

JORDAN RIVER, SYMBOL OF DEATH (Josh. 3:14-17/Josh. 4:5)

Josh. 3:14-17 So it came about when the people set out from their tents to cross the Jordan with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people, and when those who carried the ark came into the Jordan, and the feet of the priests carrying the ark were dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest), 16 that the waters which were flowing down from above stood and rose up in one heap, a great distance away at **Adam**, the city that is beside **Zarethan**; and those which were flowing down toward the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. So the people crossed opposite Jericho. 17 And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahveh **stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan.**”



The Jordan river is a symbol of death. They enter the river at the place where the priests are crossing and they represent the Messiah entering death (Jordan) before us. Now, the waters rose up and rolled back north to a place called Adam, which means “man.” That means sin/physical and spiritual death has been rolled back all the way back to Adam, the first man. Adam is a city near Zarethan, which means “distress.” Now, the Jordan flows down to the Dead Sea, which is symbolic of the Lake of Fire. So, what is being communicated here. There is only one place to cross, one way to enter death safely and that is where Yeshua has crossed (John 14:6, Acts 16:31). Man (Adam, red earth) dwells near distress (Zarethan) and is always close to death (Jordan). One day we will all come to the Jordan and without faith in Messiah, there is no crossing place. **Josh. 4:5** and Joshua said to them, “Cross again to the ark of Yahveh your Elohim into the middle of the Jordan, and **each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel.**”

The stones were placed in a heap as a memorial to the later generations, marking the place where Israel crossed over. But, there is a spiritual meaning to this as well. The Jordan symbolizes death, both physical and spiritual. The stones symbolize believers (1Pet. 2:5) and raising them out of the Jordan symbolizes our being raised out of death. Now, Gilgal was where they crossed and where these stones were set up. Gilgal eventually was seen as a place of rest to Israel based on Joshua 10:43. It was where the kingdom would be renewed in the time of Saul and David (1Sam. 11:14). Galilee is an allusion to the same concept because of the “gal” in the name but also it was located in the north, which is where Yah’s throne is located in the Universe (Isa. 14:13; Ps. 48:2). Gilgal also played a role in the lives of Elijah and Elisha (2Kgs. 2:1, 4:38). So Gilgal became a concept associated with Heaven and the eternal kingdom. As a side note, these stones were possibly referred to in Matt. 3:9 where John was preaching along the Jordan. It would make sense for John, who came in the spirit of Elijah, to start preaching and preparing the people for the coming Kingdom of God (Matt. 3:2) there because it had become the place to “renew the kingdom.” (Also refer to 1Pet. 2:4-8 for the details about living stones.)

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