

## MEMORIALS

Text: Joshua 4:1-7

April 25, 1866, one year after the ending of the War Between the States, Miss Matt Moreton, Mrs. J. T. Fontaine, Mrs. Green T. Hill and Mrs. Augusta Murdock Sykes met in a 12-gabled house on North Fourth Street in Columbus, Mississippi and led a solemn procession to Friendship Cemetery on April 25, 1866. Columbus was a hospital town serving both the Confederate and Union casualties from the Battle of Shiloh in 1862. Friendship Cemetery was the place the dead from the war were buried. Moreton, Fontaine and Hill are credited with originating the idea of a decoration day, and their friend, Mrs. Augusta Sykes, the widow of a Confederate soldier, recognized the need to also decorate the graves of fallen Union soldiers. It was said that she set an example of healing kindness that was taken up by the people of Columbus. The Library of Congress reported that "...this act of generosity and reconciliation prompted an editorial piece, published by Horace Greeley's New York Tribune, and a poem by Francis Miles Finch, 'The Blue and the Gray,' published in the Atlantic Monthly."

Two years later Maj. Gen. John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic "established Decoration Day as a time for the nation to decorate the graves of the war dead with flowers." That date was said to be chosen as a date when many flowers would be in bloom. A portion of General Logan's General Orders No. 11, May 5, 1868 reads, "Let us, then, at the time appointed gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with the choicest flowers of spring-time; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us a sacred charge upon a nation's gratitude, the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan."

Memorial Day has become a day to remember the fallen of our armed forces in all our wars. It is a day we quote John McCrae's, "In Flanders fields the poppies blow between the crosses, row on row, that mark our place, and in the sky, the larks, still bravely singing, fly, scarce heard amid the guns below. We are the dead; short days ago we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, loved and were loved, and now we lie in Flanders fields."

It also is a day we are now encouraged to remember all who were near and dear to us. On a road trip, one of the safety rules is to frequent the rear view mirror, to see what is behind us as we travel. We mark the graves of those we want to remember. We construct monuments of our famous personages and battlefields so

that we may pay tribute and remember. God designated a place called Gilgal to place a monument of memory, a place where His people would always remember what God did with them, through them and for them. Today, let us go to the Jordan and remember:

#### I. WHEN GOD MOVES, WE MOVE.

Joshua 3:3

A. Give God space -- Joshua 3:4

B. Expect great things -- Joshua 3:5

C. Know that God does not change -- Joshua 3:7; 4:14

#### II. WHEN GOD STOPS US, WE PATIENTLY WAIT.

Joshua 3:8

A. Get close to the Lord -- Joshua 3:9a; James 4:8

B. Listen attentively -- Joshua 3:9b

#### III. WHEN GOD CHALLENGES US, WE ACCEPT.

Joshua 3:13

A. Leave our comfort zone -- Joshua 3:13-15

B. Stand strong -- Joshua 3:17

#### IV. WHEN GOD CALLS US FORWARD, LEAVE NO PATH BACK.

Joshua 4:18-20; Joshua 5:9

A. A private, perpetual life with our Lord -- Joshua 4:9

B. A public, protracted witness for our Lord -- Joshua 4:6-8; 21-24

#### CONCLUSION:

In Deuteronomy 34, we observe that Moses died just short of the Promised Land. He was allowed to climb Mount Nebo, head north on the mountain chain until he reached Mount Pisgah. And from Pisgah God allowed Moses to see Canaan, but not enter. In Numbers 20:7-13 Moses was instructed to speak to the rock, which symbolized Christ. Instead, Moses disobeyed and struck the rock twice. The result is found in Numbers 20:12: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron,

Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”

In Deuteronomy 34:6 we discover that Moses was buried without a memorial. What lesson may we learn from this?

1. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS ALL ABOUT JESUS!

Jude, verse 9

2. THERE IS VALUE IN LIFE'S UNREALIZED DREAMS, HOPES AND PURPOSES.

Deuteronomy 34:9; Joshua 1:2, 5; Joshua 3:7; I Chronicles 28:2, 3; I Kings 17:18, 19

3. WHEN LIFE IS LIVED FOR GOD'S GLORY, LIFE'S GREATEST REWARDS COME AFTER OUR EARTHLY PILGRIMAGE.

Hebrews 11:24-27; Hebrews 11:13: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

Luke 9:30

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.