

dan on dry land!" These twelve stones represented the twelve tribes, and were brought out of the river-bed through which they passed—an actual, tangible witness of what Jehovah did for them. Nor could Israel in those days have set up anything more likely to be durable. If the clause in ver. 12 were written by Samuel the prophet it proves the existence of the cairn four or five hundred years after its setting up. If it were added in later years by Ezra, then the period is more than doubled. There are in some places stone heaps existing which must date from a very remote past.

Whether the words of ver. 12 refer to a second cairn set up in the river-bed (or perhaps on the eastern bank, where the priests' feet rested when the waters were driven back, midway between the heap by the city Adam and the mass of water which poured away into the Dead Sea) I shall not attempt to explain. It is remarkable if they do refer to such a cairn that it should be mentioned in this verse only. Anyhow, the recorded command of the Lord mentions but one cairn, set upon the western shore of the river, at Gilgal. It is from this that we have to draw a lesson for our classes.

And what is the lesson? First, the duty of thanksgiving. As long a portion of the Book of Joshua is devoted to the "memorial stones" as to the wonderful passage which they commemorated, and the one immediately succeeds the other. The connection between the mercy of God and the acknowledgment that should follow it is close and indissoluble. The stones were carried over and set up that same night in their first camping-place in the land of Canaan. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again."

For this acknowledgement—this devotion of the life to Him that loved us—is the only durable, appropriate, and noticeable monument of gratitude we can raise for his mercies.

The Lesson Council.

Question 6. What was the purpose of the memorial stones?

To treasure up in the most imperishable form a memory of the great miracle and all the associations that gathered around it. The people needed some object lesson constantly before them to overcome their strong inclination to idolatry. The passage of the Jordan at the close of their wanderings would suggest the passage of the Red Sea at their beginning, and tend to keep alive the memory of those forty years' wonders which could not fail to keep in mind the fact, indispensable to all pure religion, of an invisible God ever in contact with, but supreme over, nature.—*Rev. A. Wheeler, D.D.*

They were a remembrance, a monument, and a corroboration; a continuous remembrance of God's interposition in their behalf; a silent monument, yet ever proclaiming this transaction in the ears of the race; and a corroboration of the history of the event, which no skeptic could deny and no doubter could overthrow. And not only Israel would thus be convinced, but "all

the people of the earth would know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty."—*Rev. L. R. Dunn, D.D.*

They served as a rude but appropriate memorial of a great event; a visible testimonial of gratitude; to simply mark a spot made sacred by God's presence in the putting forth of power; not for superstitious veneration and idolatry, but as a remembrancer.—*Rev. W. P. Thirkield.*

To challenge the inquiry, "What mean these stones?" which would lead to a recital of the miracle of the passage of the Jordan, with its accompanying lesson of God's gracious providence over his people.—*Rev. J. C. W. Coxe, D.D.*

The whole world was plunged in the abysses of idolatry. All the nations were "mad upon their idols"—Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Greece, and the surrounding countries. It was evidently necessary that the knowledge of the true and living God should be kept alive in the midst of them. Hence it was that God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees and gave to him and his descendants the land of Canaan for their inheritance. Now, in the fullness of this promise, they had entered this land, and there they were to abide for the centuries. Not only so; on account of their sins, and especially their frequent relapses into idolatry, they were carried away captives into all the surrounding nations, where they taught the knowledge of the one only living God, who made the heavens and the earth. These purposes were more or less fully answered by them. And so for fifteen hundred years they were an elect people, proclaiming God's existence, his character, and his Son.—*Rev. L. R. Dunn, D.D.*

7. For what reason, in what way, and to what extent were the Israelites "the elect nation?"

That through them the knowledge of the one and only true God might come to all the nations of the earth. True worship could be based only upon such knowledge. "In what way?" As being the channel through which the divine revelation should come in miraculous events, by prophets, apostles, and teachers of various kinds; and lastly, that revelation of revelations, Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh. "To what extent?" Not to the exclusion of other peoples or their own release from the obligation of obedience, but that through them other sheep might be brought into the fold. Instead of being freed from obligations by their election, those obligations were enlarged and intensified. Their election to salvation was conditioned upon obedience.—*Rev. A. Wheeler, D.D.*

Cambridge Notes.

Commemoration of events by the raising of cairns is a familiar custom in most countries, and especially in Palestine. Compare Gen. 28, 18; 31, 45; 35, 14; 1 Sam. 7, 12. On this occasion two cairns were raised, marking two stages in the miraculous passage. One was on the eastern edge of the wider channel filled by the yearly flood, where the priests' feet had rested; the other in the first encampment west of Jordan, at Gilgal, some four miles from the river. The narrative is noteworthy as exhibiting the great stress which the Hebrews laid on the traditional preservation of their history. As in the case of the passover (Exod. 12, 26), the great deliverances of Jehovah were not remembered by written annals, but constantly commemorated in the talk of the people, and so handed down from father to son.

VER. 10. *Stood.* The priests behaved worthily of the occasion, and their faith was a powerful encourage-