

[ARM Prison Outreach International](#)

"Ministers' Minute" Volume V Number 5

Joshua 4:1-7 "REMEMBER WHOSE YOU ARE!"

A message suitable for Memorial Day

Editor's Note: This "MM" is the 5th email of 2006 in a series that ARM is sending as an encouragement to preachers and Christian workers around the world. (This was sent for the first time in May of 2002 when our list was much smaller.) This message could be appropriate as a Memorial Day sermon or devotional. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and those you teach. (For a plain text version rather than rich text, just reply and request.) Use it as a devotional, edit it, share it, or use components of it!

May God bless your labors! -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

ARM BREAKING NEWS!

A fantastic book by Ben Alexander -- a Spanish translation of "Out From Darkness" -- was recently posted on www.abarc.org at

<http://www.abarc.org/Resources/Spanish/De Las Tinieblas/De Las Tinieblas.htm>

A large listing of Spanish resources will be found at

<http://www.abarc.org/Resources/Spanish/Spanish Resources.htm>

Resources in English, German, Russian, and Spanish can be accessed at

www.abarc.org

Joshua 4:1-7 "REMEMBER WHOSE YOU ARE!"

OPEN: A pious old man who had reached the age of 105 suddenly stopped going to church. Alarmed by the old fellow's absence after so many years of faithful attendance the preacher went to see him. He found him in excellent health, so the he asked, "How come after all these years we don't see you at church anymore?"

The old man looked around and lowered his voice. I'll tell you, preacher," he whispered. "When I got to be 90 I expected God to take me any day. Then I got to be 95, then 100, then 105. So I figured that God is very busy and must've forgotten about me,".. then he came close to the preacher and looked all directions before whispering.... **"and I don't want to remind Him that I'm still down here!"**

But it isn't God who has the memory problem... IT IS US! I READ A BOOK TO IMPROVE MY

MEMORY RECENTLY...but I've forgotten what the name of it! **Truthfully, we need memory joggers.**

In fact, forgetfulness is a common spiritual problem. This can really be disastrous to your faith, therefore God has graciously given us memorials, memory joggers.

IE Sabbath, Circumcision, Passover, and the most important: COMMUNION

Josh 4:1-9

1 When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua,
2 "Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe,
3 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."
4 So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe,
5 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,
6 to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?'
7 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. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."
8 So the Israelites did as Joshua commanded them. 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.
9 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. And they are there to this day.

Without memorials, we tend to forget very quickly. WE NEED MEMORIALS TO REMIND US. The Lord's Supper: "This is my body, my blood, remember Me!" Acts 20:7 First day of week for breaking of bread. God doesn't want us to ever forget what He has done for us and in us.

BOULDERS REMIND US OF THE STORIES THAT TELL US whose WE ARE. Joshua 4:5b ... Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, 6 to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' 7 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. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."

As they went in to take possession of the land, these boulders would be a reminder of whose they really were. NOT EX-SLAVES OF EGYPT, GOD'S PEOPLE! Lots of people try to tell us who we are: Hollywood says you are primarily a sexual being. Madison Avenue says you are a consumer. Humanism says you are an accidental freak of nature. GOD'S WORD SAYS SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT!

1 Cor 6:19 **Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit,** who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

1 Cor 3:17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and **you are that temple.** (NIV)

1 Cor 12:27 **Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.** (NIV)

2 Cor 3:3 **You show that you are a letter from Christ,** the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. (NIV)

Gal 3:26 **You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, (NIV)**

Gal 4:7 **So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. (NIV)**

Eph 2:19 **Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, (NIV)**

1Thes 5:5 **You are all sons of the light and sons of the day.** We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. (NIV)

1 Pet 2:9 **But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God,** that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

AND EVERY TIME WE MEET AROUND HIS TABLE, WE ARE REMINDED OF THESE IMPORTANT FACTS THAT DEFINE OUR IDENTITY....

These stones would remind them that they were God's people, whom he had led across on dry land when the Jordan was flooded.

We all need a Gilgal go back to when our faith wanes and times get hard. We need a place where we can go back and say, **"This is whose I am and this is why I'm here."** The New Testament epistles were written to believers, but they frequently call people to remember their baptisms. Go back and visit that experience.

Romans 6:3-7 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. 5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin-- 7 because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

John Wooden of UCLA fame carried a wooden cross in his pocket as a constant reminder of whose he was. I carry a nail in my pocket, a reminder of the crucifixion. Is it a gimmick? Maybe. WE ALL need some personal reminders of the times when God specifically moved in your life. These reminders of our relationship with God confirm whose WE ARE!

I heard a story about a man who carries around in his pocket a gold plated safety pin. It is a great conversation piece. Anytime he pulls it out to get some change people ask, "Why do you have a gold safety pin?" He then has the opportunity to tell them that he used to be an alcoholic and drug addict living on the street. He had an old overcoat with no buttons on it. He found a safety pin and used it to keep his coat fastened as he slept. When someone introduced him to Christ, he started making the kind of decisions that Jesus helped him make and put his life back together. He didn't ever want to forget, so he took the safety pin, and had it gold plated as a constant reminder.

Don't allow yourself to forget what God has done in your life and whose you are therefore. IF YOU'LL COME AROUND THIS TABLE EVERY WEEK, WITH AN OPEN HEART AND AN OPEN MIND, YOU'LL REMEMBER WHOSE YOU ARE AND THE YOU'LL BE STRONGER,

MORE JOYFUL, AND BETTER FOR IT!

When we remember Jesus around His table, and remember Him as we live our lives, day by day, HE WILL REMEMBER US.... CONSIDER THIS

A minister passing through his church in the middle of the day,
Looked into the auditorium, to see who had come to pray.
Just then the back door opened, a man came down the aisle,
The minister frowned as he saw the man hadn't shaved in a while.
His shirt was kinda' shabby and his coat was worn and frayed.
The man knelt, he bowed his head, then rose and walked away.

In the days that followed, each noon time came this chap,
Each time he knelt just for a moment, a lunch pail in his lap.
Well, the minister's suspicions grew, with robbery a main fear,
He decided to stop the man and ask him, "Watcha' doin' here?"
The old man, he worked down the road. Lunch was half an hour.
Lunchtime was his prayer time, for finding strength and power.
"I stay only moments, see, 'cause the factory is so far away;
As I kneel here talkin' to the Lord, this is kinda' what I say:
"I just came to tell you Lord, how happy that I've been,
Since we found each other's friendship and you took away my sin.
Don't know much how to pray, but I think about you everyday.
So Jesus this is Jim checkin' in."

The minister feeling foolish, told Jim, that was fine.
He told the man he was welcome to come and pray just anytime.
Time to go, Jim smiled, said "Thanks." He hurried to the door.
The minister knelt right there, he'd never done it before.
His cold heart melted, warmed with love, he talked with Jesus there.
As the tears flowed, in his heart, he repeated old Jim's prayer:
"I just came again to tell you, Lord, how happy that I've been,
Since we found each others company and you took away my sin.
I don't know much how to pray, but I think about you everyday.
So, Jesus, this is me just checkin' in."

Past noon one day, the minister noticed that old Jim hadn't come.
As more days passed without Jim, he began to worry some.
At the factory, he asked about him, learning he was ill.
The hospital staff was worried, but he'd given them a thrill.
The week that Jim was with them, brought changes in the ward.
His smiles, a joy contagious. Changed people, his reward.
The head nurse couldn't understand why Jim was so glad,
When no flowers, calls or cards came, not a visitor he had.
The minister stayed by his bed, he voiced the nurse's concern:
No friends came to show they cared. He had nowhere to turn.
Looking surprised, old Jim spoke up and with a winsome smile;
"The nurse is wrong, she couldn't know, that all the while,
Everyday at noon He's here, a dear friend of mine, you see,
He sits right down, takes my hand, leans over and says to me:
"I just came to tell you, Jim, how happy I have been,
Since we found this friendship and I took away your sin.
Always love to hear you pray, I think about you each day,
And so Jim, this is Jesus checkin' in."

**CLOSING PRAYER -- THAT WE MIGHT COMMUNE WEEKLY, AND DAILY REMEMBER
WHOSE WE ARE ...**

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"Remain faithful unto death .." Rev. 2:10B

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In 2005, 127 ABA Bible courses was mailed from ARM every day!

In 2005, an ABA Bible course was mailed from ARM to a prisoner EVERY 11.3 minutes!