



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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Daddy, What's the Big Pile of Rocks For?

Focus Verses: Joshua 4:6-7 - ⁶That 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? ⁷Then 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.

Lesson Text: Joshua 4:1-9; Judges 2:10

Truth About God: God calls us to remember what He has done and share it with the next generation.

Truth For My Life: I will tell the next generation what God has done.

God had called Joshua to succeed Moses to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land. But in order to get from here to there, they had to cross the Jordan River during the flooding season. Joshua waited for instructions, and God spoke to Joshua: *"This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan"* (Joshua 3:7-8).

Once the final priest's foot touched dry land. God removed His hand that held the water back, allowing the water to flood the riverbed and riverbanks once again. God called for twelve men from the twelve tribes of Israel (one man per tribe) to go back into the river and pull out a stone from the place where the priests stood. Those stones would stand as **a memorial from generation to generation**, what wondrous works God had worked, especially for the Israelites who were not at the Jordan River crossing. It has always been God's plan for one generation to declare His works to the next generation (Joshua 4:21-24). That is why the psalmist David wrote: *"One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts"* (Psalm 145:4).

"Stones" look different in our day than they did in Joshua's. Perhaps you do not have any rocks or boulders you care to heft from one house to the next, but each of us has stories of God's work in our lives. Perhaps God miraculously protected you from a crash. When you drive by that same area, share that story afresh with those in the car with you. If God healed you of a sickness or disease, when you hear of others battling the same condition, share your testimony with them to give them faith that God can do for them what He has done for you. **Remembering past miracles should not imprison us in the past; it should free us to approach God with faith for the future.**

As the sun set on Joshua's day, no one rose up to succeed him as Israel's new leader. After the Book of Joshua, the Book of Judges tells of Joshua's final words and his final breath. He died at 110 years old. After Joshua's funeral, the writer of Judges records one of the most sobering passages in the Historical Books: *"And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel"* (Judges 2:10).

God has called **all** parents (biologically and spiritually) to teach our children about the wonderful works He has done. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 lays the responsibility to disciple the next generation at the feet of parents, not just pastors, youth pastors, and children's pastors. We naturally teach our children how to cook, how to play sports, fish, drive, how to play instruments, etc.; but be sure to teach them: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD," and Jesus is His name. Teach them the gospel: that Jesus Christ died for us, was buried, and rose from the grave. Teach them how to be right with God as found in Acts 2:38: *"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*

Teach them how to pray, how to fast, how to give. Teach them why we believe the Bible to be the Word of God. Teach them Bible stories to help build their faith to believe God will do in our day what He did in the Bible days. When they ask why people are baptized or why some people cry during church, let us not leave discipling our family only to the church leadership team. Declaring the Lord's words and works to the next generation is our privilege, our responsibility, our holy calling.