

New

Joshua 4:18-24

18 And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before.

19 And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho.

20 And those twelve* stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.

21 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?

22 Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

23 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:

24 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.

Introduction:

Here we are at New Year's Eve again. It is an exciting time where people have a chance to set the pace for a New Year. Many people set new goals and then make resolutions to help accomplish the goals. With that being said getting something new is generally exciting and fun, but doing something new, well that can be a whole other story. Learning a new language would be a wonderful challenge this year, but just thinking of the time, energy, and money that would cost is exhausting! Many times, the thought of what it cost to do something new stops me from ever doing it. I would like to get in tip top shape, the image in my head of a healthy muscular little man looks good, but thinking about running, sweating, high heart rates, and being short of breath is more than I can bear. Doing new things takes work, a lot of work and dedication. Today we will look at the new things that the children of Israel were facing when Moses died and Joshua became the new leader. It is my hope that this message is good prelude to our January Series "A Time for War" by laying out the foundations that makes doing new things as a believer possible.

What New things were Happening in the life of Joshua

When we open the bible, and begin reading in Joshua chapter one we learn the Moses is dead and now Joshua has charge over a multitude of people that are on the brink of the promised land (Joshua 1:1-2). Joshua is now a new leader, and before him new challenges. Jericho's walls and Jordan's overflowing waters are on his desk when he starts the job. He crosses the Jordan into the promise land which is also enemy territory at this time. There he circumcises the children of Israel, again this is something new for that generation (Joshua 5:2). Finally, God is going to change how he feeds the people. The manna was to stop and the people were going to take responsibility to feed themselves (Joshua 5:12). There was more change facing Joshua then in his life than any of us are facing today. But God had a game plan built into all

these changes. He had ways that would encourage His people to make good decisions that would change their lives and bring new things to pass.

E/c Can do things that glorify God in 2018

By laying the following stones as foundation to accomplish new things

1. Remember (4:21)- Memory is a powerful thing. It can motivate you or it can detour you. Moses had recently died, but it was not the memory of Moses's death that God sets as a foundation to do that which is new. No God decides to take His people across the Jordan and set up a memorial of His power, grace, and justice to the living generation. He wanted them to remember Him at every turn of their journey. God decided to use stones to arouse the memory of all those present and to come. God has done much for each of us this past year and we can stack those memories up to remind us of God. It is not any old stone that will do, just like there is not just any old memory that will do. God has specifics when it comes to things He wants us to cling to. Not every stone, not every memory will help new things happen.
 - a. The Place of the Stones (4:3)- God wanted the stones collected from "where the priest's feet stood firm". God wants us to go to the place where faith conquered fear and did not waiver. Our memories that push us forward are to come from the place where faith stood firm. It may not be where or feet stood, but it needs to be where someone's feet did! Collect stones and memories from the victories of faith.
 - b. The people of the Stones (4:6)-12 men were selected to get the stones. The stones mattered to the generation present and the ones to come. Natural curiosity would cause the next generations to ask "what do you mean by these stones". Our children and grandchildren need to be evoked to serve and worship God by what we pull out of our present. There is nothing more motivational to me than to see and hear from the more seasoned believers how God wrought wonderful things in their life. It reminds me God can do it for me as well.

Illustration: I recently read about the last days of William Tyndale. William suffered unto death for translating the bible into English. His faith and work created a new thing that earned him death. Reading the last letter William wrote gave me strength and encouragement in the ministry. The letter was not long and complex, but it was real and carried with it the spirit of a warrior for Christ. The "stone" he left was his letter and martyrdom. It is such memorials that give me courage to continue in service to Christ and the desire to do more.

Application: What are you remembering today about God that pushes you forward, what are you leaving today to push others forward in the future?

Recalibrate (5:2)- Joshua led his people across the Jordan with collected stones to commemorate the event. Once settled on the other side of the Jordan the people were commanded to be circumcised. Their faith and commitment would have to be adjusted to a higher level. They had just witnessed the power and care of God toward them and now they

would be commanded to give flesh off their body in keeping the commands of God. Their faith was called to an Abrahamic faith (Genesis 17:10-12). It was no small request to ask that all the men be circumcised. Once in the history of Israel a whole group of people died when the fighting men of the city were circumcised. Joshua would know the story very well because it was his ancestors that did the massacre (Genesis 34:18-29). What God asked seemed very untimely, but it is never timely to serve God. Serving God always cost and it cost dear. When transitions are happening and new things are to be accomplish be prepared to be obedient to God on a higher level. Christian new year's resolutions should be more than diets and work outs. It should begin with a desire and then design to grow in Christ and serve God to a higher degree. Doing new things for God is possible when our faith is adjusted to a higher temperature.

Illustration: Zell Kravinsky knew he wasn't cut out for the wealthy way of living. Sure, he had made millions investing in real estate in his native Pennsylvania, but Kravinsky decided his dollars had a grander purpose than just fattening his bank account. In 2001, he began donating money and land to various charities until his contributions reached \$45 million dollars. By then, his family and friends thought that he was being too impulsive, but Kravinsky brushed their reservations aside and said that he could always earn more money—though he'd likely give it away as well.

However, Kravinsky still felt that donating money and land wasn't enough. He decided up the ante and **gave his kidney to a total stranger**. His move was met with mixed views, ranging from praise to disbelief. Even his wife threatened to leave him, although that was later defused thanks to famous singer Pat Boone, who knew what Kravinsky did and urged her to forgive him for being too generous. As for Kravinsky, he said that he would readily give any of his body parts again for any who need who needed it.

We should continually adjust our faith toward God until we will give anything for Him. This is love without limits.

Application: What has God ask of you to adjust your level of faith?

React (Joshua 6)- Joshua 6 is about the fall of Jericho. The people watched the wall fall only after the obeyed the Lord. The people under Joshua's command showed their reaction to who God is and what He says makes the impossible possible. The stones lay in another place to remind them that God can do the impossible, their circumcision proved they were committed, and their marching showed that it was not all for naught.

What were the people reacting to?

The people were reacting to God's desire for them. God's people had wanted to return to Egypt. That was their desire. They wanted to be continually fed with manna and not have to worry about crops and harvest and the such. Their own desires were carnal and

deadly. But when the people reacted to God's desire for them the walls of a great city fall before their feet with a few days march. As a father, mother, employ, or boss whose desires are you reacting to?

It is now time to react to God's desire toward you. He desires that you love Him with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself.

Illustration:

Application: Will you react to God's desire for you in 2018?