

## THE RING

Wedding rings symbolize marriage. School rings symbolize a connection and academic achievement. A championship ring symbolizes a team of winners. Each ring is exclusive and bonds people together.

These rings provide a constant reminder of a pinnacle moment in the life of the ring-holder. Often, when the ring is noticed by others, it's accompanied by the story of its obtaining. It's not the ring, but the *story* about the ring that makes it so special.

As we will see today, God gives his people reminders because the stories of his faithfulness are special and must be remembered. We will face ups and downs. We will face seasons of uncertainty. Remembering God's past faithfulness assures us the he is able to save, rescue, heal, and redeem. If God was faithful then, he will be faithful now.

### JOSHUA 4:1-7, 21-24

<sup>1</sup> When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the Lord said to Joshua, <sup>2</sup> "Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, <sup>3</sup> and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests' feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.'" <sup>4</sup> Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. <sup>5</sup> And Joshua said to them, "Pass on before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, <sup>6</sup> that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' <sup>7</sup> then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever."

<sup>21</sup> And he said to the people of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in times to come, 'What do these stones mean?' <sup>22</sup> then you shall let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.'

<sup>23</sup> For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, <sup>24</sup> so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever."

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Reminders are important, but what are we trying to remember? We might need to remember many things—from homework to the playbook. However, the main thing all of us need to remember is who we are and who God is. How we define these two things shape everything about us. That's why it's important to get it right every single day.

Scan the QR code for a great article on Ten Big Daily Reminders that we should all focus on every day.



## DISCUSSION

If you could pick one fictional character to hang out with for a day, who would it be and why?

ICEBREAKER

1. When does this passage occur? (1)

2. What command did Joshua follow from God? (2-5)

3. How would this memorial be used? (6-7, 21-24)

OBSERVATION

4. Why might the Lord have specifically assigned the 12 leaders to carry these stones? (2-5)

5. What reminders do you use to practice remembering what God has done? Is there anything you need to start or stop doing?

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Hard lessons, like carrying giant stones, aren't quickly forgotten. Maybe God has or is taking you through something hard to teach you. If you aren't sure, talk to your coach today.

# VICTORY!

WEEK 4

## A STUDY OF JOSHUA

### STUDY NOTES REMEMBER



Most Americans recognize this picture. Built out of bronze in 1954, the statue of five marines and one sailor remembers and honors the heroism required to raise the American flag atop Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima during World War II. More generally, the statue honors all Marines who have fought for freedom since their first battle in 1775.

Why bother with a statue that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, took over 3 years to construct, and weighs over 100 tons? It is worth it to remember their sacrifice for duty, honor, and country. It's worth it to remember what it takes to remain free. It's worth it to remember a story that would inspire future generations to sacrifice for duty, honor, and country.

The power of remembering is why a nation sets aside holidays, conducts parades, and establishes museums. It's why a school hangs plaques, displays trophies, and names stadiums after those who excelled in carrying out its ideals.

The Lord designed us so that we might remember, not the great things *we* have done, but the great things *he* has done. As we return to the story of Joshua, the Lord established a memorial so that his people would never forget what he did that day.

### VICTORY REQUIRES REMEMBERING

As we saw last Week, the Lord delivered Israel across the Jordan River. Although the river was normally overflowing at this time of the year,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile wide and 150 feet deep, the Lord stopped the water and the people walked on dry land.

Our story continues as ***all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan. The Lord commanded, "Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests' feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.'"***

The twelve men discussed here are likely the twelve that were selected in chapter three. They were told to ***"pass on before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder."***

This wasn't a small rock in their palm, this was a large stone hefted on their shoulder. And not only did they have to carry it out the river

bed, they had to carry it to where they were "lodging." In Joshua 4:19, we discover that they "lodged" in Gilgal—8 miles away!

Want to make sure your leaders learn a lesson? Make them carry a huge stone on their back for 8 miles. They're not likely to forget the meaning of this moment anytime soon.

Again, why bother? The Lord clearly stated his purposes in stacking the stones from the Jordan—***that this may be a sign among you***. Additionally, the Lord said, ***"When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever."*** Likewise, ***"so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever."***

### REMEMBERING INVOLVES REPETITION

It's amazing that the Lord knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows we forget quickly. He knows the power of sin and how it deceives us. Sin says, "I'm going to do what I think feels good right now without worrying about the future." In sin, we can't see the past and we can't predict the future—or at least sin makes us not care.

We are like the man in James 1:24–25 that, ***"looks intently at his natural face in the mirror,"*** who ***"looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like."*** For that reason, we must establish patterns of remembering so that it never strays too far from our hearts. How do we do this? The Lord has provided us with many opportunities for remembering him and what he has done.

*First*, as many have said, preach the gospel to yourself daily. We must spend time in God's Word and pray every day. No day goes by that we don't need God. Failing to spend time with him implicitly says, "Don't worry about it God, I got it. You have the day off."

*Second*, we should have weekly opportunities to dive deeper in God's Word both alone and in community (like this study). God uses the church and small group community to help remember.

*Lastly*, we celebrate yearly events like Christmas and Easter to remember Jesus. However, other annual events could be more personal to you.

Let us take these opportunities to remember so that we may be victorious in him.