



LOUD STONES

PART TWO

LOUD Stones Part 2

Scripture Reading

Joshua 4:21-24 (NKJV)

21 Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What are these stones?' 22 then you shall let your children know, saying, Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land"; 23 for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, 24 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."

Introduction

Out of all the memories that we keep stored in our minds, the "remember when" memories may stand out the loudest. Sure we can recall the hard memories and when someone said the worst things to us, or did the unthinkable to us. We may remember the times when our lives were in danger or the times we went on a thrilling ride at the amusement park. But I would almost wager that our loud memories are the ones where we experienced something so good that it made us laugh in disbelief, cry in joy, look in amazement or relish it like it was the best thing that ever happened to you!

It is from this text where the title "Loud Stones Part 2" comes from.

We catch up with Israel at a pivotal time in their journey into the Promised Land. In Chapter 3 They crossed the River Jordan as a people for the first time and they are also under new leadership now. This

was new!

This Crossing is Different

- They used to have Moses and Aaron and Moses infamous staff that performed miracles.
 - The rod that Moses & Aaron used was used to turn the Nile River into Blood
 - The rod turned into a serpent and devoured Pharaoh's magicians serpent rods
 - The rod was used to open the Red Sea so Israel could cross
- Moses died and they were wandering around in the dessert for 40 years.
 - 40 yrs of not coming together in agreement to obey the Lord's command to cross over and possess the land.
 - The rod was placed into the Ark of the Covenant along with any other miraculous sign (manna, the tablets of stone with the 10 commandments.
- Israel had gotten used to the older man Moses, the white beard, the older voice, the mysterious prophet; the symbol; the one who represented age and wisdom and the voice of God
- Now they had a younger man
 - Fearless
 - More agile
 - More ready to make moves
 - A military man who would ask more of them
 - He would require orderly and timely movement from them
 - Greater accountability
 - His beard wasn't as long but he understood the assignment
 - And "as the Lord was with Moses, so He was with Joshua."
 - And unlike Moses, Joshua had been into Canaan as a spy and seen the Promised Land so his faith was already engaged.
- The people could see that The Lord was moving differently this time:
 - He parted the water not with a staff with the priesthood's feet touching the waters while they carried the ark and they would cross on dry ground.
 - The rod wasn't visible but the Ark was and so was Joshua.
 - And this time the crossing of water on dry ground would be different also.

Fear Often Results in Shorter Memories

When Moses and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea:

- They were on the run from Pharaoh
- They didn't have time to grab anything from the sea bed to carry with them as a memento or souvenir
- Their number 1 purpose was to get to the other side before Pharaoh's chariots got to them.
- Fear and dread was a part of their experience and this would lead to short memories

When God shows up in a mighty way and gets us out of a life threatening situation, we will:

- Praise Him for the victory
- Praise Him for the deliverance and protection
- Write songs of praise like Miriam did
 - Recall the horsemen and the chariots drowning in the sea
 - We sing; we dance; we shout; we take out the timbrel and lead the people in a song
- Yet when the Lord moves differently for a short time and doesn't send us a memo about what

He's doing , then something else takes over

- that's when the God who doesn't fit your expectations gets quickly replaced with a god that fits our ambitions
- Those past breakthroughs gave us security, they served us, it made us feel special and loved and now we want to continue to feel that way but how can we if God is not speaking as He did before?
- We need to take what He did before and project that onto our new idol and convince ourselves that this is now God going before us in the way WE like
- And In a short time, an idol crafted from our ambitions comes forward and our hearts abandon the will of The Almighty God
- God was angry with them because it was flabbergasting how quickly they forgot the Lord!

How often do we forget the Lord when He comes through for us;

- He comes through for us in our fear and dread moments
- And when we get what we needed, we celebrate but when we face another trial, and some time passes, and we are tempted and tested, we easily forget what the Lord just did

But this time would be very different:

- There was no Pharaoh chasing them
- The desire to wander in circles was gone
- There was no fear or dread but a collective agreement that it was time to cross over and take the land.
- They could finally make a decision out of faith and not fear!

LOUD Reminders for Longer Memories

And God commanded Joshua to tell the tribe leaders to take stones from the bed of the river this time. There was no 911 rushing them to cross over, but it was a command and a joy to cross over!

- This time, FAITH was applied
- This time, they were to take 12 reminders with them!
- These stones were from the bottom of the river bed that no one could get to unless the river was parted or if the waters had stopped.
- These were reminders that it was The Lord that did this!
- These were loud reminders that it couldn't have been anyone else, anything else:
 - no 911
 - no tragedy
 - no accident
 - no happenstance
 - all of these can be easily forgotten when we try to block out the bad memories
 - these memorial stones were too loud to be forgotten

These stones were

- louder than their fears

- Louder than their doubts
- Louder than their disobedience
- Louder than their hesitations
- Louder than their forgetfulness
- Louder than their idolatry
- Louder than their envy of other nations
- Louder than their ambitions

Collect Your Stones

The Bible says that while the priests, who were carrying the Ark on the shoulders, still had their feet in the water, the Israelites went and gathered the stones from the Jordan River bed.

This is certainly a transition period for us here at the Well. And while we are getting our feet wet walking by faith, carrying the Presence of God in our hearts,

- grab your proofs of God's faithfulness
- grab your evidence that God is real
- collect your memories of what He did for you
- collect your testimonies of what He's brought you through
- recall the truths that transformed your thinking
- recall the Words that woke you up
- gather your notes, your souvenirs from the last 5 years together and prepare for this new season that God is bringing us into

You're going to need to be able to look at these stones when the battles come

You're going to need these reminders when the doubts come whispering

You'll need these stones to remind you that you are where you are only because God opened the waters for you to cross over!

And if He opened them for you then, He is faithful to take you through what you're facing now

Lastly, the stones have another purpose:

Joshua 4:23-24 (NKJV)

23 for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, 24 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."

They serve as a sign to all the peoples of the earth that the Hand of the Lord is on your life.

You are the proof, you become the Memorial Stone as proof of God's faithfulness!