

# Joshua Chapter 4 :



**What do these stones mean?**



THE MEN AND WOMEN OF HESTON  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE  
SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-1945

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REMEMBER TOO  
THE MEN AND WOMEN OF HESTON  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE  
SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-1945

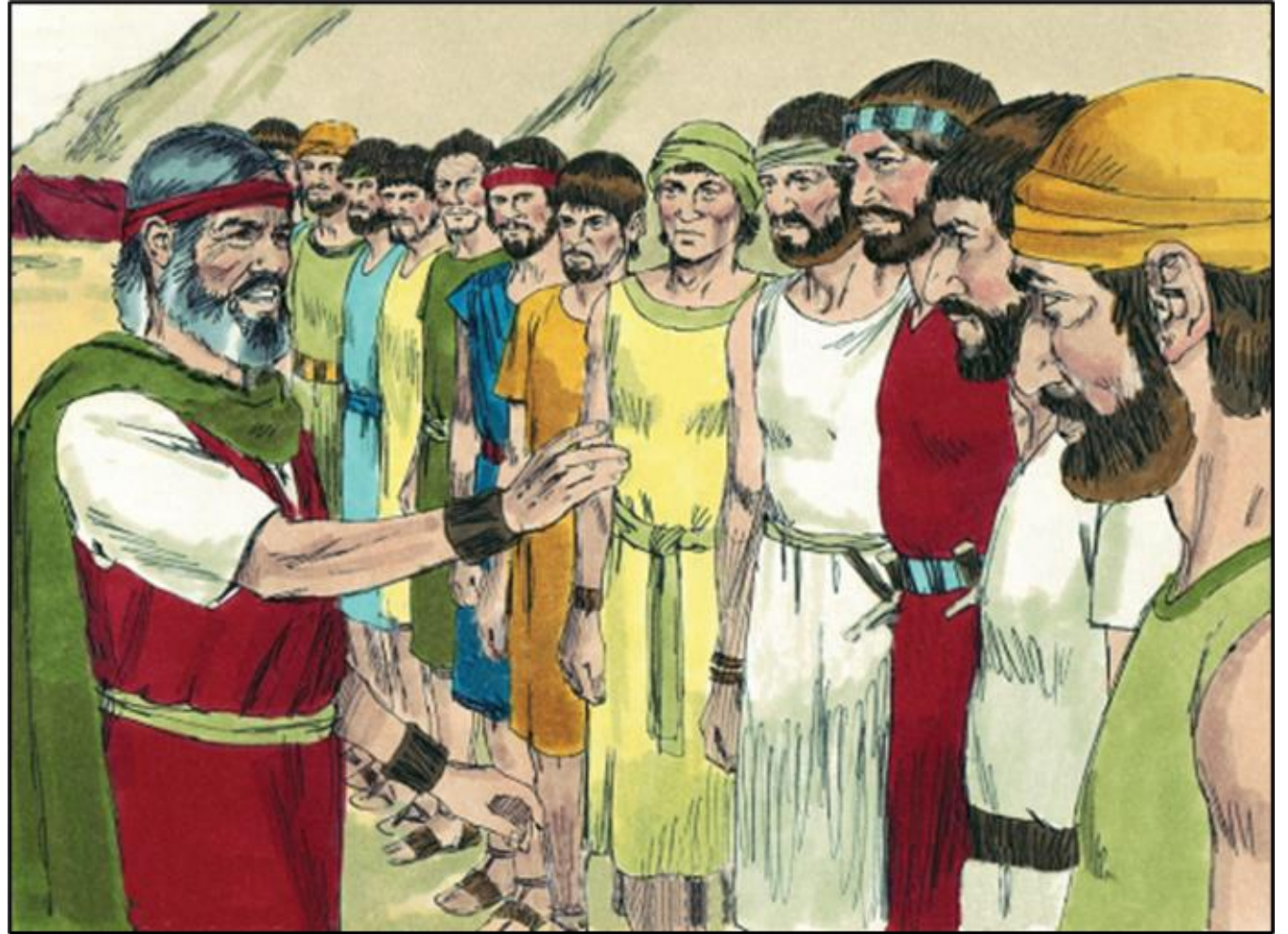


**March  
20 miles**



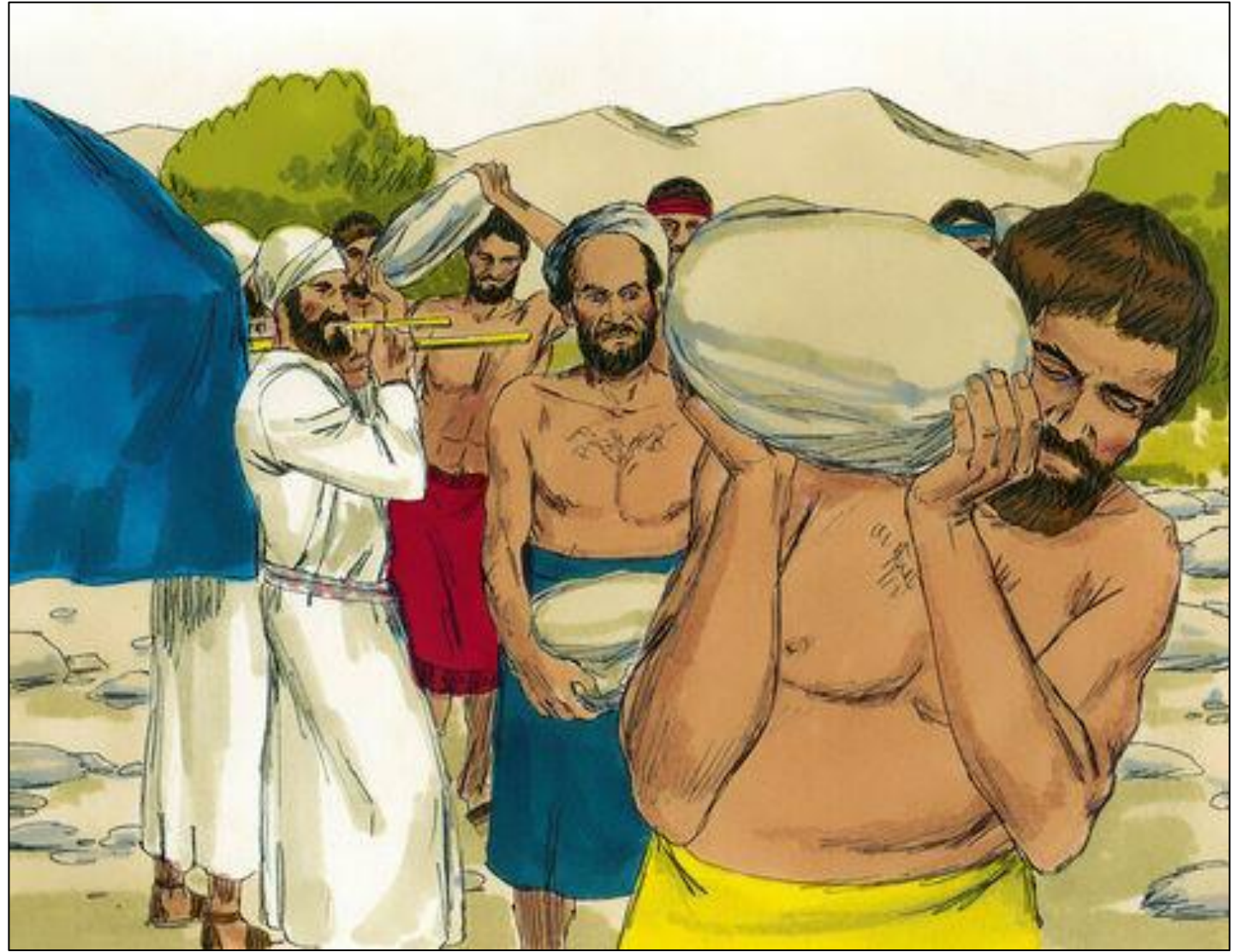


When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, **the LORD** (*had*) said to **Joshua**, "Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan from right where the priests stood and to carry them over with you and put them down at the place where you stay tonight."



A technical note on Hebrew grammar  
Only two 'tenses' past and non-past  
Previous appointment in ch. 3: 12

So **Joshua** (*had*) called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, and **said to them**, "Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites,



The message passed on to 12 men ... the nation's representatives

to serve as a sign among you.



The explanation is coming ...



In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?'



tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.



Joshua says it twice ... the message is important

These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."



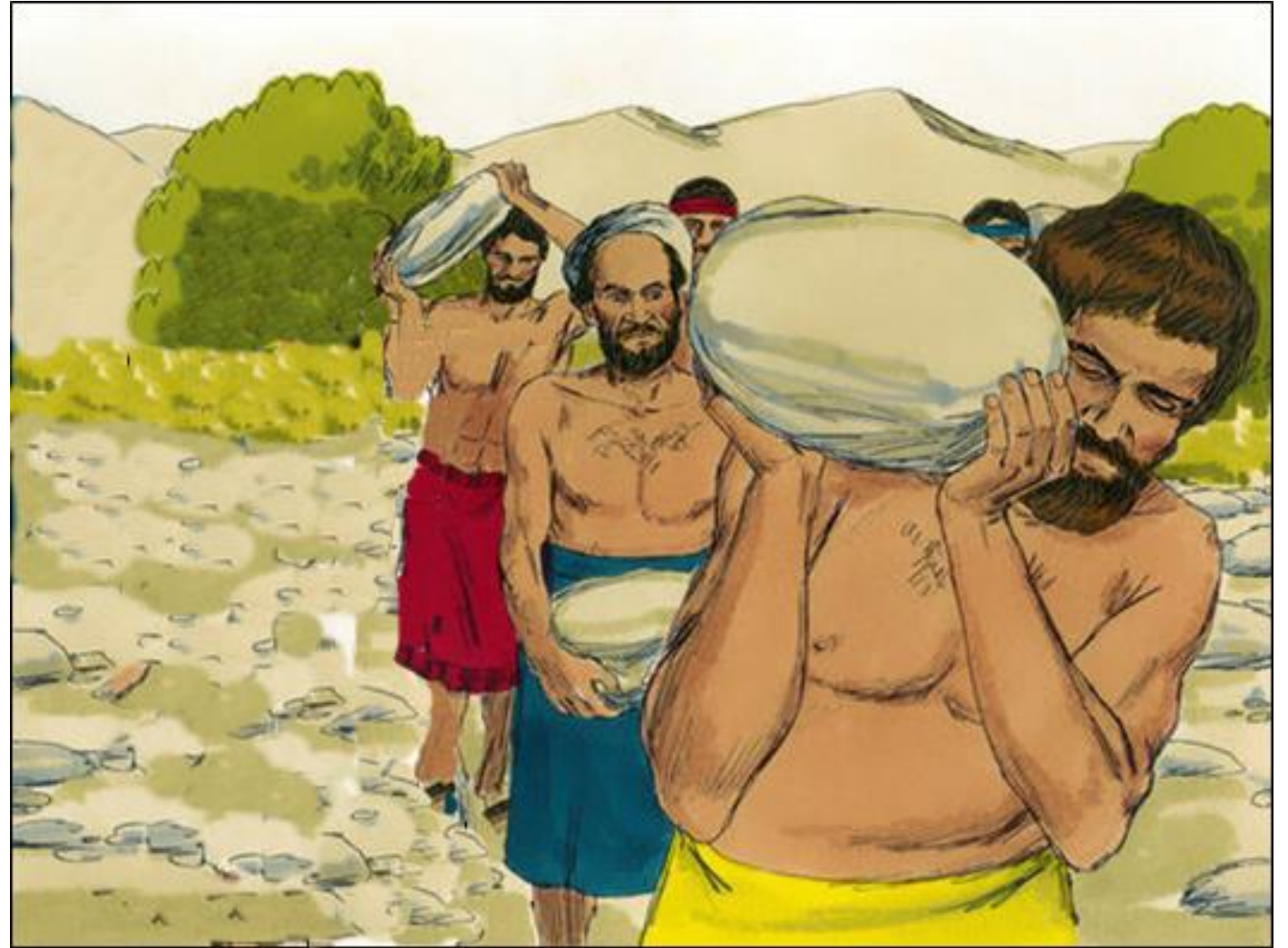
Don't forget!

So the Israelites did as Joshua commanded them.



**BY FAITH  
THEY OBEYED**

They took twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, as the LORD had told Joshua; and they carried them over with them to their camp, where they put them down.



How important was their job?  
Something to remember a special moment

Joshua set up the twelve stones that had been in the middle of the Jordan at the spot where the priests who carried the ark of the covenant had stood.



A marker from the very spot where the ark was held by the priests  
in the middle of the Jordan

And they are there to this day.



Still there in the writer's day (a copier's editorial?)

**Where are they now?**

Now the priests who carried the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything the LORD had commanded Joshua was done by the people, just as Moses had directed Joshua.

Moses' instruction:  
"Do what the Lord tells you."





The people hurried over, and as soon as all of them had crossed, the ark of the LORD and the priests came to the other side while the people watched.



What is the hurry?

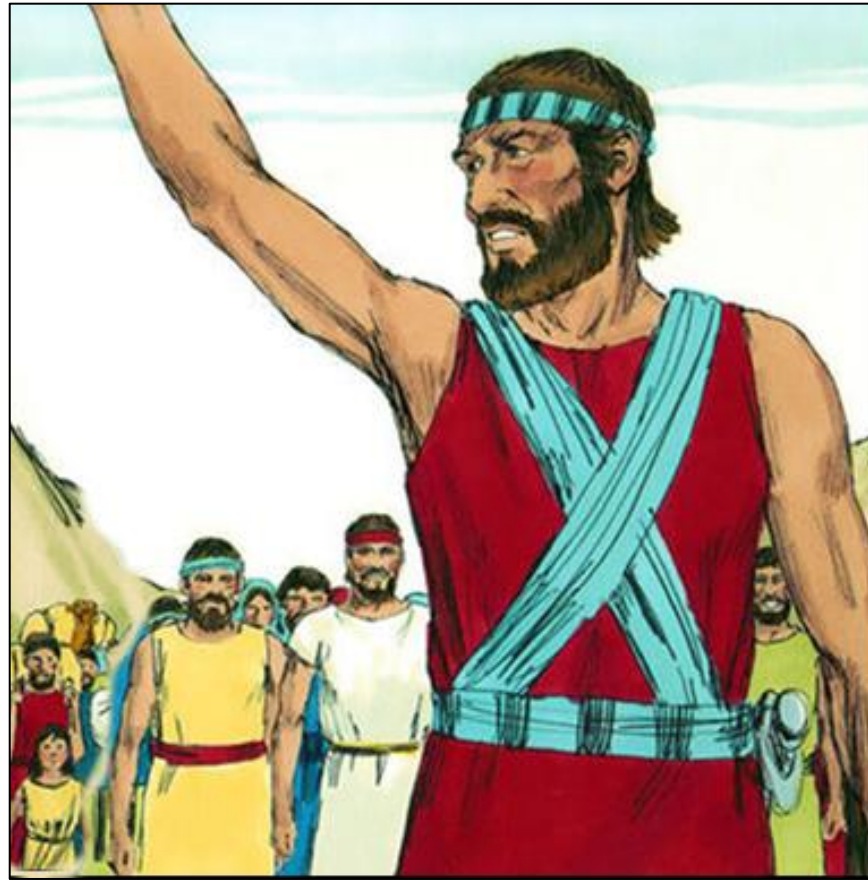
Grandstand view - they are all witnesses of God's grace and power

The men of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over, armed, in front of the Israelites, as Moses had directed them. About forty thousand armed for battle crossed over **before the LORD** to the plains of Jericho for war.



They kept their promise

That day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they revered him all the days of his life, just as they had revered Moses.



He did what he was told – and God did what he had promised (Ch. 1:8)

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Command the priests carrying the ark of the Testimony to come up out of the Jordan." So Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan."



God gave the order when to move – Joshua passes it on

And the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD. No sooner had they set their feet on the dry ground than the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before.



It's a miracle!

On the tenth day of the first month  
the people went up from the Jordan.

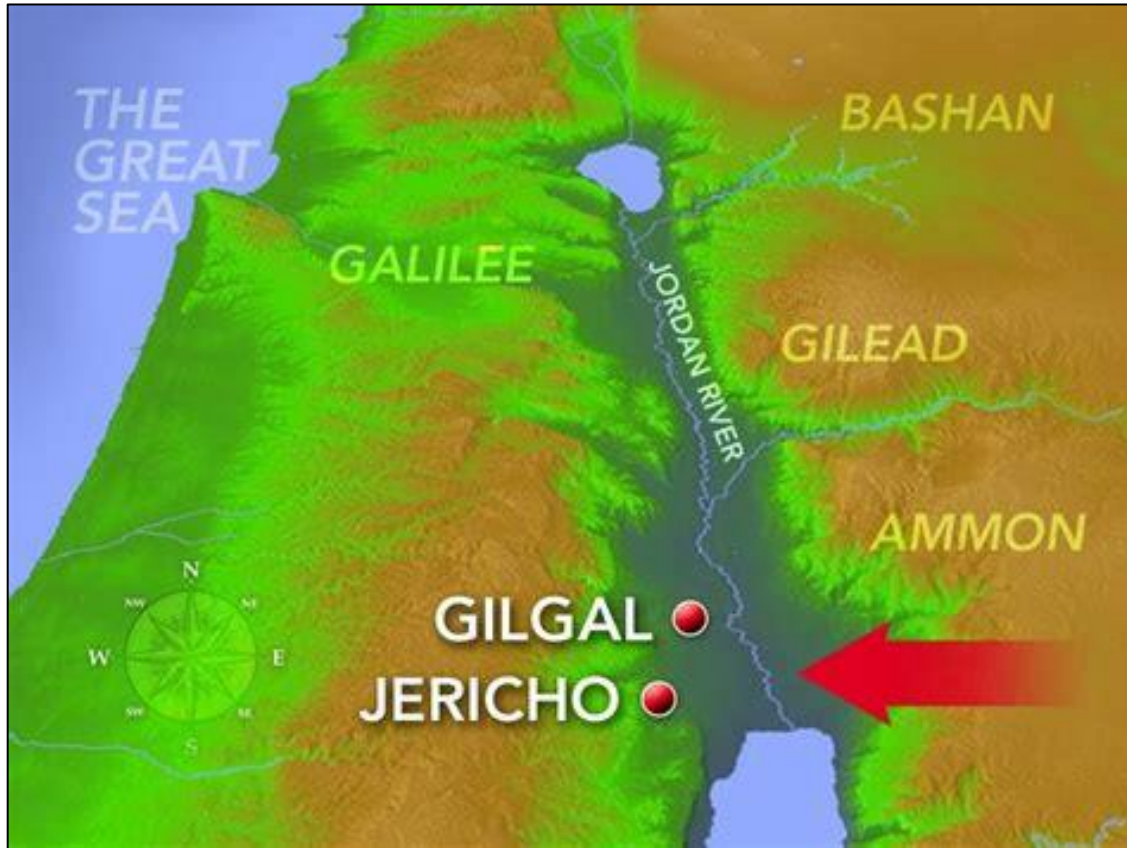
10<sup>th</sup> day

1<sup>st</sup> month

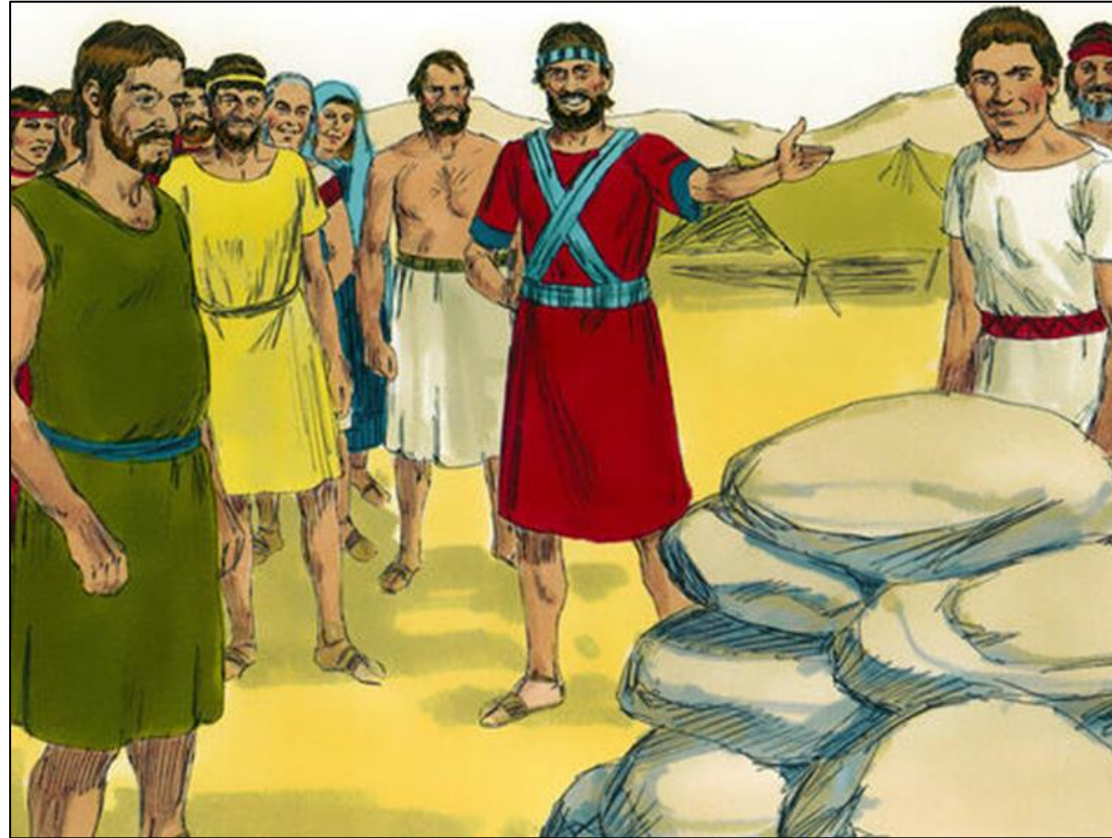
Exodus 12:1-3 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household.

and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho.

Gilgal = camp/stone structure



And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan.



Are there ways for us to mark moments of God's gracious dealings with us?



He said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.'



The message: God did the impossible for us

For the LORD your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The LORD your God did to the Jordan just what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over.

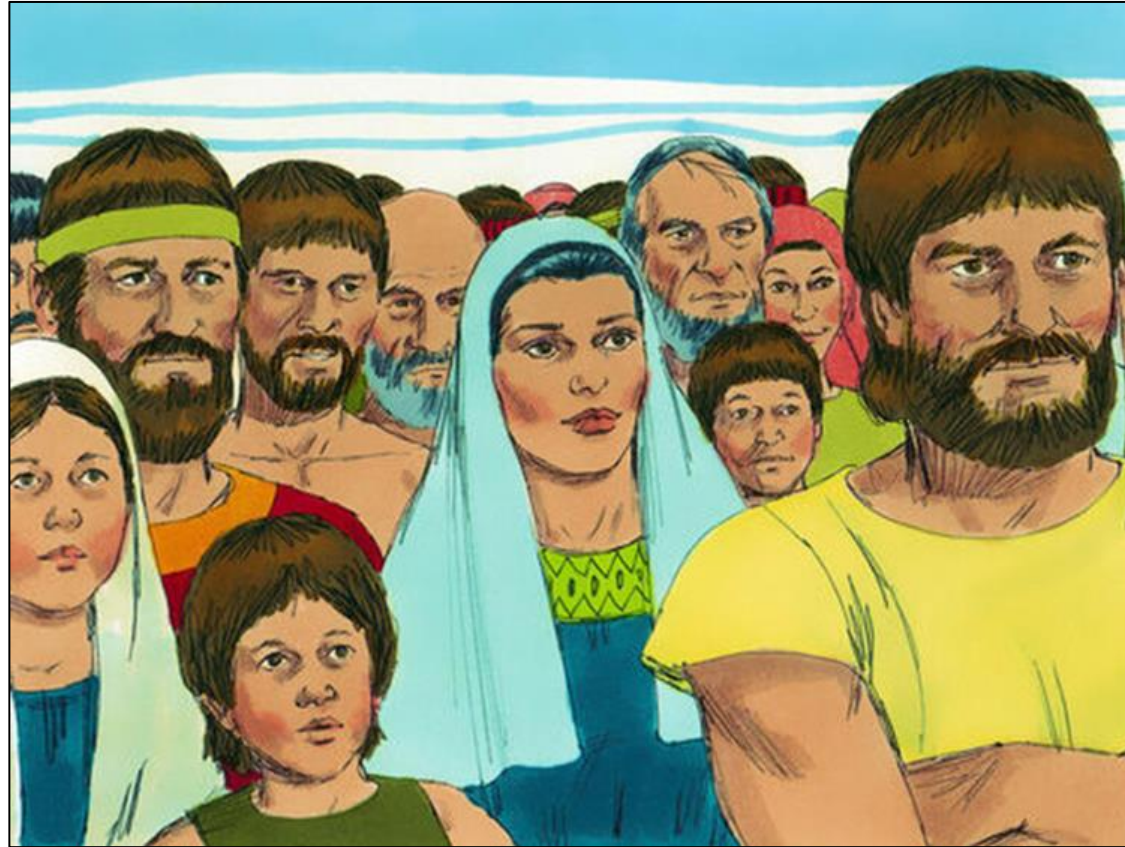


Who gets the glory...  
Joshua, Moses or  
the LORD your God?

He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that  
the hand of the LORD is powerful



and so that you might always fear the LORD your God."



What is the difference between the 'people of the earth' knowing about God and 'you' knowing/fearing Him?

and so that you might always fear the LORD your God."



It's about relationship



There are important links between the 2 events on the same date  
The crossing of the Jordan happened exactly 40 years to the day  
after the first Passover in Egypt.

God redeemed them OUT of Egypt by sacrifice  
and  
brought them INTO the promised land



There are important links between the 2 events on the same date

One is remembered by a yearly festival (Passover)  
and  
the stones are a continual reminder of the new life in Canaan



There are important links with 2 events on the same date

Jesus died to atone for our sin – our Passover Lamb  
and  
by his death gives us life – our Redeemer

Psalm 85:9-10 Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,  
that his glory may dwell in our land. Love and faithfulness meet  
together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.