

What was the Purpose of the Stones?

Joshua 4:5-7 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: That this may be a sign among you, *that* when your children ask *their fathers* in time to come, saying, What *mean* ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

Joshua 4:20-24 And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What *mean* these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.

- **God is a God of remembering**
 - O.T.
 - Feasts were intended as a time to remember
 - Feast of the tabernacles- To remember the time when God's people dwelt in tents in the wilderness.
 - The Passover feast- To remember God's deliverance from Egypt.
 - N.T.
 - Lord's Supper
 - Remember your salvation
 - Remember what Jesus did on the cross

- **We are very quick to forget the blessings of God**

Deuteronomy 4:9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

- So what was the purpose of the stones?

I. They were intended to cause His people to remember

...these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

A. It was a time to remember how God brought them out of Egypt (God's salvation)

Deuteronomy 6:12 *Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.*

- We ought never to forget the day we got saved.
- Sharing our testimony with others helps our salvation to stay fresh in our minds.

B. It was a time to remember how God lead them through the wilderness (God's provision)

John 6:31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Deuteronomy 29:5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

- God provided for his people
 - Gave them bread to eat
 - Gave them clothes and shoes that did not get old
- God has provided much for us

C. It was a reminder that God will always fulfill His promises (God's promises)

Deuteronomy 6:10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,

- God had promised Abraham many years prior that he would bring his people into Canaan land and now God has fulfilled His promise.
- God can be trusted at His Word.

II. They were intended to be a teaching tool for the generations to come

When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know...

- God is a multi-generational God

Exodus 3:6 Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the **God of Abraham**, the **God of Isaac**, and the **God of Jacob**. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

- In order to see the generations that follow embrace the faith of their forefathers we must be constantly teaching them.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

III. That others might know of the power and the might of God

That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.

- God brought His people into the Promise Land to show others that God is able.
- God is looking to show Himself strong through the lives of His people.
- This is the story of David...a young boy against a trained assassin...all odds were against him.

I Samuel 17:46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

- God likes to use the most unlikely people to accomplish great things for Him.
- God wants to use His people here at Pacific Baptist Church to build great things for Him.
 - Building godly lives
 - Building godly families
 - Finishing that building for His Glory
- Let us never forget all that God has done for us.
- We must be diligently passing on all that He has done to the next generation.
- God wants to show Himself strong on our behalf.