7:21, 21-24; John 6:28-29; 14:23; Eph. 6:16; Heb. 11:6; etc.

C. Continued Flow of the Jordan River Josh. 4:15-18

1. God in Control . . . He was there all the time!

- (a) How reassuring and comforting, to know He is in control of our all!!
- (b) God ordered Joshua to command the priests to come up out of the Jordan River (Josh. 4:15-18).
- (c) Joshua then gave orders to the priests who willingly obeyed.
 - (1) They remained in place for the duration of the entire procedure; this is another example of the level of cooperation by the people.
 - (2) Undoubtedly, however, they must have felt relieved and came up out of the river carrying the Ark of the Covenant.
- (d) Immediately after the priests were on the west side of Jordan the waters resume its normal flow to its flooded level (Josh. 4:18).
- (e) It then became more apparent to everyone the result of faith in God.
 - (1) Not only were the Israelites moved with awe when they passed over on **dry ground** (Josh. 3:17) but standing on the west side of Jordan watching it all continue to unfold they witnessed firsthand the awesome power of God and what can happen when they exercise genuine faith.
 - (2) They were now about to spend their first night in the Promised Land.
 - (3) Finally!! They were realizing that which for so many years they longed for; that which was so greatly anticipated has now been realized!!!
 - Now—at long last—the day had finally come!!
 - There was excitement, joy and rejoicing everywhere!
 - The buzz of activity was seen all over.
 - Some were setting up camp
 - Some most likely were singing, talking excitedly, praying, sharing their hopes and dreams with each other and praising God.
 - Little children could be seen running all about playing their games with much excitement; their parents had told them about the Promised Land, now it became a reality!!
 - It was a day of great celebration and a joyful experience for these people of God.
 - Their faith in God's promises had borne fruit.
 - Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, what He says He will do!!

2. No Retreat!!

- (a) Alexander the great burnt his ships.
 - (1) Believed to have taken place when he sailed into Asia Minor, when he was on shore he ordered the ships to be burnt.
 - (2) By burning the ships, Alexander hoped to galvanize and motivate his troops.

- (3) They knew they had to fight in order to survive. There was no other way out.
- (b) The Jordan River returned to what it was before Israel crossed over.
- (1) The waters were cut off when the feet of the priests touched the water (Josh. 3:15-16).
- (2) After the purpose of the miracle was fulfilled and the Ark of the Covenant was carried to the west side of Jordan, the waters resumed their flow to the flooded level (Josh. 4:18).
- Previously this river was an obstacle to the possession of Canaan.
 - Now it became a hindrance to any who would return to the old position.
- (3) In the Christian's life similar situations occur.
- There are those who have great difficulties making an unconditional surrender because of certain obstacles.
 - They just did not see any possibility as to how they could accomplish the assignment given to them.
 - Victory, however, was realized after setting themselves apart, they then found a new power in their lives.
 - The acquired victory then became a stepping stone and a means of helping them to pursue a committed life to the glory of God; having a desire to press forward.
 - Victory is experienced as we daily set ourselves apart and with God's enabling, continue living as God desires (*One of many references*):
1 Cor. 6:11 NKJV
 "And such were some of you, But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."
- (4) We saw in previous lesson that Israel was charged to sanctify themselves in preparation for the great wonders God was about to do among them (Josh. 3:5).
- They were about to experience extraordinary occurrences by the favor of God.
 - With them being set apart and giving themselves to meditation and prayer they would be able to pay close attention and glorify God for His goodness.

D. Camp at Gilgal/Cairn #2 Erected Josh. 4:19-24

1. Camping at Gilgal (Josh. 4:19)

- (a) The following was noted in our previous lesson on page 24.

They Camped Opposite of Jericho

- (1) They demonstrated their boldness and strong defiance of their enemies, no matter how powerful they considered themselves.
- (2) The experience of crossing the Jordan River was a major contributing factor of the assurance of all God's promises.

- (3) Their enemies were already terrified but Israel's crossing the overflowing Jordan River created more confusion and terror for the Canaanites.

NOTE:

Israel camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. (Josh. 4:19)

(b) Significance of Gilgal

This requires a separate study . . . I will briefly note two things to which you can add as you desire.

(1) Some Special Events at Gilgal

- This was Israel's first campsite after crossing the Jordan River (Josh. 4:19)
- There they erected a memorial using 12 stones taken from the Jordan River, as a sign of remembrance of the miraculous crossing of Jordan (Josh. 4:1-9, 20-24)
- It was there that all males who grew up during the 40 years Wilderness Wander were circumcised thus renewing the Israelite's covenant of circumcision with God (Josh. 5:2-9).
- It was there they celebrated the Passover for the first time in the Promised Land. We also note they also stopped receiving manna and started eating the produce of the land (Josh. 5:10-12).
- There the Gibeonites deceived Joshua into making a treaty in order to save themselves from being slaughtered by the Israelites (Josh. 9).
- Gilgal served as the base of operations during the initial conquest of the Promised Land; there Joshua also honored his treaty with the Gibeonites (Josh. 10:6-15, 40-43)
- Etc.
(You may want to continue looking at this subject which will enrich your learning experience. For example see Judges 2:1-5; 3:12-30; 1 Sam. 7:15-17; 10:9-15, 40; etc.

(2) Gilgal was of significance in Israel's history.

(Limited pointers and noted briefly)

- For Israel it was a place of new beginnings.
- As noted above it was the main base of operations for their military campaigns against their enemies.
- It was a place that was very special, a sacred area that eventually became corrupted, but was still important in Israel's history.
- Eventually, the emphasis of Gilgal was moved to the heights of the mountains on which Jerusalem and the Temple were built.

2. Memorial Stones Set Up (Josh 4:20)

(a) As noted before: In essence the purpose of the memorial was to be a witness to the power of God. It would serve as a witness to future generations and to all nations.

(1) **To Future Generations (Josh. 4:6-7, 20-24).**

By relating the account of the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River they would inform their children of the power and continued presence of God among His people, acting on their behalf.

(2) **As a Witness to All Nations.**

The crossing of the overflowed Jordan was possible because of the power of God by cutting the flow of the river (Josh. 3:15-17) and the resumption of its flow when all of Israel had passed over (Josh. 4:1, 15-18). Such was a powerful witness to all nations of the wonder-working God (Josh. 4:24).

(b) **The Memorials** *(For emphasis ... some repetition included)*

(1) A memorial is also referred to as monument, shrine, cairn, etc. As used in our text it refers to a monument of stones that was frequently used to remind the Israelites, including future generations, about God's salvation (deliverance) and His grace (undeserved favors) towards His people.

(2) Memorials, vividly point to what God has done, is able to do and will do for all His people who faithfully follow Him in obedience and unwavering trust.

(3) As we saw previously and in this lesson, these great works of God are the results of faith in God manifested in action by the people.

(The following has been noted before)

- One of the purpose of faith is to teach the power of God to our children, that they might always fear Him (Josh. 4:21-23).
 - When the memorial was finally erected (when they camped at Gilgal), most likely Joshua called all the people (Israel) together and conducted a memorial service of thanksgiving.
 - The solemn challenge was presented and emphasizes the necessity for each family to faithfully teach their children accordingly.
 - **To teach the power and fear of God to the children of ALL generations.**
 - That God dried up the Jordan River so that His people could cross over into the Promised Land.
 - That they are to always trust, obey and give reverence to Him who is worthy of their (our) worship, gratitude, etc.
- A second purpose of faith is to teach the power of God to ALL the people of the earth (Josh. 4:24).
 - This fact was clearly made known by Joshua; obviously and undoubtedly, He is God of all the earth.
 - The miraculous crossing of the Jordan River was a message for all people of the earth.

- They were to be made aware of God's power so they might fear (reverence) Him.
 - All the earth was (is) to know the power of God's mighty hand. Everyone, Jews or Gentiles, is to fear the Lord God.
 - Everyone on earth is to acknowledge God:
 - ...that He alone is the living God.
 - ...that He alone is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and He possesses all power.
 - ...that He alone has the power to cut off the flow of the rivers.
 - ...that He alone has the power to split asunder the seas of the world.
 - ...that He alone has the power to cause the waters of the seas and rivers to flow back together again.
 - He got the whole world in His hands!!
- Psa. 24:1 NKJV**
 "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein."
- All people are to know that the Lord God is the only living and true God and that He is to be feared (reverenced)!!

(c) **The Memorials Remind of God's Power**

Psa. 62:11 Amplified Bible

"God has spoken once, twice I heard this: that power belongs to God."

(1) The power and reverence of God are to be taught.

- We, the believers, have a solemn responsibility of teaching this glorious "Good News."
- Him who we present is the living and true God!!
 - He is the omnipotent One, possessing all power!!
 - The power of God is awesome, incomprehensible and beyond anything we can think or imagine.
- Because of His power, we must heed the warning: "**fear God!!**"
 - **By "fear" we are referring to hold God in the highest esteem, honor and reverence.**
 - **It also means to acknowledge His awesome justice and judgment and to shrink from what happens to us if we fail to fear Him as we should.**

(2) Our God is the living and true God, who is above all and no one can be compared to Him (**Ex. 15:11**; 8:10; Deut. 33:26; Isa. 40:18; etc.)

- It is our responsibility to teach the omnipotent power of God to all children and future generations
- Power indeed belongs to Him: Matt. 8:26; 9:6; 19:26; 28:18; Mark 4:39; Luke 1:37; Rom. 16:25-27; etc.

- Beloved. We do have a responsibility to teach about the awesome God that we serve to our children, future generations and all mankind!!

Awesome God

Partial quote

Our God is an awesome God
He reigns from heaven above
With wisdom, power, and love
Our God is an awesome God

- The reverence of God to all our children and future generations
 - **Luke 1:50 NKJV**
“And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation.”
 - See also Matt. 10:28; Acts 10:35; 1 Peter 1:17; Ecc. 12:13; Deut. 10:1; Josh 24:14; etc.

The memorial was a reminder of the miraculous power and care of the living and true God!!

We do have so much to remember! Oh beloved, let's not forget our responsibility!!

The song: Remind Me Dear Lord

The things that I love and hold dear to my heart
Are just borrowed they're not mine at all
Jesus only let me use them to brighten my light
So remind me dear Lord

Refrain

Roll back the curtain of memory now and then
Show me where you brought me from
And where I could have been
Remember I'm human, and human forget
So remind me, remind me dear Lord

Nothing good have I done to deserve God's own Son
I'm not worthy of the scars in His hands
Yet He chose the road to Calvary to die in my stead
Why He loved me I can't understand

2 Tim. 2:15
Amplified Bible

“Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.”

LESSON 3 PART B REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Briefly explain what Joshua chapter 4 covers.⁹ (One or two sentences will be accepted)

2. In our lesson we noted that “Faith in God Brings Results.” Match the statements on the left with their corresponding reference on the right.

STATEMENTS	CORRECT REFERENCE	JUMBLED REFERENCES
It’s Fundamentally Essential in Prayer		Heb. 11:6
It’s a Most Essential Element in the Believer’s Life		John 6:28-29
It Assures Success		Eph. 6:16
It’s a Defensive Weapon		James 1:5-6
It’s Our Fundamental Duty		2 Chron. 20:20

3. (a) Answer True or False. (B) Explain you answer.
 “When Israel initially crossed Jordan (Josh. 3-4) it was very important fo them to remember that such accomplishment was only the beginning of what had to be fully accomplished in Canaan.”

4. Complete the following:
 (A statement in our lesson noting baptism is not the ultimate goal in the believer’s experience of salvation)
 “In reality (a) _____ is the (b) _____ of a lifetime of (c) _____ and total (d) _____ to God.”

5. Explain what is meant that we were “... **created in Christ Jesus unto good works ...”** (Eph. 2:10)

6. In what way did Eleazar served in Joshua's administration (see Num. 27:12-23)?

7. In erecting the memorial, 12 stones were used representing each tribe of Israel. In what way was this was significant?

8. Why was the crossing of the Jordan River a matter of great importance for Israel to remember?

9. In the crossing of the Jordan River in what ways Israel demonstrated a new depth of dedication?

10. What was the **main purpose** of the memorial (Josh. 4:2-6, 19-24)?

11. In what **two ways** did the memorial served as a witness?

12. In regards to “Parental Duty” we briefly noted some pointers. Match the statements on the left with their corresponding verses on the right.

STATEMENTS	CORRECT REFERENCE	JUMBLED REFERENCES
To teach Their Children		2 Cor. 12:14
To Instruct Them Along the Right Way		Isa. 49:15 Titus 2:4
To Provide for Them		Deut. 6:7
To Exercise Jurisdiction as Parent		Prov. 22:6
To Genuinely Love Them		1 Tim.3 :4

13. Complete the following:

“Beloved our (a) _____ are our (b) _____
and (c) _____ for Christian education.”

14. Briefly explain: “... **and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord ...” (Judges 2:10). For context read Vv. 6-10. Keep in mind Deut. 6:4-9; Josh. 4:5-7, 20-24.**

15. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

“God expects us to be witnesses to our children and _____.”

- (a) Allow them to live as desired.
- (b) Allow them to adapt worldly standards
- (c) Teach them the way of faith
- (d) Teach them to be always cunning.

16. Why Joshua did erect a memorial in Jordan where the priest stood with the Ark (Josh. 4:9)?

17. What important lesson can be learnt from Isaiah 28:9-19, highlighting Vv. 9-11?

18. “Belief” and “faith” are interrelated; however, one goes deeper in meaning. Note which is in meaning and briefly explain.

19. What happens when we **genuinely believe in God**? (Briefly explain)

20. List five special events that occurred at Gilgal in relation to Israel (give references).

We will discuss the answers to as many questions as possible in our next class.