



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

KEEP CALM AND MARCH ON!

Marching through the Book of Joshua: Lesson 7

In last week's lesson we read about the Israelites crossing the Jordan River. This must be an extremely important lesson, because the Holy Spirit chose to write about this event twice. Joshua chapter 4 records the same crossing, but with much more detail. Hebrew narratives are often written in episodes rather than chronologically. This means the author will write about one particular aspect of the event and then go back in time to tell us about a different aspect. Sometimes the author gives us a summary of the story and then goes back and fills it in with more details. Joshua chapter 4 adds details and color to the story in chapter 3, giving us a clearer picture and better understanding of what happened at the Jordan River.

As we study this week, ask the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart. He has great things in store for those who want to listen, because His Word tells us that "He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

First Day

1. Read Joshua 4:1-24. What new details do you find in this chapter? (Remember to read the text like a detective, searching for all the facts.)
2. How many times is the "Ark of the Covenant of the Lord" mentioned in this chapter? Why is this significant?

We don't know what happened to the ark. Some believe that it may have been destroyed when Jerusalem was laid waste by Babylon or may have been demolished in the temple when it was destroyed in 70 AD by Titus. Many believe that the ark still exists today, perhaps under the dome of the rock mosque on the temple mount. Whether or not it still exists may be unknown, but we do know that what it represented did not end. (Refer to last week's lesson.)

It is said that the crossing of the Jordan River may have been accomplished in half a day, if the people crossed procession style. Verse 10 tells us that the people crossed in haste. They may have been trying to cross before dark.

3. What could be another reason the children of Israel were in such a hurry to cross?
4. When did this take place? (4:19)
5. What else happened on that same day, years ago? Read Exodus 12:1-11.

The children of Israel were commanded to kill their Passover Lamb on the 14th day of the first month to celebrate the Passover. God's timing is so perfect. He brought the Israelites over the Jordan in time to celebrate the Passover in the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10).

6. What was Passover a memorial of? Exodus 12:14-28
7. What does Joshua 4:10 tell us about:
 - a. the priests?
 - b. Joshua?
 - c. the people?
8. When were the priests allowed to move out of the river?
9. When did the waters return to their natural flow?

10. What immediate application do you see for your life in this chapter?

We will learn more about the memorials that Joshua set up in the next few days. But Joshua's goal was that God be magnified and glorified throughout all the earth (4:24). His heart's desire should be our memory verse this week, don't you think?

Memory Verse of the Week: "... 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." **Joshua 4:24**

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Hiding God's Word in your heart is an important part of your study.

Not only does God explain this miracle twice, He has them set up a double memorial as well. Let's study, shall we?

1. Read Joshua 4 again.
2. Describe the first memorial:
 - a. Who said to erect it?
 - b. Who was called to do it?
 - c. What did they use to set it up?
 - d. Where did they erect it?
3. Describe the second memorial:
 - a. Who set it up?
 - b. Where was it set up?
 - c. How long was it to remain standing?

4. Why were these memorials erected? (Read 4:6-7, 21-24)
5. Define the word "memorial."

In verse 20, Joshua "pitched" or "set up" the memorial. This word means to stand, or to raise. These stones were obviously stacked one on top of the other, in order to attract attention.

6. What is communion a memorial of? Read 1 Corinthians 1:26
7. How is baptism a type of memorial?

These memorials were a great idea. (Of course they were; the idea was God's!) We can also set up memorials in our life to remind us of what God has done and to let others know as well. Memorials provoke questions, giving us opportunities to share with others. Memorials can be physical objects, as well as special places, dates, traditions, or celebrations.

8. Do you have any objects in your home that remind you of God? What are they, and what attribute of God do they remind you of? Be ready to share it with the group.
9. How can celebrating a holiday a certain way become a memorial to you and your family? Do you have any?

Memorials help us keep the memories of God's faithfulness alive. The memorials are to remain memorials and not become shrines or idols like they did to the children of Israel (Hosea 4:15, 9:15, and 12:11). We are not to worship the memorial, but use it to remind us to worship God, who alone is worthy of all praise and glory.

It was very common in the Jewish tradition to teach their family traditions and truths about God to the next generation (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, 20-21). God taught Moses and commanded him to teach Israel, who were commanded to teach their children, and so on and so on.

10. Are you teaching the next generation about who God is? Are you teaching them all you know about the nature and character of God? How about His forgiveness? What about His grace? Why is it so important to pass on a godly heritage to your children?

11. What are some memorials that you can set up to help accomplish this? (For example: When you go on vacation, can you bring home a rock or some type of souvenir to remind you of something God did? Is there a place that is special to your family because of something God did? Can you go there and have a family devotion?)

12. Those of you without kids, or husbands, this is for you, too. We all need to be reminded of God's provisions, power, etc. What memorials can you set up?

Years ago, on one of our trips to Haiti, our team of women wore little gold lighthouse pins to remind us that we were there in Haiti to be a witness for Him (Acts 1:8). Jesus is the Light of the world, and we wanted to be a light to draw others to Him.

When I returned, I wore that pin to remind myself of the incredible things that God did on that trip. That pin reminded me, and still does, of His great faithfulness and the work He did in my own personal life. I prayed often for the day when someone would ask me why I was wearing a lighthouse. And I also prayed that I would be ready to "give every man an answer for the hope that is within me" (1 Peter 3:15).

Are you ready to share with others what God is doing within you? Is there anything holding you back? Be ready to tell others about your many "Reasons to Rejoice"!

Third Day

Review and meditate on your memory verse today.

The first thing that Joshua did after they crossed the Jordan was to set up a memorial for God. I wonder if he learned that from Moses?

1. Read Exodus 15. How did Moses and the children of Israel celebrate and honor God after they crossed the Red Sea?
2. Why is it so important to take the time to give God glory after He has done a work, before we move ahead?

We, again, need to remember that the crossing of the Red Sea depicts believers being delivered from the bondage of sin. The crossing of the Jordan depicts believers claiming their inheritance in Jesus Christ.

3. Read Deuteronomy 6:23. What did God specifically bring you **out of** that He may bring you **into** the Promised Land?

This chapter is very significant because it brings us face to face with the central theme of the entire Bible.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4, 14-17. What is that theme?
5. Why is the resurrection of Christ so important?

When Jesus died on the cross, He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He had become the atonement for our sins. He was the final sacrifice, settling our account there at Calvary (Hebrews 10:10). Jesus died for us and the Bible tells us that we are also to die with Him (Galatians 2:20). We are called to die to sin, our flesh, and our own will and desires. Paul said that "if one died for all, then we're all dead" (2 Corinthians 5:14). Paul said that we are "buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that were against us, which was contrary to us" (Colossian 2:12-24). We may die with Him, but we are also raised with Him by the power of the resurrection, to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4-11). Christ's resurrection guarantees our new life now and our eternal life with Him forever.

As the people walked down into the Jordan River, this symbolized the death and burial of our old sin nature. The people came out clean, which symbolized their new, resurrected life in Him. Alan Redpath said, "Before He raised them up to victory, He took them down into the bedrock of Jordan." We also have to die before we can be raised in victory.

6. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. Once you are "in Christ," what do you become?

We are called to walk in the newness of life (Romans 6:4). In Galatians 3:27, Paul tells us that we are to "put on" Christ.

7. Contrast the works of the old man with the new man, in Ephesians 4:17-

32. Also, read Galatians 5:19-26. What are we supposed to "put on"?

What are we supposed to "put off"?

8. Do you find anything in the "put off" list that you're still wearing? Maybe some things still fit pretty nicely. If so, what should you do?

9. Read John 12:24-25. What is Jesus saying? How does Paul's statement in Galatians 2:20 support this?

10. Explain what it means to "die to self." Are there any areas in your life that you still need to kill? How about this week specifically?

11. In what ways are we called to die to self
 - a. As a wife?
 - b. As a mother?
 - c. As a single?
 - d. As a Christian woman?

Alan Redpath said, "God's best **for you** is to die." That's a pretty amazing statement. Often we want to do something for God, something big, when all that He really wants us to do is die. Redpath also said, "**You can be victimized by the flesh, or be conquered by the Holy Ghost.**" It's our choice, ladies. We can walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16), or we can walk in the ways of our old man." What will you choose today?

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse?

Yesterday we looked at identifying with Christ in His burial and His resurrection. Let's look for a moment at our privilege to identify with Him in His sufferings.

1. Read 1 Peter 4:12-16. What does it mean to be a partaker of Christ's suffering?

2. How did Peter and John respond to persecution? Read Acts 5: 41.

3. Have you ever been persecuted for being a Christian? How did you respond? (Make sure you aren't being persecuted for being obnoxious, rather than for the sake of the Gospel).
4. Read Joshua 4:19-24 again.
5. The name "Gilgal" means "to roll." Why was it called that? (Joshua 5:9)
6. What other events happened at Gilgal? Read the following passages and briefly describe what happened.
 - a. 1 Samuel 7:15-16
 - b. 1 Samuel 11:14-15
 - c. 1 Samuel 15:33

Gilgal later became Joshua's camp and center of operation (9:6; 10:6,43; 14:6).

7. Joshua reveals his heart in verse 24. What was his desire for the people?

Fear can be defined in many ways. It is the most fundamental expression in the Old Testament for faith. It can also be defined as terror (Exodus 15:16), carefulness (Joshua 22:24), dread (Matthew 14:26), or reverence (Joshua 4:24). Unger's Bible Dictionary defines the fear of God in 4:24 as dreading God's displeasure, desiring His favor, revering His holiness, submitting cheerfully to His will, being grateful for all His benefits, sincerely worshipping Him, and to conscientiously obey His commandments.

8. What do the following verses tell us about the fear of the Lord? Rewrite them in your own words:
 - a. Psalm 19:9
 - b. Psalm 103:17
 - c. Psalm 111:10
 - d. Psalm 115:13
 - e. Proverbs 1: 7
 - f. Proverbs 14:26-27

9. If we fear the Lord, what should we do?

- a. Psalm 22:23
- b. Proverbs 8:13
- c. Ecclesiastes 12:13

10. Do you have a healthy fear of the Lord? Do you fear Him in your thoughts? How about in your actions?

11. Why is it so important for a Christian to fear God?

12. Is it important to you that others fear God forever? Is it your passion to see God be glorified?

Let's end here for today. Joshua was always more concerned for God's glory than for his own. And because Joshua humbled himself, God lifted him up (1 Peter 5:6). God told Joshua in 3:7 that He was going to begin to exalt him in the sight of all Israel. In 4:14, the Lord exalted him, and all the people feared him. God, again, is making good on His promises.

My "Reason to Rejoice" today is that we can become wise if we revere God (Psalm 111:10). He not only is the One who can give us wisdom (James 1:5), He **IS** wisdom (Jude 25). And that's the God who is living inside of me. And you!

Fifth Day

Write your verse by memory. Can you repeat it to someone, and explain what it means?

1. Read Joshua 4 again.

2. In verse 24, Joshua calls God's hand "mighty." What does mighty mean? What are some synonyms?
3. In Psalm 145:4, it says that "His _____ are mighty."
4. In Psalm 106:8, it says that "His _____ is mighty."
5. Jeremiah 33:3 says, "Call to me, and I will show you great and mighty _____."
6. Spend sometime today reflecting on the might of God. Remember to praise Him for that attribute in your prayer time.

The memorials that were set up by Joshua and the children of Israel were to help them remember all that God had done on that amazing day. So often we forget all the wonderful things that God has done for us. Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 16:9, "Don't you remember the 5 loaves and 2 fishes?" How soon they had forgotten the miracle that had transpired before their very eyes.

7. Is God saying to you, "Don't you remember?" Let's take a few moments remembering...

a. When have you or your family seen God's faithfulness?

b. When have you experienced His provision?

c. When has He shown you His mercy?

d. When were you a witness to His power?

e. When did you sense His love in a powerful way?

Has there ever been someone close to you that has forgotten a special date or occasion that was meaningful to you? How did you feel? I pray that we never grieve the heart of God by forgetting all the special things He has done for us.

8. What did you learn about God this week?

9. What did you learn about Joshua this week?

10. What did you learn about yourself this week?

11. Think of Joshua chapter 4 as a stone of remembrance. "What does this stone mean to you?"

God bless you, ladies, as you study His Word!