



Session 8 | The Memorial | Joshua 4:1-24

What must I do to be saved? That is the question asked by the Philippian jailer in the book of Acts. Mere humans tend to ask that question often and there is a tendency to always lean toward a personal action in order to save us or to please God. Most often the desire to make some sort of sacrifice comes from passages like the one we will read today.

For the Israel, not yet a nation, but a coalition of twelve tribes (The 12 tribes of Israel, or as we often say, the *children of Israel*), had been displaced from the land of their father Jacob in Egypt for over 400 years and 200 plus of those years they had been kept in slavery and bondage. After escaping from the Egyptian Pharaoh and miraculously crossing through the midst of the Red Sea, they are again back in their land. This was the land God promised them and the place that, if they would allow God to lead them, they would prosper and be blessed.

For this mass of people, we saw last time they had to physically make their way across the Jordan river, which, like the Red Sea forty years earlier, had miraculously dried up, and as 4:1 states, they **clean passed over the Jordan**.

Crossing the river was not all that had to be done in order to gain their salvation. God commanded them to take twelve stones **out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm**, each stone representing a tribe of Israel, **carry the over**. Joshua commanded twelve men to accomplish this *task*. The stones, God said, **would be a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever**. Verse 8 says, **Israel did so as Joshua commanded**.

Additionally, Joshua **set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan**. There were two sets of 12 stones. One set in which the people had to do in obedience to God, and another set which presumably God commanded Joshua himself to do.

Salvation for this people could only be accomplished by *doing*.

When it comes to interpreting Scripture, we must remember a general rule which will help us know how we are to interpret a passage such as this one. The rule is, "Don't make a doctrine out of an historical account." That is, this passage is not a command for you to do something in order to gain salvation or to get closer to God.

For you and me today, in the dispensation of grace, we can rest assured that we do not need to set up a memorial, or complete a set of commands in order to gain our salvation. Our salvation comes from the work that Jesus Christ accomplished. Jesus paid it all. No shrine, or statue, or memorial is necessary for anyone today and none of those things will make you more holy before God. Our only requirement is belief; we come before God by grace through faith and not of ourselves. When we begin to think we must do something in order to be presented complete before God, we have cheapened the sacrifice Jesus made for all men on the cross.

Tonight, when you lay your head on your pillow, remember we are complete in Christ (Colossians 2:10). Rest assured that if you believe, in Jesus and the work he did for us on the cross, that is, he died, was buried, and rose again; that he is the **ONLY** one who can offer us everlasting life—you are saved, there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1).

Jesus paid it ALL!

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