

Joshua 3 and 4

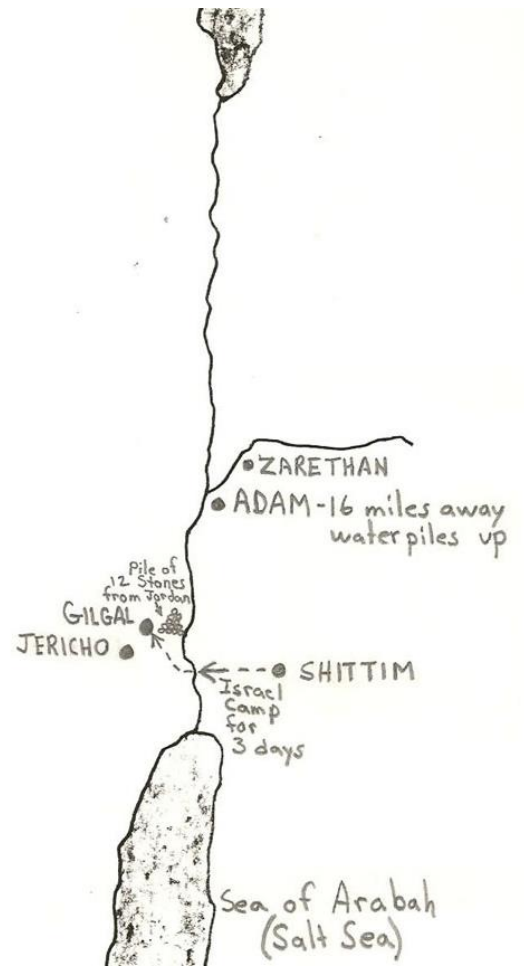
- Crossing the Jordan was both:
 - a ceremonial procession similar the religious processions of that time
 - a military procession that resembled a military march of Egypt and other military powers
- The formation was similar to the recorded Hittite instructions that require the king be surrounded by his army as they march to battle.

3:1 –

- At Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:10-15) Israel consecrated themselves by washing clothes, abstaining from sex

3:8 –

- Rivers:
 - Provided boundaries
 - Were considered divine in Egypt and Meopotamia
 - Gods could make rivers reverse directions or cease to supply water
 - Babylonian god Marduk maintained the flow of the rivers
- Here YHWH:
 - Violates the boundary
 - Overpowers the divine river concept
 - Is the God who stops the river
 - Overrides any of the Pagan gods control of the river



- The Jordan used to flow heavier in the ancient world before modern damning and irrigation

3:15 –

- Flood stage came after the winter rains and spring harvest
- Maximum levels of 80-100 feet wide and 3-10 feet deep. The Jordan narrows and becomes more turbulent as it moves south towards the Dead Sea
- A thicket surrounds the Jordan in this area making it challenging to reach
- The city of Adam is 17 miles north of Jericho:
 - Today it is Tell ed-Damieh on the east side of the Jordan
 - Adam was a crossing point of the Jordan near the Jabok River joining the Jordan
 - 29% of the Jordan was affected
 - The high banks and the structure of the ground caused periodic collapses of the soil and banks into the river. Damning of the Jordan River by collapsing banks has occurred in: 1267, 1906 and in 1927 when the water was blocked for 21 hours

4:1 –

- Standing stones are frequently used as memorials in the Old Testament

- There are 142 independent sites of standing stones in the Negev and Eastern Sinai. Many times they represent deities (although these are uncut stones) and others are remembrance stones.
- Joshua's stones represent the unity of the Israelite people and the power of their God fulfilling the promise of the Land given in the Abrahamic Covenant in their day.

4:13 –

- “thousand” (*'elep*) has the sense of a squad of soldiers, but not necessary 1,000 in number. This word refers to an organized squad prepared for battle.

4:19 –

- 10th day of the 1st month is the beginning of preparation for the Passover meal in Exodus 12:3
- “Gilgal” means “circle” and it is assumed the stones were placed in a circle here meaning Gilgal is the place (not a city) of the circle of stones
- This site became an open air worship center
- This site has not been located:
 - Several tells are possible locations
 - It is possible that there are no remains since it was an outdoor sanctuary

Memorial stones and a stone box that held a covenant or agreement between tribes remains set up at Gezer.
 There would have been a stone lid that covered the stone box and sealed its contents. Many years ago these stones would have been set up at a public ceremony for one of several reasons:
 1) Remember an important event as Joshua set up stones from the Jordan in Joshua 4:1-24
 2) As a sign of a treaty or covenant with a people.
 3) As images to represent the local deities they worshipped.



Gezer

