

Question 5

- a) Just as God had acted to bring them out of Egypt; He had acted to bring them into Canaan. From slavery to blessing; all had been the work of God.
- b) Verse 23 also expresses the faithfulness of God in acting on behalf of His people.
- c) It also bodes well for the future! God will act again; just as He has in the past!

Question 6

- a) The story of Israel's deliverance and entry into the Promised Land is an integral part of God's plan of redemption for all mankind.
- b) Israel would play an important role as the covenant made with Abraham back in Genesis 12 continued its path to fulfilment in the coming of Christ.
- c) Indeed it was part of the very purpose of God calling them out as His chosen race (see God's words to Isaac in **Gen 26:3-5**).
- d) The chapter closes with the focus back on God's people: *"that you may fear the LORD your God forever"*.
- e) John Gill observes this concerning the stones as a reminder to the people, who: *"upon sight of them would call to mind the power and goodness of God, which would serve to keep an awe of his majesty on their mind, a due reverence of him and his greatness, and engage them to fear, serve, and worship him; who by such acts as these had abundantly showed himself to be the only true and living God, and the covenant God of them his people Israel..."*

GROUP LEADERS NOTES – STUDY 13

Question 1

- a) We have emphasised from the very beginning of this series the importance of obedience.
- b) Whilst it will not always be like this; the successful crossing of the River Jordan highlights the fact that the people were following God's instructions.

Reminder of notes from Study 6

Back in Numbers 32 under the leadership of Moses, they had taken possession of land on the east side of Jordan. It was good land with strong, walled cities and a countryside ideal for raising cattle. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh asked to stay on that side of the Jordan. God granted them this on condition that first they crossed into the Promised Land to help the rest of the tribes possess it.

- c) Back in Joshua 1:12-17 those tribes had restated their commitment to obey what Moses had said back in Numbers 32.
- d) In Numbers 26:7, 18, 34 we find that a census reveals that the 2½ tribes had 110,580 men old enough to go to war.
- e) The mention in our passage of only 40,000 going over to fight with the other tribes suggests that they sent representative armies. The rest of the men stayed on the eastern side of the Jordan to protect their homes, families, flocks and cities.
- f) This was clearly accepted as being within the boundaries of the agreement made in Numbers 32.

Question 2

- a) There is no doubt that the people had held Joshua in high esteem before the crossing of the River Jordan (see **1:16-18**).
- b) Notice that it is God who 'exalts' Joshua in the eyes of the people; not Joshua himself. It is the fulfilment of the promise made in **3:7**.
- c) It was important that the people have complete confidence in their leader. There were tough times ahead!
- d) They recognised that he was committed to God and that God was guiding him.

Question 3

- a) It was exactly 40 years since the Passover had been enacted and the people of Israel delivered from slavery in Egypt (see **Ex 12:2-3**).
- b) What God had begun, He now brought to completion.
- c) Quote: "*Yahweh has written His faithfulness across another date on our calendars! Israel had been a slave; now Israel was an heir*" (Dale Ralph Davis).

Question 4

- a) The word Gilgal means, '*The reproach has been rolled away*'.
- b) The people are now in the land of promise. God has kept His word to give the descendants the land of Canaan. They are no longer slaves or wanderers.
- c) Gilgal would become an important place for a number of reasons:
 - It was a foothold in the Promised Land and became the base from which operations were carried out against the enemy. E.g. Joshua 10 (see verses 15 and 43). The stones would be a constant reminder that God was with them and that He would give them the victory.
 - We also see that it was the place where circumcision was reintroduced; the covenant sign given to Abraham. All those who came out of Egypt had been circumcised but only Joshua and Caleb remained of that great number. None of the males born in the wilderness had undergone this special sign.
 - Gilgal was also the place where the people celebrated the Passover for the first time in Canaan (**5:10**). It therefore had special spiritual significance.