



TEACHER BOOK

YEAR 2 • BOOK 1

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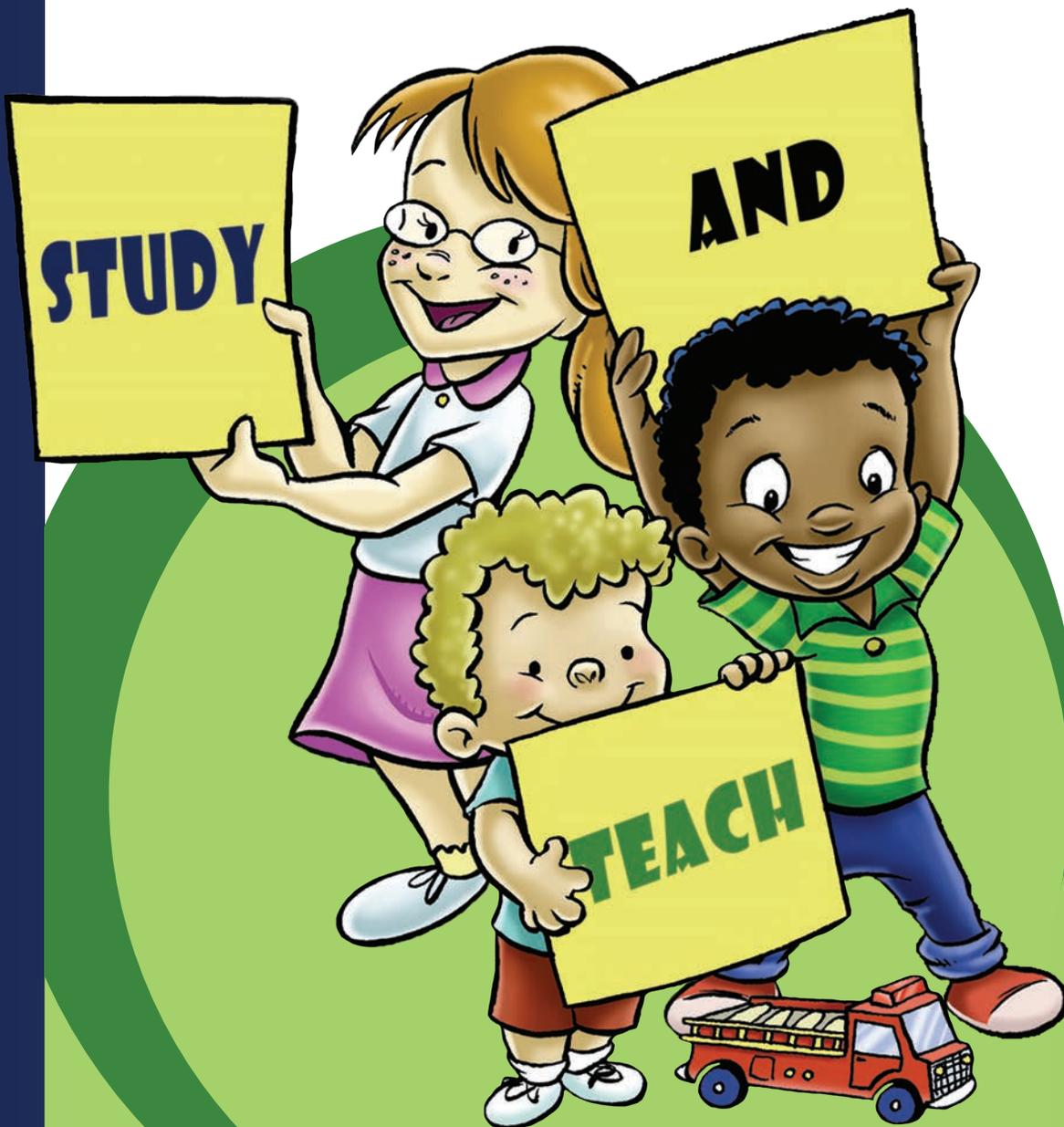
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WELCOME TO
Generations of Grace



This curriculum has been designed to deepen your own study of God's word so that you might be able to properly understand and accurately teach each lesson. It's our prayer that this curriculum would be a blessing to your ministry and home as God uses it to edify your teachers, evangelize your children, and encourage your families.



Study the Lesson

This section is designed to edify and equip teachers and to guide you through the preparation of an age appropriate Bible lesson.

- **Central Truth** – Identifies the theme and focal point of lesson.
- **Supporting Truths** – Provides appropriate objectives for mastering the central truth.
- **Spotlight on the Gospel** – Explains how each lesson connects to the gospel.
- **Lesson Commentary** – Communicates the truth of each lesson to the teacher's heart and mind.



Teach the Lesson

Use the child involvement resources to engage children from the moment they walk into the classroom until pick-up time.

- **Outlines** – Guide both teachers and children through the lesson.
- **Lesson Questions** – Foster greater interaction between teacher and child.
- **Activities** – Creative opening ideas, visual aids, and crafts to introduce, illustrate, and apply lesson.

Additional Resources

Use these additional resources to help support your lessons and to knit together the church and the home, ensuring that what is taught on Sunday matches what is learned throughout the week.

- **Coloring Book**
- **Craft Book**
- **Activity Book**
- **Student Journal**
- **Family Devotional**

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JOSHUA

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LESSON 4

God calls Joshua to be His servant

JOSHUA 1:1-9



Servants of the Lord courageously trust in God and love His Word.



“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go” (Josh 1:9).

Supporting Truths

1. Christians must be strong and courageous.
2. God gives good promises.
3. God is with His people.
4. Christians must meditate on and obey God’s Word.
5. Jesus is the great servant of the LORD who leads Christians into heaven.

Objectives

1. State that God called Joshua to be strong and courageous.
2. Explain that Joshua could be courageous by trusting in God’s promises.
3. Explain that Joshua could be courageous by trusting in God’s presence.
4. Explain that Joshua’s success depended on meditating on and obeying God’s Word.
5. Compare Jesus to Joshua.



Lesson Summary

Now that Moses was dead, Israel desperately needed a new leader. God chose Joshua, a man who had proven to be a faithful leader as Moses' assistant for nearly 40 years. But no man is capable of carrying out his God-given mission by his own strength. So God strengthened Joshua in three ways: He confirmed His promise about the land, He promised His presence with Joshua, and He commanded Joshua to meditate on God's law and obey it. By trusting God, Joshua could have courage to face any enemy who came against him.

Spotlight on the Gospel

Joshua and Jesus share the same name: "The LORD is salvation," but Jesus is actually the LORD Himself, not just a human being used by the LORD. He is the chosen servant whom the Father was pleased to crush. He thought carefully about God's law and sought to obey it, exhibiting strength and courage in the face of much greater difficulty. Jesus is the great and final leader of God's people, leading them into a heavenly land that lasts forever. As the people confidently followed Joshua to victory, we may with much greater confidence follow Jesus our Lord and Savior.

LAST WEEK



God promises to
bless or curse

Deuteronomy 28:1-68

THIS WEEK



God calls Joshua to be
His servant

Joshua 1:1-9

NEXT WEEK



God approves
Rahab's faith

Joshua 2:1-24

Lesson Commentary

Servants of the Lord courageously trust in God and love His Word.

God's covenant to Abraham included making him a great nation set apart for Himself (Gen 12:2; 17:1; 18:19; 22:17) and blessing all nations through his descendant (Gen 12:3; 22:18). But as Israel was now about to enter the land, the most obvious aspect of the covenant was the promise that Abraham's descendants would possess the land from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates (Gen 12:7; 15:18-21; Josh 1:5). Would this promise come true, especially now that Moses had died? As the book of Joshua begins, God affirms His promise by selecting a new leader, promising His presence, and instructing the new leader on how to achieve success.

God called Joshua to be His servant (1:1-2)

After 40 years of faithfully leading God's people, Moses was dead (Josh 1:1). Up to this point in Scripture, he is the only man called "the servant of the LORD." He enjoyed an incredible relationship with God, even speaking with God plainly (Num 12:1-8). He had given Israel God's law, authored the first five books of our Bibles, and by his intercession rescued Israel from utter destruction (32:9-14, 30). Now that he was dead, Israel was leaderless. But God was not dead. Great leaders die, but God remains, and He is able to raise up new leaders.

In this case, God chose Joshua to be the next leader of His people (Josh 1:2). Joshua was a proven leader already. He had been Moses' assistant since the crossing of the Red Sea nearly 40 years ago. He had led Israel's army to numerous victories, as in the battle against the Amalekites (Exod 17:8-16). He had been one of only two faithful spies (Num 14:26). Moses even changed his name from Hoshea, which means "salvation," to Joshua, which means "The LORD is salvation," a reminder to Joshua of where salvation comes from (Num 13:16). So Joshua had proven himself faithful in lesser roles before God called him to greater leadership (Matt 25:23).

Joshua was an experienced leader and was already recognized as Moses' successor (Num 27:18-23), but this was still an intimidating call. How was he to lead over 2 million people across a river into hostile land? How was he to provide spiritual leadership to a nation known for its stubborn grumbling? How was he to defeat all the inhabitants of Canaan?

God confirmed His promises to Joshua (1:3-5)

God encouraged Joshua, first, by confirming His promise about the land. What God said to Moses still held true (Josh 1:3), and Joshua could be encouraged by realizing that this land was ultimately a gift from God, not something that in the end depended on him (1:2). God would be the one to give the victory (1:5). How encouraging it must have been to hear God say, "No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life." Yet believers today are the recipients of an even greater promise. .

Although God confirmed His promise as certain, Joshua and the nation of Israel had to act in order to experience the promise. They had to cross the Jordan (Josh 1:2). They had to enter into all the land (1:3). While Joshua led Israel courageously into Canaan, the conquest was not completed in his days (13:13; 15:63; 16:10; 17:12-16; 18:3), nor has Israel ever possessed all the land that was promised (1:4). Joshua could say at the end of His life that all God's promises came true (21:45), not because the land was fully possessed, but because God had proved His faithfulness. He had fought their battles for them and given them all the land that they had been faithful to enter.

The LORD also encouraged Joshua by promising to be with Him (Josh 1:5). Not only that, but God promised to be with him just like He was with Moses. God

THINK ABOUT IT
Paul declares that no one can stand against those who are in Christ (Rom 8:31, 35). Those who are in Christ are more than conquerors (8:37). God will most assuredly bring our salvation to completion.



STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God calls Joshua to be His servant • Joshua 1:1–9



made this same promise to Moses when Moses was so afraid he tried to reject God's call (Exod 3:14–15). But God was with Moses, working miracles through him, speaking to Moses as one friend to another, and giving Moses grace to lovingly lead a people that were often hard to love. So He would also be with Joshua.



THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus is also with all believers forever (Matt 28:20). He will never leave us or forsake us, so we need not fear (Heb 13:5–6).

God commanded Joshua to be strong (1:6–9)

So God's word, His promises, becomes the foundation of Joshua's strength. This command is repeated three times here as it was also repeated three times at the end of Deuteronomy (31:6, 7, 23). Joshua, Israel, and all believers need to be reminded often to be strong and **courageous** (Matt 14:27). He was to face danger without fear, not confident in himself, but in God—in God's promises, presence, and protection.

This confidence comes from being saturated with God's word. The commands to be strong and courageous surround two commands to love and obey God's law (1:7b–8). Moses had written the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Bible—and now Joshua was to obey them carefully, without turning to the right or to the left (1:7; Deut 2:27; 17:11; 28:14). If he would do this, he would have success in his calling. So it is for all believers: God's Word is like a straight path, and those who walk in it are happy (Ps 119:1).

God emphasizes the command again, but this time He adds the command to meditate on the law day and night (1:8). **Meditation** literally is mumbling; it is mulling over God's words, thinking through them, lingering over them, praying them, and speaking them to oneself. The law is not to depart from Joshua's mouth—as if every time Joshua opens his mouth, God's law is the first thing to come out. Success in God's mission comes from

commitment to His word.

Finally, God again commanded Joshua not to fear, promising again to be with him wherever he went (Josh 1:9). In the end, it would be God who granted Joshua success. God would be with Joshua to enable him to obey His law, and God would be with Joshua to bless him with success. Joshua need not fear his own weakness, Israel's rebelliousness, nor Canaan's armies. Joshua need only trust God.

Likewise, all believers can be confident in the victory God provides through Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:57). In fact, "Jesus" is the same name as "Joshua." Joshua faithfully, yet imperfectly, led Israel into the Promised Land (Heb 4:8). But Jesus both faithfully and perfectly leads believers into their eternal home (John 14:3). He is the LORD's servant (Isa 42:1) and our great captain (2 Pet 3:18). He was strong and courageous in the face of the worst terror (Ps 22:1–21). He meditated on God's word and did not let it depart from His mouth (Matt 4:1–11). Following His lead and meditating on His word, believers can be strong and courageous servants of the LORD, fearing no man.

THINK ABOUT IT

Soaking up God's word leads to obedience, but neglecting God's word leads to disobedience (Jas 1:23–25). This command and promise applies to all believers (Ps 1:1–3).



Lesson Outline

Servants of the Lord courageously trust in God and love His Word.



AGES 3-5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. God chose Joshua to lead Israel (1:1-2).
2. God promised to be with Joshua (1:3-5).
3. God told Joshua to be strong and courageous (1:6, 9).
4. God told Joshua to read the Bible and obey it (1:7-8).



AGES 6-11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. God called Joshua to be His servant (1:1-2).
 - God's servant Moses was dead (1:1-2a).
 - God told Joshua to lead Israel into the promised land (1:2).
2. God confirmed His promises to Joshua (1:3-5).
 - God promised to give them all the land that they entered (1:3-4).
 - God promised victory (1:5a).
 - God promised always to be with Joshua (1:5b).
3. God commanded Joshua to be strong (1:6-9).
 - God commanded Joshua to be strong and very courageous (1:6-7a).
 - God commanded Joshua to love and obey God's law (1:7b-8).
 - God commanded Joshua not to be afraid (1:9).





Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. Who did God choose to lead Israel into the promised land?**
God chose Joshua.
- 2. What did God tell Joshua to be?**
“Be strong and courageous.”
- 3. What reasons did God give to help Joshua be strong and courageous?**
God promised to be with Joshua and to give Joshua success.
- 4. Joshua was supposed to meditate on and obey something. What was it?**
Joshua was supposed to meditate on God’s word and do it.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Who died just before Israel entered the promised land?**
Moses died, after leading Israel for 40 years.
- 2. What does the name Joshua mean?**
Joshua means “The LORD is salvation.”
- 3. What was Joshua’s mission?**
Joshua’s mission was to lead Israel across the Jordan, drive out the Canaanites, and take possession of the land.
- 4. What did Israel need to do in order to enjoy God’s promise about the land?**
Israel needed to enter the land—wherever they entered, God would give victory. But if they did not enter certain parts, they would not possess that land.
- 5. What was special about the way God promised to be with Joshua?**
God promised to be with Joshua just like He had been with Moses.
- 6. What does it mean to meditate on God’s Word?**
It means to “mumble” it: to think about it, talk about it to yourself, and pray it.
- 7. What would happen if Joshua obeyed God’s law?**
Joshua would have great success.
- 8. What was Joshua’s courage supposed to be like?**
His courage was not self-confidence. His courage was supposed to be in the LORD: in His promises, in His presence, and in His Word.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

FOOTPRINTS

Choose one of the ideas below to illustrate Joshua 1:3—“Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.”

Classroom Footprints:

Cut out large footprints from colorful paper and tape them around the room, on floors, and walls. Later, have each child choose a footprint to decorate with stickers or “land” decor such as grass, dirt, sticks, flowers. Then, have them glue on the Bible verse.

Hopping Path:

Place footprints around the floor, and have children hop or follow the footprints into the classroom, perhaps finding treasure or going to various tables or activities for the day.

CHOOSING THE NEXT LEADER

Play a group game that requires a leader, such as “Follow the Leader” or “Simon Says.” Have one child be the leader and then choose the next leader by performing a small ceremony.



ILLUSTRATE

RIGHT, LEFT, OR STRAIGHT AHEAD

Begin by making sure that all children know the difference between their right and left hands. Read Joshua 1:7 out loud, and discuss how it describes not turning to the right or the left. Explain that this meant that Israel was not to do anything except what God had commanded them. They were not to turn to the right or left, going their own way. Use paper or tape to create a narrow path for the children to walk on. Tell them they must follow the path and not step off it. Then have another teacher tempt them to come off the path with a treat or some other incentive. Explain that when we go our own way and choose to disobey His instructions, we turn to the right or left.

TEACHER TRANSITION

Have one teacher start the lesson time by teaching about Moses. When it's time to transition to Joshua's leadership, have a different teacher come to teach the rest of the lesson. You also could discuss what happened and how, at other times, teachers or leaders have changed.



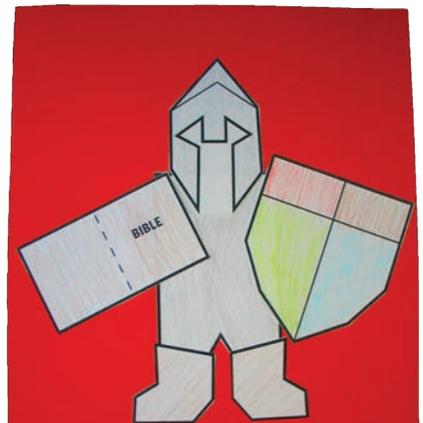
APPLY

DRESS-UP SOLDIER

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*.

Materials: Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, scissors, and glue.

Directions: Pre-cut soldier outfit pieces. Have children color the soldier outfit pieces and then glue the pieces to a sheet of cardstock. Talk about the Bible verse, and explain that God's soldier needs the Bible as his sword.



Dress-Up Soldier
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*

TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God calls Joshua to be His servant • Joshua 1:1-9



AGES 6-8



INTRODUCE

MEDAL OF HONOR DISCUSSION

Bring to class some war medals and explain what they are and why they are given. Better yet, invite a veteran to come in and talk about his medals. Talk about times when children have been strong and courageous for doing the right thing, obeying God.

COURAGEOUS

Ask the children what things make them afraid. What do they do when they are afraid? Who helps them to stop being afraid? There were lots of things that may have frightened Joshua. There were enemies without (Canaanites) and hardships within (leading the often stubborn and rebellious nation of Israel). Joshua may have even wondered at his own ability to carry out the massive job before him. But God promised to be with Him and told him how to have success. God's promises and presence removed fear and provided confidence and courage. If God is on our side, there is nothing we have to be afraid of.



ILLUSTRATE

CHEW ON IT

Have the children demonstrate how we can care for others by leading a blindfolded person around the room, taking care to protect him from tripping or injury. This will show the children how to show love to others and how they can "keep" their brother.

LIKE OUR SHADOW

God encouraged Joshua by promising to be with Him (Josh 1:5). No matter where Joshua went, He could be courageous because of the knowledge that God would always be with him. Our shadows help us to picture how God's presence will always be with us. We can never outrun or hide from our shadow and, even though there are times when we can't see our shadow, we can be certain that it is still with us.



APPLY

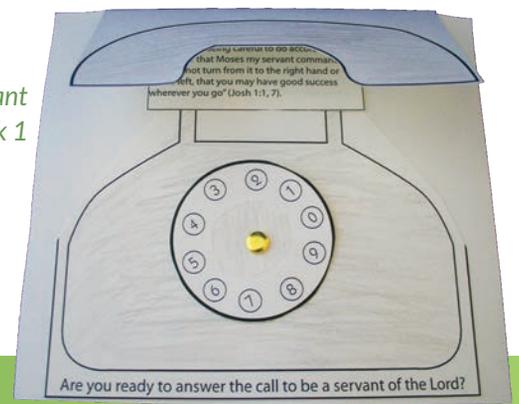
THE CALL TO BE A SERVANT

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*.

Materials: Craft sheet, scissors, glue, crayons, yarn, and brads.

Directions: Students should cut out the box with the phone base, phone dial, and verse from the second page and then glue the phone base to the back of the phone handset page. Then they should use a brad to attach the dial to the phone base. Have the students glue the verse at the top of the page. They should fold the handset down so that it rests on the phone base. Last, they should use yarn to attach the handset to the base, leaving enough room to open the flap.

The Call to Be a Servant
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

WHO'S STRONG AND COURAGEOUS?

Ask the children who they think is the strongest person and who is the most courageous person. Ask them why they think that person deserves to have that title. Explain that in today's Bible lesson, we are going to learn about a person who was "strong and courageous," but not because of his muscles or his bravery. He was courageous because of his confident trust in God's presence.

TRUE SUCCESS?

Ask the children what they need to do in order to have success in life. Tell them that in today's lesson, God tells Joshua what he must do in order to have success: "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success" (Josh. 1:8). According to this verse, what must we do in order to have success?



ILLUSTRATE

ALWAYS WITH YOU

When you were a baby, did you have something you liked to keep with you all the time? A blanket? A stuffed animal? A pacifier (binky)? Talk about a child you know that had to carry around his _____ everywhere he went. Explain that he did this because its presence helped him feel safe (even though this item did nothing to help him). But he couldn't bring it with him everywhere, and he eventually outgrew it. However, there is one person who is always with us—God. His presence gives us courage and provides us with real safety.

THE MISSION FIELD

Find out about a missionary from your church (or have one come to class). Discuss with the children how this individual has courageously served God by trusting in His promises and presence in hostile environments around the world. Explain that not all countries allow their people to practice any religion they choose and that the penalty for sharing the gospel can be death for those who do not obey their laws.



APPLY

JOSHUA'S RÉSUMÉ

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Lead the class in discovering how God had prepared Joshua to be leader of Israel by filling out the résumé worksheet. You may need to discuss the purpose of a résumé. Direct the children to look up the verses beneath each category and write notes about Joshua's life before he was called to be God's special servant to Israel.



LESSON 5

God approves Rahab's faith

JOSHUA 2:1-24



God saves those who have true faith in Him.



“And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath” (Josh 2:11).

Supporting Truths

1. God saves those who have true faith.
2. True faith is a right response to knowledge of God.
3. True faith produces actions that honor God.
4. True faith comes to God for mercy.
5. God accepts believers on the basis of their faith.

Objectives

1. List the good things that would happen to Rahab because of her faith.
2. List two truths that Rahab spoke about God, and describe her response.
3. Describe how Rahab risked her life to rescue the spies.
4. Explain Rahab's request.
5. Explain why Rahab is a hero of the Bible even though she sinned by lying.



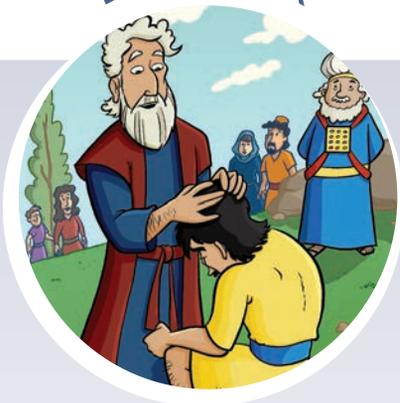
Lesson Summary

After encouraging Joshua with His words (Josh 1:2-9), God encouraged Joshua with the report brought back by the two spies sent to scout out Jericho: the hearts of the Canaanites had melted with fear (2:23-24). God was already winning the battle by taking away the courage of Joshua's enemies. So as Israel heard this book shortly after Joshua's death, the message was clear: God is trustworthy to save. He gives grace to those who come to Him (Rahab), and He gives victory over all enemies (Jericho).

Spotlight on the Gospel

By God's grace, the Messiah was one of Rahab's descendants (Matt 1:5). Because of Rahab's faith, the Messiah would one day be born and offer salvation to all. But this salvation comes only to those who have faith like Rahab's—faith that is rooted in clear knowledge of God, devoted to God alone, coming to God for mercy, producing actions that honor God, and reaching out to others to bring them to salvation as well.

LAST WEEK



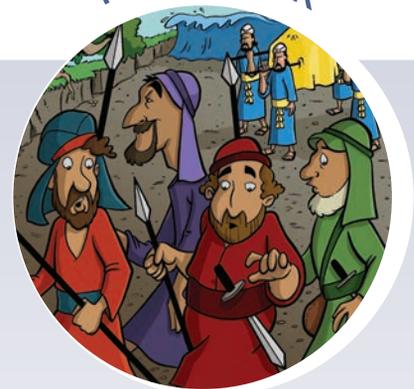
God calls Joshua to be
His servant
Joshua 1:1-9

THIS WEEK



God approves
Rahab's faith
Joshua 2:1-24

NEXT WEEK



God reveals His might
at the Jordan
Joshua 3:1-5:1

Lesson Commentary

God saves those who have true faith in Him.

The book of Joshua was written to the Israelites at about the time of Joshua's death. It was written to encourage them to stay faithful to God and finish the conquest even without Joshua's leadership. So God's words to encourage Joshua (1:1–9) were recorded to encourage Israel as well. In the same way, the story of Rahab encouraged Joshua, but it was also recorded to encourage Israel.

Rahab protected the spies (2:1–7)

Before crossing the Jordan, Joshua secretly sent two spies to scout out Jericho (Josh 2:1). He trusted God's promise of victory (1:5–6), but he also knew that God may win the victory by means of Joshua's military efforts. He knew that God's

sovereignty does not excuse man from his responsibility. Joshua wisely sent spies ahead to gain information that could make his attack more successful. He also wisely kept the mission secret, so that a bad report would not lead to rebellion as it did at Kadesh-Barnea (Num 13–14).

The two spies traveled to Jericho and chose to stay with Rahab, a sinful woman (Josh 2:2). The spies were not being sinful. They were being smart, because staying at her house wouldn't attract a lot of attention, allowing them to avoid detection. From her busy home they would also have been able to gather valuable information, and since it was on the wall, they could flee the city quickly if needed.

Unfortunately, they were detected and the king of Jericho was informed (2:3). The lives of the spies were in the hands of an immoral Canaanite woman. Fortunately, when the king's soldiers arrived, she hid the spies and lied to protect them (2:4–7). She put her own life on the line, committing treason against her

own king for the sake of total strangers. Why would she do this? And was it ok for her to lie?

Rahab's actions were motivated by her faith (2:8–16)

Rahab explained her reason for taking the side of the Israelites. She had heard of God's mighty deeds. She knew that God had given Israel the land (2:9). When He led them across the Red Sea, God had made Israel His own people (2:10). When He defeated Sihon and Og, two kings on the east side of the Jordan (2:10), He proved that He would fight for Israel and defeat Israel's enemies. All Canaan had heard, and their hearts melted (2:11), just as predicted when Israel crossed the Red Sea (Exod 15:15–16). Although there may have been other Canaanites who responded in faith, it seems that this was not the normal response.

Rahab's response reveals the character of biblical **faith**, which is trust in God. First, biblical faith is not blind faith. Rather, true faith is a right response to the facts God has made known about Himself (Isa 41:18–20). Second, biblical faith includes the fear of God, trembling in awe before His might (Josh 2:9). Third, biblical faith is trust in the LORD alone as God (2:12; Deut 4:39; 6:4). True faith is not half-hearted. It does not leave room for two masters (Matt 6:24). Fourth, biblical faith does not stop with recognizing God's supremacy—it presses on until it rests upon God's mercy (2:12). True faith trembles before the power and wrath of God, but instead of running away from God it runs toward God seeking refuge. Fifth, true faith cares for others (2:13). Love for God cannot be separated from love for one's neighbor (Mark 12:30–31). Sixth, true faith takes action, even at great risk—in Rahab's case, she hid the spies and enabled their escape (2:14–16; Jas 2:25–26).

So what about her lie? The story never comments on whether the lie was good or bad, because the point of the story is Rahab's faith. The New Testament praises



THINK ABOUT IT

This story encourages courageous faith because Rahab shows what true faith looks like and confirms that God is worth trusting

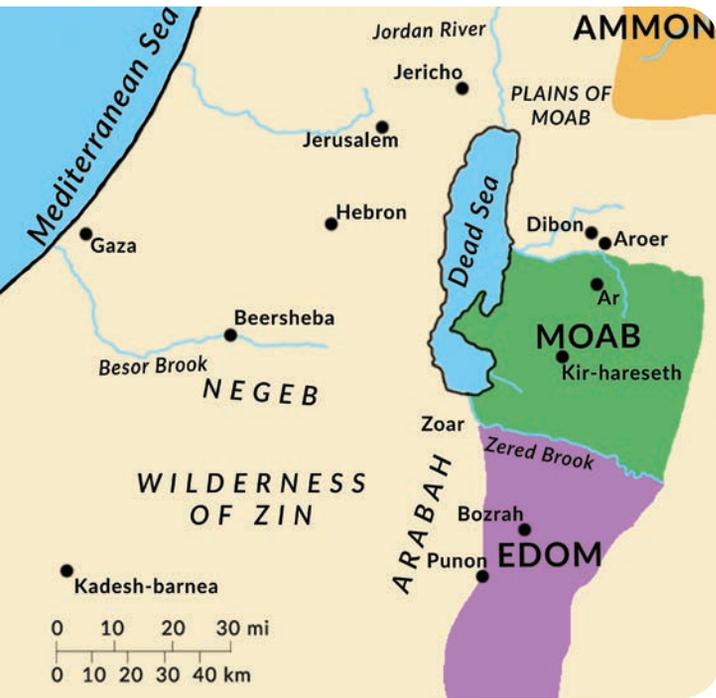


THINK ABOUT IT

Faith is a trust in God that is expressed through: (1) a confident assurance of things hoped for; and (2) a conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1).

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God approves Rahab's faith • Joshua 2:1–24



her for her faith, not for her lie (Heb 11:31, James 2:25).

Rahab was promised safety (2:14, 17–22)

Because of her faith, Rahab experienced God's grace. She would escape death, along with any family member who would stay inside her house (Josh 2:17–20). Again, she proved her faith by her actions when she did as the spies said and tied a scarlet thread to her window (2:21).



THINK ABOUT IT

Lying is wrong (Prov 12:22; 1 John 2:21), but rather than focusing on her lie, we ought to be astonished by her faith—and be thankful that God evaluates us according to our faith, not our perfection (Rom 4:5).

Rahab's salvation is a testimony to God's grace. She was a Gentile and a sinful woman, but from the beginning, the Abrahamic covenant was intended to bless all nations (Gen 12:3). Jesus would later make this same point with the Samaritan woman. Like Rahab, the Samaritan was unclean—a non-Jew and an immoral

woman. But like Rahab, the Samaritan woman would believe and bring many others to salvation with her (John 4:7, 29, 42). God's grace is especially amazing in Rahab's life considering who her descendants included: the great king David, and ultimately the Messiah (Matt 1:5).

Rahab's testimony encouraged Joshua (2:22–24)

The story ends where it began, with Joshua talking to the spies. Rahab had given them good advice, allowing them to return safely (Josh 2:22–23). So they brought Joshua the encouraging news from Rahab that the hearts of the Canaanites had melted with fear (2:23–24). By causing the Canaanites to despair, God was already winning the battle. God's word is enough to confirm our faith, but God knows human weakness. He gave Joshua additional evidence to help him feel sure of God's promises.

So as Israel read this book shortly after Joshua's death, the message was clear. God is trustworthy to save. He gives grace to those who come to Him, and He gives victory over all enemies. Therefore they ought to respond in faith as Rahab did—even if it meant risking their lives. Will you respond with faith like Rahab? We have seen an even greater display of God's power than the crossing of the Red Sea or the defeat of Og and Sihon. We have God's word, the Bible, which is more complete, more permanent, and more authoritative than anyone's experience. In this word we have heard of Christ's power to conquer sin, Satan, and death (Col 1:13; 2:15). How will you respond to this revelation?

Lesson Outline

God saves those who have true faith in Him.



AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Rahab protected the spies (2:1–7).
2. Rahab believed that God is the true God (2:8–13).
3. Rahab showed her faith by rescuing the spies (2:14–16, 21).
4. Rahab and her family were saved because of her faith (2:14, 17–22).



AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Rahab protected the spies (2:1–7).**
 - Joshua secretly sent two spies (2:1).
 - The two spies cleverly chose to stay at a harlot's house (2:2).
 - Rahab the harlot deceitfully protected the spies (2:3–7).
2. **Rahab's actions were motivated by her faith (2:8–16).**
 - Rahab feared God because of God's powerful deeds (2:8–10).
 - Rahab believed that the LORD alone is God (2:11).
 - Rahab entrusted herself to the LORD's mercy (2:12).
 - Rahab cared about her family, not just herself (2:13).
 - Rahab showed her faith by helping the spies escape (2:14–16).
3. **Rahab was promised safety (2:14, 17–22).**
 - The spies promised to save her if she saved them (2:14).
 - The spies promised to save her if she tied a scarlet thread to her window (2:17–18).
 - The spies promised to save her family if they stayed in Rahab's house (2:18–20).
 - Rahab showed her faith by tying the scarlet thread in her window (2:21).
4. **Rahab's testimony encouraged Joshua (2:22–24).**
 - The spies followed Rahab's advice and returned to Joshua (2:22–23).
 - Rahab's story showed that God had already defeated the heart of the enemy (2:23–24).





Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3-5 Lesson Questions

- 1. Who did Joshua send to Jericho?**
Joshua sent two spies.
- 2. Who rescued the spies?**
Rahab rescued the spies.
- 3. Why did Rahab rescue the spies?**
Because she believed in the God of Israel.
- 4. What would happen to Rahab because of her faith?**
She would be saved along with all her family.



Ages 6-11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Why did Joshua send out two spies?**
The spies were sent to gather information about Jericho in order to know the best way to defeat it.
- 2. Did the spies' mission stay secret?**
No. The king of Jericho sent men to find them.
- 3. What did Rahab do to protect them?**
First, Rahab hid the spies and lied to the soldiers to protect the spies. Second, she let them escape by a rope through her window. Third, she gave them advice on how to stay hidden and return to Joshua.
- 4. Why did Rahab believe in the God of Israel?**
She had heard of the things God had done for Israel, like the crossing of the Red Sea and their victory over the two kings, Sihon and Og.
- 5. How did Rahab and the Canaanites react to the news of God's mighty deeds?**
Their hearts melted and they trembled with fear.
- 6. Instead of trying to fight against God, what did Rahab do?**
Rahab worshiped God as the true God and came to Him for salvation.
- 7. What was the result of Rahab's faith?**
Rahab and all her family were saved, and Rahab became the ancestor of Jesus the Messiah.
- 8. How did the news from Rahab encourage Joshua?**
Joshua saw that God was already winning the victory. He had already won the battle inside the hearts of the Canaanites.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

SPY GAMES

I Spy

Play a game of “I Spy” with the children.

Hide the Spy

Have the children sit in a circle and close their eyes. Pull one child from the group, and have him hide somewhere in the classroom. Have the rest of the children open their eyes and find the missing child. In today's lesson, they will learn about two spies who had to hide from soldiers.

SPYING OUT THE CLASSROOM, PART 1

Hide objects around the classroom to give clues about this week's passage (e.g. Number 2 (2:1, 23), cityscape of Jericho (2:1), house with roof made from tissue box (2:1), king's crown (2:2), gate (2:5), stalks of flax (2:6), picture of river (2:7), heart (2:9, 11, 24), rope (2:15), window (2:15, 18), picture of a mountain (2:16, 22), number 3 (2:16, 22), scarlet cord (2:18, 21)). As children enter class, direct them to search for the clues. Ask the “child spies” who found clues to present their findings to the class. Lead the class in a discussion of what the day's lesson might be about, based on what these spies discovered. Tell the children to listen carefully for the clues they found to be mentioned in the story.



ILLUSTRATE

SPYING OUT THE CLASSROOM, PART 2

Use the “clues” the children found in the first part of this activity as illustrations while you teach the lesson (the king's crown, gate, Stalks of flax, picture of river, heart, etc.).

SKIT

Have the children act out a skit of Rahab hiding the spies. Choose one girl to be Rahab, two boys to be the spies, and a handful of children to be the soldiers.



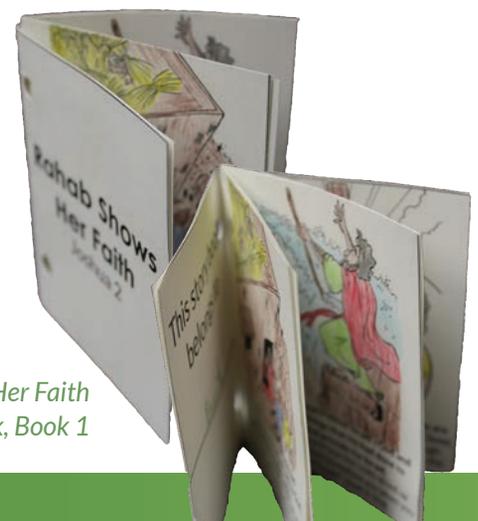
APPLY

RAHAB SHOWS HER FAITH

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheets, stapler, crayons, and scissors or cutting board.

Directions: Before class, make double-sided copies of the two craft pages (so that they are both on one page). For younger students, cut the page in half along the dotted line beforehand. Older students may cut it out for themselves. Then they can put the pages together to create a book, and color and decorate it. After the craft is complete, walk through each page with the students.



Rahab Shows Her Faith
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1

TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God approves Rahab's faith • Joshua 2:1–24



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

FAITH

What are some things that we believe but cannot see? Examples might be that there is air all around us, that gravity is real, that a chair will hold us up, or that God exists. What do we call it when we believe in something we cannot see? Faith. In Hebrews 11, Rahab was commended for her faith for hiding the spies. She had not seen God or His works directly, but she knew about Him and trusted Him in faith.

GOOD NEWS

Have you ever received good news? Maybe you have heard that someone important to you was coming to visit. Or maybe you learned that you would be receiving a special gift. Discuss with the children various kinds of news that would make them excited. Explain that Israel received some great news; they heard that the people of Jericho greatly feared them because of what the Lord had done on their behalf in the past (Josh 2:8–11).



ILLUSTRATE

MELTING WITH FEAR

The spies returned with Rahab's encouraging report: the hearts of the Canaanites had melted with fear (Josh 2:23–24). To illustrate this, use a blow dryer to melt ice cubes in a glass bowl. Explain that this report would have been very encouraging to Joshua and the Israelites because it demonstrated that God had already begun to defeat their enemy.

ESCAPE PLAN

Make a window from black construction paper. Attach it to the wall or a bulletin board. Hang a red cord from the window when you talk about what Rahab's escape plan. Do you know what to do in an emergency? Have you talked with your parents about what to do in case of a fire? Show the children building plans of escape routes or participate in a fire drill as a class. Maybe the children participate in fire drills at school. Talk about the plan the spies had for Rahab when Israel would conquer the city. Since we know that God "wins," what plans do we have for the day when we will stand before our great God? (salvation).



APPLY

RAHAB HIDES THE SPIES

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*.

Materials: Craft sheet, tan construction paper, brown paper, crayons, and tape.

Directions: Color and cut out pictures from craft sheet. Form a cube shape building from brown paper and tape it to the tan construction paper. Form a fence for the roof from the brown paper and tape on top of the cube. Place figures in specified locations, as shown below.

Rahab Shows Her Faith
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

A REPUTATION

A reputation is an important thing, and it can stay with someone for a long time. Ask the children what kind of reputation they have. Are they known for being loving, kind, smart, etc.? Talk about God's reputation. During the time of our lesson today, God was known for being with His people and taking care of them. The people of Jericho had melted with fear because of what they had heard about God and what He had done for His people in the past.

TREASON

Discuss with the children what treason is. Treason is acting to overthrow your government or showing allegiance to a government other than your own. In today's lesson, children will learn about Rahab, who committed treason against her city, Jericho. Ask the children what the consequence for treason is. Our government looks at treason as even more serious than murder. It is very likely that if Rahab had been discovered, she would have been killed for protecting the spies. However, because she feared God, Rahab was willing to risk severe punishment in order to serve the God of the Israelites.



ILLUSTRATE

FAITH IN ACTION

Discuss Joshua's faith in God and how Joshua's use of the spies was not a lack of faith, but also not presuming on the Lord. Talk to the children about situations in life that require both faith and hard work (promotions at work, becoming class president, being a good athlete, etc.). Talk about how presuming on the Lord is not wise and the fact that true faith involves our interaction with God.



APPLY

MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES

Talk to the children about the choice Rahab made and the type of faith it required. She knew that she could possibly lose her life if she was found out, but she also knew that Jehovah, the God of the Israelites, would protect her. Have the children look at times in their lives when saying that they are Christians or evangelizing others could come with some type of consequence (not using bad words, not watching television shows or movies that everyone else is watching because it does not honor God, standing up for what you know to be true even though your friends don't agree with you, etc.).



LESSON 6

God reveals His might at the Jordan

JOSHUA 3:1-5:1



God reminds us He is powerful and able to keep His promises.



“So that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever” (Josh 4:24).

Supporting Truths

1. God is powerful.
2. God uses His power to help His people.
3. God’s power should cause us to fear Him.
4. We must remember God’s power.
5. Godly leaders obey God’s instructions.

Objectives

1. Describe how God stopped the Jordan River.
2. Explain how hard it would have been for Israel to cross the Jordan on their own.
3. Recite the key verse (Josh 4:24).
4. Describe the memorial and its purpose.
5. Describe Joshua’s obedience.



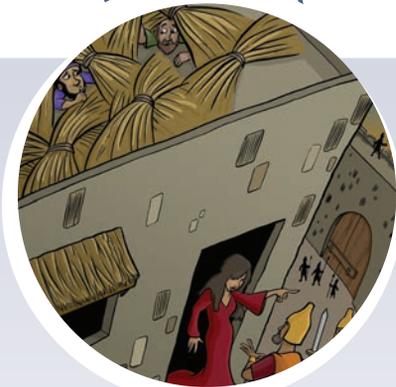
Lesson Summary

God could have provided a normal crossing of the Jordan, but He chose to lead Israel across the tangled flood plain during the middle of flood season so that they could clearly see God's power at work. By damming up the Jordan and bringing His people across, God also struck fear into the hearts of the Canaanites. After the crossing, Israel followed God's instructions and built a memorial to remember His mighty power.

Spotlight on the Gospel

The God who brought the people across the Red Sea is the same God who led them across the Jordan River. We can trust the gospel because God keeps His promises. Just as God displayed great power when He led Israel into their promised land, so Christ displays great power when He leads believers into the kingdom of God (Col 1:13). In response, Christians, like the Israelites, should remember Christ's matchless power, and thus they should fear Him and obey Him.

LAST WEEK



God approves
Rahab's faith
Joshua 2:1–24

THIS WEEK



God reveals His might
at the Jordan
Joshua 3:1–5:1

NEXT WEEK



God gives Jericho
to Israel
Joshua 5:13–6:27

Lesson Commentary

God reminds us He is powerful and able to keep His promises.

God had called Joshua to be Israel's new leader and provided His promises, presence, and law as the foundation for Joshua's leadership (Josh 1:1–9). Then by the words and example of Rahab, God had strengthened Joshua to lead with courageous faith (Josh 2). Now, the time had come to cross the Jordan River and enter the land. God chose to make this crossing a miracle for all Israel to see and remember forever.

This story utilizes lots of repetition. However, there is purpose in the way the story is told. The repetition emphasizes the role of the ark and the importance of the memorial. The ark, a symbol of God's presence, was evidence that God would accompany His people into the land. The memorial, a testament to God's power, would instruct future generations to fear Israel's great God. Also, the story jumps back and forth between various characters involved—God, Joshua, the priests, the 12 men, and the whole nation—adding more of the story each time. Together, it paints a picture of a spectacular miracle designed to cause Israel to fear the LORD and trust in His *omnipotence*, that is, His *power over all things*.

God prepared Israel to learn from the miracle at the Jordan River (3:1–13)

Before performing the miracle of the Jordan, God made sure that Israel would have the right perspective. The ark of the covenant was to lead the way (3:3). But the people were to follow at a distance. This was appropriate in light of God's holiness (Exod 19:10–25). But the main purpose for the distance in this case was so that the people could see the way (Josh 3:4). God wanted them to have a good view of what He was about to do. Also, as at Mt Sinai (Exod 19:10–15), the people were to consecrate themselves, so that they would be ready to see the great wonder God was about to do (Josh 3:5). This is an important principle: if we are to see God's hand at work in our lives, we must be prepared to see it.

One of God's purposes in displaying His power at the

Jordan was to confirm Joshua's leadership (3:7). When the people saw God working through Joshua as He had worked through Moses, they had

confidence in Joshua's leadership (4:14). This confidence would be crucial in the battles to come. Also, when Joshua gained that respect, he knew it was not because of himself, but because God was with him.

A second reason God displayed His power at the Jordan was so that Israel would know that the "living God" was present with them (3:10). If He could defeat the raging river, He could also defeat their enemies in the land. Like the parting of the Red Sea, drying up the Jordan was proof that God was not like the local idols (3:13; Exod 15:8; Ps 78:13). He was "Lord of all the earth" (Josh 3:11; Ps 24:1–2). The God who had brought them safely out of Egypt was the same God who would lead them safely across the Jordan. This extraordinary display of God's power would fortify God's people as they crossed the Jordan and began to wage war with the many nations that inhabited the land.

God miraculously stopped the Jordan River (3:14–17; 4:10–18)

The plan was now put in motion. The priests approached the river until their feet touched the edge of the water (Josh 3:14–15). Just then, as we anticipate what will happen, a detail interrupts the story: it was harvest time, the time when the Jordan floods its banks (3:15).

Normally the Jordan River is about 90 to 100 feet wide and 3 to 10 feet deep, but during the flood stage it can be a mile wide and flowing swiftly. In addition, the flood zone of the Jordan was overgrown with a dense thicket that was difficult to travel through. While this was not impossible for a couple warriors like the spies to cross, a nation of people—men, women, children, animals, and possessions—would have had a very difficult time crossing at such a place during the flood season.

So it was all the more remarkable when, at exactly the moment the priests' feet met the edge of the

THINK ABOUT IT

If we are to worship God, we must come to Him prepared to worship.



STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON



God reveals His might at the Jordan • Joshua 3:1–5:1



THINK ABOUT IT
Why interrupt the story for this detail? To highlight the incredible nature of the miracle God was about to perform.

flooded river, the river was held back in a heap near the town of Adam, about 15 miles to the north (3:16). By piling up the water in a heap and allowing Israel to cross on dry ground, God was intending to recall the miracle of the Red Sea

(Exod 14:16; 15:8). As soon as the priests came out of the riverbed, the Jordan rushed back and overflowed its banks as before (Josh 4:14–18).

God instructed Israel to remember the lessons from the Jordan River (4:1–9, 19–24; 5:1)

Before the story of the crossing ends, it seems like it is interrupted again, this time by a long description of 12 men, one from each tribe, gathering 12 stones from the place in the Jordan where the priests were standing (4:1–9). But this description is placed here to give it central importance. God’s display of power at the Jordan was not just a way to get Israel across the river; it was to be remembered by Israel for all generations as an example of what God can do for His people (4:6–7).

brought up again in the conclusion of the story, highlighting the importance of remembering what God had done. The Israelites who had crossed the Jordan did not experience the crossing of the Red Sea; or if they did, it was just a faint childhood memory. Now they had their own experience of God’s great power (Josh 4:23), and by building a memorial in the land they would live in, their descendants for generations to come could return to the memorial and hear of this great demonstration of God’s miraculous power (4:19–22).

As Israel remembered the powerful way God brought them into their inheritance, they were to respond by fearing the LORD—respecting, worshiping, and standing in awe of God (4:24). In the same way, Christians are to fear God when they remember the great power of God in redeeming them from sin and welcoming them into God’s kingdom (Col 1:13).

God has freed Christians from Satan’s kingdom, “the domain of darkness,” and transferred them to “the kingdom of his beloved Son.” He has accomplished this through Jesus Christ, who has freed Christians from slavery to sin through His payment for sin on the cross.

THINK ABOUT IT
Israel’s memorial reminds us that God is still faithful to save those who trust in Him.

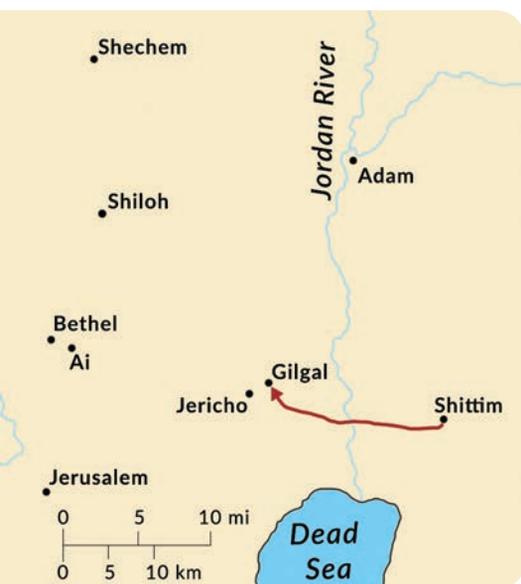


Joshua’s obedience is carefully recorded (4:8–9), showing that obedience to God’s word is essential for spiritual leadership (1 Cor 4:1–2). He actually built two memorials; one in the river and one at their camp after crossing.

The building of the memorial is

God achieved one final purpose by bringing Israel across the Jordan on dry ground. He caused the Canaanites to lose their courage (Josh 5:1). Even a large, well-equipped army cannot fight well if they do not think they can win. As Rahab had reported earlier (2:9), God was already winning the battle in the hearts of the Canaanite warriors.

This should give all believers courage. When we face foes, whether physical or spiritual, who tempt us or oppose our desire to carry out God’s will, we need not fear (Rom 8:38–39). We need not despair or think that we will fail. If God is for us, who can be against us (Rom 8:31)? Nothing—not even our own flesh and weakness—can separate us from God’s powerful love.



Lesson Outline

God reminds us He is powerful and able to keep His promises.



AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. God wanted to show Israel His great power (3:1–13).
2. God stopped the Jordan River (3:14–17; 4:10–18).
3. God wanted Israel to remember His power forever (4:1–9, 19–24).
4. Israel's enemies were afraid of God's power (5:1).



AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. God prepared Israel to learn important lessons at the Jordan River (3:1–13).
 - God prepared Israel to see His work (3:1–6).
 - God prepared Joshua to see how God would strengthen his leadership (3:7–9; 4:14).
 - God prepared Israel to see proof of God's power (3:10–13).
2. God miraculously stopped the Jordan River (3:14–17; 4:10–18).
 - The priests came to the river and their feet touched the edge (3:14–15).
 - It was the most difficult time to cross the river (3:15).
 - The waters rose up in one heap (3:16).
 - The priests stood in the middle on dry ground (3:17).
 - The whole nation of Israel crossed over (3:17; 4:10–13).
 - As soon as the priests came out of the river, it overflowed again (4:14–18).
3. God instructed Israel to remember the lessons from the Jordan River (4:1–9, 19–24; 5:1).
 - God told Joshua to build a memorial out of 12 stones from the Jordan (4:1–5).
 - The memorial was to be a reminder of how God dried up the Jordan (4:6–7).
 - Joshua obeyed and built the memorial (4:8–9, 19–22).
 - The memorial reminded Israel to fear the LORD because He is mighty (4:23–24).
 - The Canaanites were afraid when they heard of the crossing (5:1).





Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. Who went into the Jordan River first?**
The priests, carrying the ark of the covenant.
- 2. What happened when the priests' feet touched the edge of the river?**
The river stood up in a heap near Adam.
- 3. What did the people do after they crossed the river?**
They built a memorial out of 12 stones.
- 4. What were the people supposed to remember?**
God's great power.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did the priests carry in front of all the people?**
The priests carried the ark of the covenant, which represented God's presence.
- 2. What did God want Israel to see?**
He wanted them to see that the God of heaven and earth was with them.
- 3. What did God plan to do for Joshua?**
God planned to give Joshua the trust and respect of the people.
- 4. What was unusual about the Jordan River at this time of year?**
It was harvest time, which was the time when the Jordan River flooded its banks.
- 5. As Israel was crossing the river, what did they take from the middle of the river?**
Twelve men (one from each tribe) took twelve stones to build a memorial.
- 6. Did Joshua obey God's instructions?**
Yes. He built not just one memorial, but two.
- 7. What happened as soon as the priests came out of the river?**
As soon as they stepped out of the river, the water returned and flooded the banks as before.
- 8. What did God's power cause Israel and the Canaanites to think?**
It caused Israel to fear Him, and it caused the Canaanites to lose their confidence.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

MEMORIALS

Bring in birthday related items and show them to the class (a wrapped present, candles, party favors, etc.). Explain that on your birthday each year, you probably have a party with a birthday cake and candles in memory of the day of your birth. This celebration is a “memorial”. A memorial reminds people of an important event, person, or belief. In our lesson today, Israel will build a memorial remembering God bringing them through the Jordan River to the promised land.

CROSS OVER

Near the entrance to the classroom, make a river for the children to cross as they come to class. You can make the river using long strips of blue cellophane or plastic wrap and the river banks by using brown wrapping paper or wadded up paper bags. Tell the children that in today's lesson, they will learn how the Israelites crossed the Jordan River to enter the promised land. During the lesson, refer to the children's crossing. Did they jump over or walk across? God had a special way for the Israelites to cross that would demonstrate His power.



ILLUSTRATE

RIVER SCENE

Materials: brown paper bags, newspaper, materials for river (see below), cardboard box, broom handles or wrapping-paper tubes, paint, cardboard, tape or glue.

Directions: Act out the crossing of the Jordan River with the class. To prepare, build an ark using a cardboard box and two long wrapping-paper tubes or broom handles. This can be painted. Turning brown grocery bags inside out and stuffing crushed newspaper inside can create the rocks for the memorial. The ends can be closed with staples. The Jordan River can be made using blue painted cardboard, plastic wrap, crepe paper, or a variety of other materials.

REMEMBERING PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Bring a trophy or medal to class and explain why it was awarded to you. Explain that this trophy is a “memorial” or something to help us remember what happened in the past. Tell the class that God instructed the Israelites to make two memorials out of stones to help them remember His incredible power in allowing them to cross the Jordan River on dry ground.



APPLY

BUILDING A MEMORIAL

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, construction paper, crayons, and glue.

Directions: Pre-cut pictures from craft sheet. Have students color and glue the pictures to a piece of construction paper. Assist them in using the individual stones to build an altar. Talk to them about the purpose of a memorial.

Building a Memorial
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1



*For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, so that

TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God reveals His might at the Jordan • Joshua 3:1–5:1



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

CAN YOU DO THAT?

Ask the children to name some things that people can't do. But God can do anything. Discuss some of the mighty acts that God has done in the past (creation, the flood, the exodus, parting the Red Sea, and Jesus' resurrection). In today's lesson, we are going to learn about another one of God's mighty acts: the crossing of the Jordan River on dry ground. Finally, ask the children what should be their response to God's might.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Ask the children to name some things that they are afraid of. What makes them afraid of these things? Fear can make us too scared to go near something or touch it. But fear also can help us treat things with the proper respect (for example, not playing with fire). Do you know that God wants us to fear Him? God does not want us to run away from Him and cry, but He wants us to remember His great holiness and power and treat Him with proper respect when we come to Him.



ILLUSTRATE

MEMORIAL CALL-AND-RESPONSE

God gave Israel a way to remember the amazing works that He had done for them. He told them to create a memorial out of rocks and place it on the side of the Jordan. Explain to the children that one way to remember something is with a chant, or a call-and-response. Practice this call and-response by using it in the lesson. When you say, "What are these stones?" the children should respond: "Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land!" Encourage them to repeat the chant to their parents after church.

THE DRY JORDAN

Materials: fine-grain play sand and silicone spray (you may also want some kind of disposable tray for drying sand. Any surface sprayed with silicone will be very slippery).

Directions: To illustrate what it was like when the priests with the ark stepped into the Jordan River, create your own "magic sand" by spraying fine-grain play sand with silicone spray. Pour water over the sand, and then pour off the excess water. The sand will be completely dry (be very careful not to breathe in any silicone vapors when spraying sand).



APPLY

MIGHTY BLOCK REMINDER

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*.

Materials: Craft sheet, scissors, crayons, glue, and small rocks.

Directions: Give each student a copy of the craft page to cut out. Students should fold along the dotted lines to form a small box. Use glue to keep the bottom and sides together. The top should open and close like a lid. After the boxes have dried, the students can place a small rock inside. Talk to them about the rocks that the Israelites gathered to build an altar commemorating their crossing of the Jordan River (Josh 3–4).

Mighty Block Reminder
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

MEMORIALS

In Arlington, Virginia, there is a tomb with a soldier in it whose name no one knows. This is called the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It is a memorial that reminds Americans of the soldiers who died for their country in all the past wars, but who were never identified. A memorial reminds people of an important event, person, or belief. In our lesson today, Israel will build a memorial remembering God bringing them through the Jordan River to the promised land.

DON'T FORGET!

We all forget things—our lunch for school, to make our bed or brush our teeth, our friend's birthday, our homework assignments, etc. What things do you most often forget? We never seem to forget important things such as our birthdays, the last day of school, or a promised treat! Have you ever forgotten God? Do you forget to pray or have a quiet time? Do you forget to seek forgiveness for your sins? Do you forget to thank God for His provisions and blessings? What are some ways we can remind ourselves to think of God? Remember that God never forgets you!



ILLUSTRATE

TRIP TO THE MOON

Have you ever wondered why astronauts who have traveled to the moon plant their country's flag on the moon's surface and return to earth with moon rocks? Both the flag and the rocks are memorials; they help the astronauts and their countries remember this amazing accomplishment. The two memorials in today's lesson helped the Israelites to remember God's amazing power and provision for them at the Jordan River.

A HEALTHY FEAR

Ask the children to imagine that they are alone in sub-Saharan Africa and have stumbled upon a fully grown, African male lion. The lion hasn't seen them, and they use the opportunity to take a closer look at this 500 pound killing machine. Ask the children how they would behave in this situation. Would they be carefree or afraid? Ask them how their fear would help them in this situation (maybe keep them alive!). We must also fear God because of His incredible strength and perfect holiness. However, unlike the lion, a healthy, biblical fear prepares us to safely approach Him in order to seek His mercy and His grace or to offer our heartfelt worship.



APPLY

A MEMORIAL

There are many memorials that we have all around us. In Washington, D.C., for example, there is a tall, marble monument that memorializes the first U.S. president, George Washington. In New York City, there is a monument, given to us by the French, which reminds us of our freedom. We call it the Statue of Liberty. The Lord's Supper is also a memorial. It reminds us of the substitutionary and atoning death of our Savior. Jesus did not give us a monument made of stone or metal, though. He gave us a memorial of His death in something that we do often. He gave us the memorial in eating and drinking. When He broke the bread, He asked us to remember His body, and when He drank the cup, He reminded us of the blood He shed on believers' behalf for the remission of sins (1 Cor 11:23–26). Discuss with the children other memorials that God has given to us in Scripture. How important is it that we remember Christ's death? How often should we remember what Christ did on the believer's behalf?



LESSON 7

God gives Jericho to Israel

JOSHUA 5:13-6:27



God fights for those who obey Him.



“And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor’” (Josh 6:2).

Supporting Truths

1. God fights for those who obey Him.
2. God fights for His own glory, so He must be worshiped.
3. God’s instructions must be obeyed even when they seem strange.
4. God is just in His fighting.
5. God is merciful in His fighting.

Objectives

1. Describe the way Israel defeated Jericho, especially the role of the ark.
2. Describe Joshua’s meeting with the captain of the LORD’s army.
3. List the LORD’s instructions and describe Israel’s obedience.
4. List a few reasons why the destruction of Jericho was just.
5. Explain why Rahab needed mercy and how she obtained it.



Lesson Summary

Before the attack against Jericho, the LORD met with Joshua, reminding him that Joshua's first priority was to worship the LORD as the One in charge. Then the LORD gave Joshua specific but strange instructions. Israel followed these instructions obediently, and the LORD miraculously defeated Jericho despite its strong walls and locked gates. Jericho was totally destroyed. Only Rahab, her family, and their possessions were spared. Through all of this, the LORD proved faithful to bring Israel into the land.

Spotlight on the Gospel

The battle of Jericho reveals both God's hatred of sin and His mercy towards repentant sinners. Rather than shake our fists at God, like the inhabitants of Jericho, we must be like Rahab and return to God and seek His mercy. Only then will we find safety and protection from God's great wrath against sin.

LAST WEEK



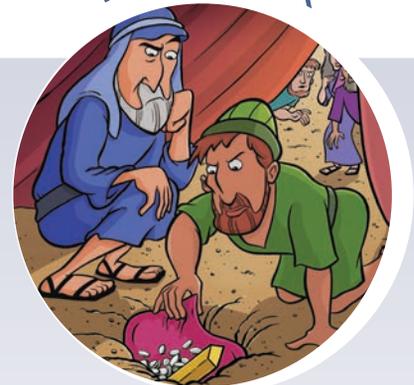
God reveals His might at
the Jordan
Joshua 3:1–5:1

THIS WEEK



God gives Jericho
to Israel
Joshua 5:13–6:27

NEXT WEEK



God judges Achan's sin
Joshua 7:1–26

Lesson Commentary

God fights for those who obey Him.

In the first five chapters of Joshua, God kept encouraging Joshua and the Israelites, while at the same time instructing them to trust Him and obey. And for the first time since leaving Egypt, the Israelite men obeyed God's command to be circumcised (Josh 5:2-7; Gen 17:9-14). They obeyed even though the procedure was painful and left the men unable to fight for a few days. They also obeyed by celebrating the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (5:10-12). After this obedience, the manna stopped, showing that they could now live off of the land God had given them (5:11-12). Now, if they would continue to trust and obey, they could finally take possession of the land, starting with Jericho.

The preparation: The LORD came to Joshua (5:13-6:5)

Encouragement and instruction came again before the battle for Jericho. The captain of the LORD's army met Joshua, a fearsome warrior who fought only for God's glory (5:13-14). While this encounter was unexpected, it was also encouraging, for it revealed that the battle was not just between the Hebrews and the Canaanites. There was a third army fighting to achieve the LORD's promises: an angelic army (1 Kgs 22:19; Ps 103:21). This mysterious warrior was actually the LORD Himself, another appearance of the second person of the trinity. This meeting is a reminder that God is not just a source of guidance and help. He is first and foremost the One we must worship (Josh 5:14-15).

But before the instructions, a problem interrupts: Jericho was tightly shut (6:1). Jericho was a small city, only about 225 meters long, 80 meters wide, and about a half mile around. But with strong walls and secure gates, it was a difficult obstacle. The normal way to

conquer such a city was a siege of several months in order to force surrender through starvation. But God,

not human might or methods, would give the city to Israel (6:2).

The battle: Joshua and Israel obeyed God's instructions (6:6-20)

After receiving a very unusual battle plan (Josh 6:3-5), obedience was essential. So Joshua took the time to repeat God's instructions (6:6-7), and the story carefully describes the people doing exactly what God told them to do (6:8-16). No matter how unusual God's instructions may have seemed, Joshua and the people obeyed, trusting in God rather than themselves. Even when Joshua gave the command to shout (6:16), the story pauses to state specific instructions and emphasize obedience again (6:17-19).

Obedience to the LORD is important. The story shows this by emphasizing the ark during the marches around Jericho. It was at the center of the column, and it is mentioned in almost every verse (6:6-14). As at the crossing of the Jordan, the ark represented God's presence with Israel. He is present with His people to enable them to carry out His instructions (Matt 28:20). He is present with His people to give them victory (1 Cor 15:57). So the story emphasizes the people's obedience and God's presence.

THINK ABOUT IT
Israel's obedience proved that they believed that the LORD was with them and would do exactly as He said (Heb 11:30).



The results: victory, judgment, salvation, and fame (6:20-27)

By His might, God accomplished all His purposes at Jericho. First, He gave Israel victory, just as He said He would (Josh 6:20-21). The destruction of Jericho's walls is even more miraculous considering the fact that Rahab's house, which was part of the wall, was still standing after the walls came down. God is a faithful and powerful God who fights for His people (Exod 15:1-3).

Second, God brought just punishment upon Jericho. Jericho was utterly destroyed, and all the inhabitants were killed (Josh 6:21). Everything was burned, except



THINK ABOUT IT
Sometimes God chooses to act in extraordinary ways so that the power is clearly seen to be from Him and not from us (2 Cor 4:7).

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives Jericho to Israel • Joshua 5:13–6:27



for the metal, which was devoted to the LORD's service (6:24). All this was by God's command (Deut 20:10–18). In addition, even the walls and gates of the city were put under a curse (6:26), which later was fulfilled (1 Kgs 16:34).

How could a good God demand the death of all the Canaanites? There is no denying that the death of so many was painful and sad. God grieves over the death of the wicked (Ezek 18:23), and so should we. But though we grieve, we must also rejoice in God's justice (Ps 35:1–9; Rev 18:20–21). Rather than let our grief cause us to doubt or reject God, it should cause us to tremble as we realize how terrible sin is (Isa 6:5), and to marvel at how merciful God is (Ps 103:8–14).

It was just for the Canaanites to be killed for four reasons. First, it was **justice** because they got *what they deserved*. The Canaanites were extremely wicked (Deut 9:5). They were infamous for their idolatry (Lev 18:24–25), for child sacrifices (Deut 12:31), and for all kinds of sexual perversion (Lev 18:3–30).

Second, their sin was also contaminating. In fact, when Israel failed to remove all the inhabitants from the land, they joined the Canaanites in their sin (Deut 20:18; Ps 106:34–42). Millions of Israelites strayed from God, suffered, died, lost the land, and failed in their testimony to the nations, all because they let the Canaanites remain in the land.

Third, it was just for the Canaanites to be killed because God was very patient. He patiently delayed judgment for 600 years (Gen 15:16). During this time the Canaanites had contact with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They had opportunity to turn to the true God, and perhaps some did, since men like Eliezer of Damascus became part of Abraham's household (Gen 15:2). But on the whole, they remained entrenched in their sin.

Fourth, because God is merciful. God forgives even the wickedest nations if they repent (Jonah 4:11; Jer 18:5–10). God provided the Canaanites a way to be saved.

They could have, like Rahab, turned to the true God and joined with Israel in all its covenant blessings. Unfortunately, the hearts of the people of Jericho remained as closed as their gates.

The third result of the battle highlights God's mercy: Rahab's salvation, along with all her family, is repeatedly emphasized (Josh 6:17, 22, 23, 25). Rahab gets as much attention as Jericho itself, showing God's concern for the one lost sheep, the despised, and the rejected (Matt 18:12–14; 15:21–28; 1 Cor 1:18–31). He loves to save in the midst of judgment (Gen 6:7–8), to bring near those who were far off (Eph 2:13). Rahab, formerly a Canaanite prostitute, was now a woman of faith living as part of the chosen nation of Israel. God even saved her family with her and made her an ancestor of the Messiah (Matt 1:5). God's mercy truly overflows.

The fourth result of the battle was that God made Joshua famous (Josh 6:27). Just as God had promised, God was with Joshua to give him great success (1:5–9). What an encouragement this is to follow in Joshua's steps—to be bold and courageous, believing in God's presence and clinging to His law (1:8).

The battle of Jericho reveals the hideousness of man's sin and the greatness of God's mercy. The consequences of sin are great, but so too is the reality of God's mercy. Out of the rubble of Jericho a single house stood securely—evidence of God's amazing mercy towards undeserving sinners. Rather than shake our fists at God, this story should cause us to flee as fast as we can from our sin and run straight into God's open arms of mercy. It should strengthen us to choose God's way, even when His way seems foolish to us.

THINK ABOUT IT
How much sin could have been avoided by fully carrying out God's command?



Lesson Outline

God fights for those who obey Him.



AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. The LORD was with Joshua at Jericho (5:13–15).
2. The LORD told Joshua to march around the city (6:1–5).
3. Joshua obeyed the LORD and the walls fell down (6:6–20).
4. The LORD destroyed Jericho, but saved Rahab (6:21–27).



AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The preparation: The LORD came to Joshua (5:13–6:5).**
 - The LORD came as the captain of His army (5:13–14).
 - The LORD required Joshua's reverent worship (5:14–15).
 - The LORD gave Joshua an unusual battle plan (6:10–13).
2. **The battle: Joshua and Israel obeyed God's instructions (6:6–20).**
 - Joshua and Israel marched around Jericho for seven days (6:6–14).
 - Joshua and Israel kept the ark in the center of their army (6:6–13).
 - Joshua and Israel marched around 7 times on the 7th day (6:14–16).
 - Joshua and Israel shouted, and the walls came down (6:17).
3. **The results: victory, judgment, salvation, and fame (6:20–27).**
 - God gave Israel victory over Jericho (6:20–21).
 - God judged Jericho with total destruction (6:17–21, 24, 26).
 - God saved Rahab and her family (6:17, 22–23, 25).
 - God made Joshua famous (6:27).





Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. Who met with Joshua?**
The captain of the LORD's army, who is also the LORD.
- 2. What did the LORD tell Joshua to do?**
Take the ark of the covenant, march around Jericho one time each day for six days, then seven times on the seventh day. Be quiet until the end, then shout.
- 3. What happened when Israel obeyed?**
God knocked down Jericho's walls.
- 4. Who did God save in Jericho?**
God saved Rahab and her family because of her faith.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Whose side was the captain of the LORD's army on?**
The LORD was not on any person's side. He is His own captain, and Joshua chose to be on His side by worshiping Him.
- 2. Who was the captain of the LORD's army?**
He was the LORD. He was the second person of the Trinity.
- 3. Why would Jericho have been difficult to defeat?**
Jericho had strong walls, and they had shut and locked their strong gates.
- 4. What was at the center of Israel's army as they marched around Jericho?**
The ark of the covenant was at the center, representing God's presence with them.
- 5. Did Israel obey?**
Yes, Joshua was very careful to give clear instructions.
- 6. What happened to Jericho?**
Jericho was completely destroyed. This shows God's justice, because the people in Jericho were very wicked.
- 7. Did anyone in Jericho survive?**
Yes. Rahab and her family were spared because of her faith.
- 8. What did God do for Joshua by giving the victory at Jericho?**
God caused Joshua to become famous.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

TUMBLING WALLS

Materials: large foam blocks or small cardboard boxes, large towel.

Directions: Build a small wall on top of the towel while the children watch; then have them sit in front of the wall and shout (or blow their rams' horn trumpets; see activity below) at it to see if they can knock it down. When they cannot, have them shout again; then quickly pull the towel out from underneath the wall. (It should tumble down.) Explain that in today's lesson, they will learn about a much larger and stronger wall that was built around the city of Jericho. God crumbled the wall flat so the Israelites could get in.

RAM'S HORN TRUMPET

Have the children make rams' horn trumpets by curling a sheet of paper lengthwise and taping it closed, making one side larger than the other. They can use the horns during the "Tumbling Walls" activity.



ILLUSTRATE

ISRAEL'S KEY

Materials: several keys on a key chain

Directions: Explain to the children that the city of Jericho was locked up tight. Nobody could get in or out of the city (Josh 6:1). Hold up one key at a time and ask them whether they think that the key could open the door. Explain that the only key that would open up Jericho for Israel would be God's power.

CONQUERING JERICHOW

Using the materials from the "Tumbling Walls" and "Rams' Horn Trumpet" activities, have the children act out the conquering of Jericho. The walls of Jericho could be made up of butcher paper, cardboard boxes, or cardboard. After children have walked around the walls of Jericho, they can blow trumpets and yell, making the walls fall.

God Destroys Jericho
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1



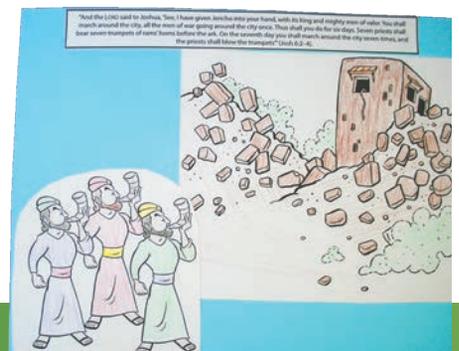
APPLY

GOD DESTROYS JERICHOW

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheets, construction paper, scissors, crayons, and glue.

Directions: Pre-cut pictures from craft sheets. Have children color pictures and glue them to a sheet of construction paper. Glue on the verse. Explain to them that God caused the buildings to crumble when his people blew the trumpets.



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives Jericho to Israel • Joshua 5:13–6:27



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

PUSH OVER

Have the children line up against a wall, and on the count of three, have them all try to push the wall over. After they realize that it is impossible for them to do this, tell them to yell the wall over. On the count of three, have the children yell at the wall to see if they can knock it down. After they try to yell over the wall, ask them whether they think it is possible for the walls to fall that way. Explain that in today's lesson, they will be learning about how God made a wall fall when Israel obeyed His surprising instructions.

SURPRISING INSTRUCTIONS

Give the children strange instructions that do not make sense to them but will result in a small blessing. For example, blindfold a child and tell him to take a certain amount of steps in various directions. If he follows the directions correctly, he will then be blessed with a prize. Israel was also blessed through their obedience. If they followed God's instructions, they would also experience God's blessing in the promised land.



ILLUSTRATE

CANDY UNDER THE BAN

Bring to class a piñata with a variety of candy inside. Tell the children they can collect the candy, but all of one particular kind must be set aside and given to the teacher. You might even talk about how good this candy is and the fact that God should have the best, but also remind the children that there is plenty of other good candy left.

OBEDIENCE—EVEN WHEN IT DOES NOT MAKE SENSE

Ask the children what kinds of people or instructions we obey (a policeman, our moms and dads, a medicine prescription, the Bible, etc.). Ask the children if there are some kinds of instructions that we can choose to obey or not obey (instructions on a recipe or directions on a map). However, we usually obey instructions because we think that the other person knows better than we do and can help us get what we want or help us avoid danger. Explain that God knows everything and always knows what is best for us. We must, therefore, always obey God's instructions, even when we think we know better. This shows that we trust God and believe He knows best.

God's Surprising Instructions
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1



APPLY

GOD'S SURPRISING INSTRUCTIONS

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheets, cardstock, scissors, glue or tape, crayons, red yarn.

Directions: Color and cut out all the pieces from craft sheet. Fold a piece of cardstock in half like a greeting card. On the front of the page, glue the square that says "God's Surprising Instructions for the Miraculous Destruction of Jericho." On the back, glue the square that says "Israel Did All That God Commanded." Glue the city to the inside of the card in a W shape. Glue the verse across the bottom. Draw figures above each description—Rear Guard, Ark of the Covenant, etc.

God's Surprising
Instructions
for the
Miraculous
Destruction
of Jericho

AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

ENCOURAGING WORDS

Throughout the first five chapters of Joshua, God encourages Israel. Discuss words that are encouraging. Ask the children how people have encouraged them in the past. Discuss how they have encouraged others. Then talk about how the words that God told Israel would have been an encouragement to them.

OBSTACLES

Discuss with the children obstacles that they have had in their lives. This could be a school subject that they had a difficult time learning, or maybe a particular problem that they encountered. Explain that Israel also had obstacles. They struggled with not trusting God, not putting Him first in their lives, etc. But when they trusted God, amazing things happened. One huge obstacle in Israel's history was Jericho's wall. This huge wall seemed like an impossible obstacle. It would have been easy to question God and His instructions in this situation. But Israel obeyed, and God did amazing things that they witnessed firsthand.



ILLUSTRATE

GOD PROVIDES

Tell a story of a missionary that shows God overcoming a seemingly impossible situation to further His purposes. One example would be George Mueller and the amazing ways God provided for the many orphaned children under his care. One incident involved a baker bringing bread on just the morning when he had nothing to give the 300 children sitting at the breakfast table waiting for food. Soon after, there was another knock at the door. A milkman's cart had broken down in front of the orphanage. Since the milk would spoil by the time the wheel was fixed, the milkman asked George if he could use some free milk. He brought in ten cans, just enough for the 300 thirsty children.

WHOSE SIDE IS GOD ON?

During the US civil war, President Abraham Lincoln met with a group of ministers for a prayer breakfast. At one point, one of the ministers said, "Mr. President, let us pray that God is on our side". Lincoln's response showed far greater insight, "No, gentlemen, let us pray that we are on God's side."



APPLY

ENCOURAGEMENT AND EXHORTATION

Ask the children what sorts of things they dislike doing (cleaning their rooms, brushing their teeth, washing dishes). Ask what sorts of things they find very difficult to do (juggle or catch a ball, for example). Sometimes we don't do things just because we don't feel like doing them, and sometimes, we don't do them because we don't think we are able to. Sometimes we lack discipline and don't want to keep trying until we learn to do something that is difficult to do at first. Israel didn't always feel like doing the hard work of taking over the promised land, and they weren't sure that they were able to. God encouraged the Israelites by promising them that they would be able to drive the Canaanites out of the land. He also exhorted them to obey. This means that He gave them firm instructions that they needed to believe His promises and act upon them. What are some exhortations and encouragements that God gives to us today?



LESSON 8

God judges Achan's sin

JOSHUA 7:1-26



God takes sin seriously.



“But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan...took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the LORD burned against the people of Israel” (Josh 7:1).

Supporting Truths

1. God’s wrath burns against sinners.
2. Loss of God’s gracious presence is deadly.
3. Sin must be dealt with in order for God’s grace to be present.
4. The consequences of sin are severe.
5. God’s wrath cannot be avoided by trying to hide sin.

Objectives

1. Describe Achan’s sin.
2. List those who died during Israel’s first attempt to conquer the city of Ai.
3. Describe how Joshua responded when God was not present to fight with Israel.
4. Describe what happened at Ai because of Achan’s sin.
5. Describe how Achan tried to hide his sin, but how God made his sin known.



Lesson Summary

By God's presence, Joshua had led Israel to victory over Jericho. Soon after, however, Israel was defeated at Ai, showing that God was no longer with Israel to fight for them. God would no longer fight for Israel because Israel had sinned. So Joshua followed God's instructions, found out that Achan was the one who sinned, and put Achan to death along with all his family and animals. Once the sin was dealt with, God turned from His wrath and fought for Israel once again.

Spotlight on the Gospel

God takes sin seriously. So much so that God sent His only Son to rescue sinners. On the cross God poured out His wrath over sin on Jesus so that all those who trust in Him will no longer experience God's righteous anger over sin. As Christians our sin still provokes God's anger, but His anger does not condemn us. Instead, His anger brings pain into our lives in order to draw us back to Him. When we repent, we enjoy His presence once again.

LAST WEEK



God gives Jericho
to Israel

Joshua 5:13-6:27

THIS WEEK



God judges Achan's sin

Joshua 7:1-26

NEXT WEEK



God is chosen by Israel

Joshua 23:1-24:29

Lesson Commentary

God takes sin seriously.

True to His word, God brought His people into the land of Canaan. At Jericho it was clear that Israel's success was a work of God (Josh 6:1–2). God's presence, represented by the ark of the covenant, was the key to victory (1:5, 9; 6:4–13). But immediately after this victory, something terrible happened: God's presence was no longer with Israel to fight for them. Instead, His anger burned against Israel—all because of one man's sin.

The LORD was not present to give victory (7:1–5)

One man sinned, but his sin affected all of Israel. Just as Rahab's faith brought safety to her entire family (Josh 6:25), so Achan's unfaithfulness brought *wrath, God's burning anger*, upon all Israel.

Achan sinned by taking things from Jericho that were set apart for destruction. This violated God's command (Deut 20:16–18) and Joshua's specific instructions (Josh 6:18–19). Joshua had warned that those who broke this command would make the camp of the Israelites accursed and bring trouble on it (Josh 6:18).

This warning was realized when Israel was defeated at Ai (7:3–4). Thirty-six Israelites were killed (7:5), and Israel suffered a potentially devastating defeat in their ongoing conquest of the promised land (7:8–9). While God fought for Israel, the hearts of the Canaanites melted in fear (2:9). But now Israel saw that God was not fighting for them, and their own hearts melted in fear (7:5).

Their failure was due to God's wrath, not poor strategy. The people who had just witnessed the extraordinary destruction of Jericho's walls now fled before a less than ordinary military force from the city of Ai (7:3–5). All this happened because of *sin, any thought, word, or action that is displeasing to God*. God's anger burned against Israel on account of their sin, and His anger would continue as long as this sin remained (7:11–12).

God takes sin seriously. He does not punish every sin immediately, but the mercy He graciously extends to guilty sinners will not continue indefinitely (Rom 2:4–5). God will judge every sinful thought (Luke 8:17; Rom 2:16), word (Matt 12:36–37), and action (Matt 16:27). And His judgment is severe: spiritual death (Rom 6:23). The unrepentant sinner will endure God's wrath for all eternity, separated from the presence of God's grace (Rev 20:14–15).

The LORD explained why He was not present (7:6–15)

Joshua was so grieved that he tore his clothes (Josh 7:6). He knew this was no small defeat. God had promised that no one could stand against him (1:5), but now that promise seemed empty. What was God doing? Why had He brought them into Canaan only to abandon them (7:7–8)? Despite his confusion, Joshua still had the right perspective: he addressed God as “Lord GOD,” which emphasizes the LORD's sovereign control over all things (7:7). He also had the right priority: he was concerned about God's glory (7:9).

Joshua shows us how to pray in times of trouble. Prayer is rooted in faith in God's sovereign control even when things don't make sense (Rom 8:28). Prayer may express sorrow and make requests, but God's glory is its greatest concern (Dan 9:16–19; Matt 6:9–13, 33).

The LORD answered Joshua's righteous prayer. He explained that Israel had “sinned,” “transgressed,” “taken,” “stolen,” “lied,” and “put” the stolen things with their own possessions (Josh 7:11). These words are piled up to show how serious the sin was. Achan had broken numerous commandments (Exod 20:3, 15, 17; Lev 19:11; Deut 20:16–18) and, through Achan, Israel was guilty of taking things set apart for destruction (Josh 7:10–11), so the LORD declared that He had set apart Israel for destruction (7:12). The LORD would no longer be with Israel to fight for them, which would surely lead to their destruction, because it is the LORD's presence that provides courage and wins the victory (1:5, 9; 3:7, 10; 4:14; 6:27; Exod 33:15–16).

THINK ABOUT IT
Joshua's main concern was not Israel's defeat, but what Israel's defeat would say about Israel's God.



STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God judges Achan's sin • Joshua 7:1–26



Mercifully, the LORD's response did not end there. He also provided the solution: get rid of the sin (Josh 7:13–15). This is always the solution to sin. In our own lives, we must quickly **repent** and **turn away from sin** (Acts 3:19), get rid of anything leading us back to sin (Matt 5:29–30), and make things right with those wronged (Matt 5:22–23).

The LORD even promised to show Joshua exactly who had sinned, and we can ask for His help to reveal our own sins too (Ps 139:23–24). No sin can be hidden from His sight (Heb 4:13). If we try to hide our sin, we will be miserable (Ps 32:3). But when we confess it, we will find great joy in God's forgiveness (Ps 32:1, 5).

The LORD restored His presence (7:16–26)

Joshua got up early in the morning, showing that he obeyed immediately (Josh 7:16). As Joshua carefully followed God's instructions, God revealed the sinner just as He had promised: it was Achan (7:16–18).

Achan knew he was caught and admitted his sin (7:19–22). He had seen things that looked good, coveted them, and had taken them, exactly as Eve had done with the forbidden fruit (Gen 3:6). So we also sin when we choose to follow our desires rather than God's word (Jas

1:14–15). But sin never gives us what it promises. If Achan had only obeyed and waited, he would have been allowed to keep the plunder from Ai (Josh 8:2). How often in our impatience do we miss out on God's good gifts?

Achan's punishment was severe: Achan, along with all his family and animals, was stoned to death, then burned (7:24–25). His remains were buried under a pile of stones (7:26), just like the body of the king of Ai would be (8:29). That pile of stones over Achan was a monument reminding Israel for years to come of God's deadly wrath against sin. But it also reminded them that the LORD's wrath did not last (7:26). With the purging of Achan's sin came the

return of God's presence in battle. God spoke to Joshua, encouraging him to return to Ai, for He had given the king, his people, his city, and his land into Joshua's hand (8:1). Joshua obeyed, and he and the people gained a great victory (8:18–29). God had once again provided for His people.

God takes sin seriously. So seriously, in fact, that He sent His own Son to pay sin's penalty. God the Father treated Jesus as if He were a sinner (even though He was not) in order that all those who trust in Him would be delivered from God's wrath on sin (2 Cor 5:21). No other sacrifice will do. The only acceptable sacrifice for sin is God's Son (Heb 10:4–14), which God freely gave while we were yet sinners (Rom 5:8).

Apart from Christ, we all are like Achan. We have all sinned, choosing what looks good to us instead of choosing to obey God's commands (Rom 3:10, 23). So we all, like Achan, deserve to die away from the presence of God's glory (Rom 6:23). But if we turn to Christ, then God's wrath is removed forever (Rom 8:1). Even though as Christians we still continue to sin, provoking God to anger (Eph 4:30), His anger does not condemn us, but rather draws us back to Him (Jas 4:5; Heb 12:7–10). So although God's anger against us may last for a moment, His favor towards us is forever (Ps 30:5). This is a warning against sin, but it is also a great comfort and motivation to run back to God when we do sin, confident that His favor towards those who believe will never end.



THINK ABOUT IT

Joshua was as eager to gain victory over sin as he had been to gain victory over Jericho (Josh 6:12).

THINK ABOUT IT
God sent His own Son to pay the penalty for sin that we could not.



Lesson Outline

God takes sin seriously.



AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. The LORD caused Israel to lose the battle at Ai (7:2–5).
2. The LORD was angry with Israel because Achan sinned (7:1, 6–15).
3. The LORD stopped being angry after Achan’s sin was handled (7:16–26).



AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. The LORD was not present to give victory (7:1–5).
 - The LORD was angry because Achan took banned things (7:1).
 - The LORD caused Israel to be defeated at Ai (7:2–5).
2. The LORD explained why He was not present (7:6–15).
 - Joshua expressed grief and confusion to the LORD (7:6–9).
 - The LORD explained that Israel had taken things set apart for destruction (7:10–11).
 - The LORD declared that Israel was set apart for destruction (7:12).
 - The LORD commanded Israel to get rid of the sin (7:13–15).
3. The LORD restored His presence (7:16–26).
 - Achan’s sin was exposed (7:16–21).
 - The things Achan stole were brought before the LORD (7:22–23).
 - Achan and his family were stoned to death (7:24–25).
 - The LORD stopped being angry against Israel (7:26).





Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3-5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What happened when Israel attacked Ai?**
Israel was defeated, and 36 Israelites were killed.
- 2. Why was Israel defeated?**
Because Israel had sinned.
- 3. Who had sinned?**
Achan sinned by stealing things from Jericho.
- 4. What did God tell Israel to do to Achan and his family?**
He told them to put them to death.



Ages 6-11 Lesson Questions

- 1. How did God respond to Achan's sin?**
His wrath burned against all Israel.
- 2. When did Joshua realize that something was wrong?**
He realized that something was wrong when Israel was defeated at Ai.
- 3. Why was Israel so afraid even though only 36 soldiers were killed?**
They realized that God was no longer with them to fight for them.
- 4. What did Joshua do when he realized God was no longer with Israel?**
He prayed. He prayed to God as the one who sovereignly rules over all. He prayed for the sake of God's glory.
- 5. According to this story, can sin be hidden from God?**
No. God knew about the sin and showed Joshua who had committed the sin.
- 6. According to this story, is it okay to let sin keep going?**
No. Sin is so deadly to our relationship with God that we must get rid of it at all costs. As Israel killed Achan and all his family, so we cannot allow sin to stay in our hearts.
- 7. Did God continue to have wrath against Israel?**
No. After the sin was dealt with, God turned from His wrath against Israel.
- 8. Does God's wrath towards us last forever?**
It does if we are not a Christian. But if we have trusted Jesus for salvation, then God's wrath towards us does not last. His wrath is like the discipline of a father who still loves his children no matter what.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

GOD KNOWS

Bring in a nice coat and some money and a blanket. Put the coat and money under the blanket. Have the children guess what is under the blanket. Ask if God knows what is under there. God does. Explain that nothing can be hidden from God. Tell the children that in the story today, we'll learn that we cannot hide our sin from God.

ONE AND ALL

Play tag or "Simon Says" with the children, and make a rule that if even one child is tagged or loses, then everyone is out. Mention how quickly the game ends with this rule. Explain that God gave Israel instructions that they were to all obey, but because of one man's sin, all the people were in trouble with God. Discuss with the children what happened to Israel at Jericho when one man sinned.



ILLUSTRATE

THE SOUNDS OF FEET

As the children are seated, lead them in making a marching sound. Then have the children make the sound of feet quickly running away in fear. Talk about what the different sounds of feet were like. Use this activity to talk about what happened to Israel when Achan disobeyed God.

HEARTS LIKE WATER (JOSH 7:5)

When Achan sinned, God no longer gave Israel the victory in battle. When the people were defeated, they doubted God, and their hearts were no longer bold as they had been. The text describes Israel's spirit by saying that their hearts became like water. You could illustrate this change by showing two kinds of hearts to children: One hard (made of plastic or some other hard material) and another made out of gelatin in the shape of a heart. Extra gelatin hearts could be brought to eat during snack time. Use the activity to discuss what happens when we are scared and how it can feel as though our hearts are like water.



APPLY

ACHAN'S SIN IS REVEALED

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*.

Materials: Craft sheet, construction paper, scissors, crayons, and glue.

Directions: Pre-cut pictures from the craft sheet. Have the students color the pictures. Glue the tent to a sheet of construction paper. Help the students to tape the tent door to the correct position, as shown below.

Achan's Sin is Revealed
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God judges Achan's sin • Joshua 7:1–26



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

HATRED OF SIN

Ask the children whether they have ever hated anything. Explain that you don't mean just disliking something intensely, but rather being so repulsed by it that you can't even be in its presence. God is perfectly holy and hates sin. He hates it perfectly and can't even be in its presence. In today's lesson, we will see that God hates sin and requires that it be punished. How much does God hate sin? He hates it so much that He commanded that a sinner and his family be killed for his disobedience in the book of Joshua.

TREASURE MAP

Make a treasure map (could use map to lead the children to some type of "treasure" in the room). First, ask the children why people hide treasure. Tell them that in today's lesson they will learn about somebody who hid treasure. Second, tell the children that there is buried treasure in today's lesson, but it was not found with a treasure map. Have them listen for how the treasure was found. Third, ask the children what types of things are found with a treasure map. Tell them which of those is the buried treasure in today's story.



ILLUSTRATE

ISRAEL'S MELTING HEARTS

Freeze water in the shape of a heart. Take out the frozen heart before the lesson, show it to the class, and review last week's lesson on Jericho. After such a great conquest, the Israelite's hearts must have been strong and full of courage. Tap on the hard ice to symbolize its strength. Read Joshua 2:11 to remind the class that the Canaanites' hearts had once melted in fear. Explain that now the hearts of Israel are going to melt and become like water. Display the heart in a dish in the front of the classroom so the children can observe it slowly melting over the course of the lesson. At the end of the lesson, there should be a puddle of water in the container. Read Joshua 7:4–5 to the class at the end of the lesson, and remind the children that there are serious consequences for sin.

SIN CONTAMINATES

Bring in a clear cup of water and dark food coloring. Put in a drop of food coloring and show how it changes the color of the whole cup of water. That is how sin is. When we sin, our sin infects the people around us.



APPLY

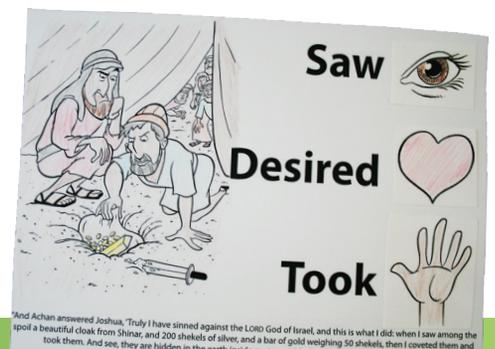
BEWARE OF COVETING

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, crayons, and glue.

Directions: Color and cut out pictures of the eye, heart, and hand. Glue them next to the words "saw," "desired," and "took." Explain that this is the process that takes place when someone covets something.

Beware of Coveting
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1



AGES 9–11



MOSTLY OBEDIENT

What does it mean to be mostly obedient? What if you asked someone to do something and they did it most of the way but didn't finish? Would they have done what you asked? What if a bridge builder built the bridge most of the way but forgot to finish it? Explain that God expects perfect obedience, not partial obedience. Although most of Israel obeyed God's commands during the siege of Jericho, one man didn't. Once the sin was found out the guilty were punished as an example to the rest of Israel. When you obey God, do you fully obey Him, or are you only "mostly obedient?"

A LITTLE LEAVEN

Before the lesson, explain how it takes only a little yeast to leaven an entire lump of dough. Illustrate the concept of what happens with yeast in bread by setting up a lump of dough and adding some yeast to it. Give enough time for the yeast to take effect. Throughout the lesson, refer back to the rising dough and the illustration of its similarities of sin. Explain that in a similar way, sin can infiltrate the life of the believer and spread to others in the church (1 Cor 5:6).



LOST

Have you ever been lost? Has there ever been a time when you thought you were with your parents, but then you looked up and they weren't there? It can be scary to realize your parents aren't with you. It is much scarier to realize that God is not with you because of sin.

SPLINTER

Ask the children if they've ever had a splinter in their finger. Then ask them what they did about it. Did they leave it under the skin to fester and become infected, or did they remove it, not matter how much it might hurt? Most should say they removed it. This is because we know that not dealing with the splinter will lead to more pain and trouble in the future. The same is true with our sin; no matter how much it hurts, we must deal with our sin as soon as we become aware of it. Only then will healing come.



COVETING

Discuss with the children the process of coveting. Read the story of Eve's temptation (Gen 3:1–6) and observe the process that she went through that led to sin. What is the difference between seeing something that you would like to have and coveting something? What are the steps that lead to coveting and sin? What are some things that you have seen that you have wanted and were tempted to sin to get? What would some logical, precautionary steps be that you could take to prevent finding yourself in the temptation in the first place?



LESSON 9

God is chosen by Israel

JOSHUA 23:1-24:29



God's people are those who make a definite choice to serve Him.



"And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh 24:15).

Supporting Truths

1. We must choose to serve God.
2. Choose to serve God because He is faithful to bless those who trust Him.
3. Choose to serve God because He fights against those who reject Him.
4. Choosing to serve God means rejecting the world.
5. Choosing to serve God means rejecting all idols.

Objectives

1. Restate Joshua's command to choose.
2. Describe all the ways God blessed Israel.
3. Describe what would happen to Israel if they rejected God.
4. Compare how the Canaanites could lead Israel astray with how people or things in your life might lead you astray.
5. Count how many times Joshua forbids idolatry, and explain what idolatry looks like today.



Lesson Summary

At the end of his life, after leading Israel into Canaan, Joshua gave two speeches to the people. In these speeches, he reminded them of God's faithfulness in the past and God's promise for the future. He urged them to respond by choosing to serve God alone. To do this, they needed to get rid of all their idols. Although that generation worshiped the LORD, the following did not, quickly abandoning the exclusive worship of their God.

Spotlight on the Gospel

As Joshua urged Israel to respond to God's grace by serving Him, so believers are to respond to the grace of Christ by serving Christ. Also, as Joshua urged Israel to reject idols, so believers are to be daily renewed in their commitment to Christ rather than conforming to the idols of this world. Though Christ has freed believers from condemnation, the believer who fails to continually uproot the idols still in his heart will fall short of God's purpose to glorify Christ with his life.

LAST WEEK



God judges Achan's sin
Joshua 7:1–26

THIS WEEK



God is chosen by Israel
Joshua 23:1–24:29

NEXT WEEK



God is rejected by Israel
Judges 1:1–3:6

Lesson Commentary

God's people are those who make a definite choice to serve Him.

Joshua was a faithful leader, successfully leading Israel into the land God promised them (Josh 1:1–9; Gen 15:18). Now at the end of his life, Joshua gave two final speeches. He urged Israel to make a clear decision to trust and serve God alone. Only in this way could they finish taking possession of the land and stay in it.

Joshua urged Israel to continue the conquest by faith in God (23:1–16)

Joshua began his first speech by reminding Israel of God's **faithfulness**: *God is so good and so powerful that He can always be trusted to do what He says*. Although there were still people to drive out of Canaan, God had been faithful to fight for Israel until the major threats were eliminated (23:1–5; Exod 23:29–30).

Based on God's past faithfulness, Joshua called Israel to be firm in their ongoing commitment to God and to His word (Josh 23:6). God's goodness, both in the past (23:9) and in the future (23:10), ought to produce a response of faith. God delivers His people

so that they will respond by serving Him (Eph 2:8–10).

His past faithfulness motivates His people to keep trusting Him (Ps 27), and God's promise to continue fighting for His people empowers them to work hard to do what is right (Phil 2:12–13).

Joshua specifies one particular sin to avoid: idolatry (Josh 23:7). The gods of the world draw people away from the one true God (Exod 20:3–6). In Canaan, gods were represented by statues, but these idols stood for the same things that are worshiped today: money, health, success, fame, sexuality, power, and violence. At the heart of every sin is idolatry, a greedy desire for something else more than God (Col 3:5; Jas

4:1–3). If Israel wanted to continue conquering the land, they needed to completely turn from idols.

This included staying separate from the Canaanites. They were not to marry them or keep company with them (Josh 23:12), or else their hearts would be stolen away from God to serve idols (23:11; Deut 6:4–6; 1 Kgs 11:3). If they loved the Canaanites instead of God, God would stop driving out the Canaanites and would drive Israel out instead (Josh 1:13). Similarly, while Christians may interact with unbelievers (1 Cor 5:9–13; Matt 28:18–20), they are not to marry them (1 Cor 7:39) or join with them in anything displeasing to God (2 Cor 6:14). They are not to desire the corrupting company of wicked men (Prov 24:1; 1 Cor 15:33), or else they will make themselves enemies of God (Jas 4:4).

So Joshua warned Israel that God's faithfulness works both ways: as God is faithful to fight for those who cling to Him, so He is faithful to fight against those who do not.

Unless Israel kept the LORD's covenant, the LORD would drive them out of the land (Josh 23:14–16).

Joshua reminded Israel of God's blessings of grace (24:1–13)

Joshua's second speech also began by looking back on God's past faithfulness. Israel's history was a constant illustration of God's **grace**, God's **unearned blessing**. Although Abraham was an idolater, God chose him, called him out of idolatry, and promised to make him a great nation (Josh 24:2–3). He defeated Egypt and set Israel free (24:5–6). He provided for all their needs for 40 years in the wilderness, despite their grumbling (24:7). He defeated the nations east of the Jordan (24:8; Num 21:21–35), and He even forced Balaam to bless Israel when Balaam tried to curse them (Josh 24:9–10; Num 22–24). He shattered Jericho's walls and defeated the large alliances of Canaanites, with such power that it was clear that victory came from Him and not

THINK ABOUT IT

God is both kind and severe (Rom 11:22). Therefore, the only way to stand secure is by faith in Him (Rom 11:20).



THINK ABOUT IT

God has broken the power of sin over a believer (Rom 6:6), but the believer must continue to wage war against his sin (Rom 8:13).

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God is chosen by Israel • Joshua 23:1–24:29



from Israel's own strength or ability (Josh 24:11–12; 6:20; 10:1–11:23). Finally, He gave Israel land, cities, and crops that they did not have to plow, build, or plant (24:13).

This is also the history of every believer. God has been so kind to us. In Christ, the believer experiences grace upon grace (John 1:16). We are saved not by any merit of our own, but purely by God's grace, so that God alone gets the glory (1 Cor 1:29). We also live out our faith not by our might but by His power (2 Cor 4:7, 15). He even cares about our daily needs (Matt 6:11). As He provided for Israel both in scarcity in the wilderness and in abundance in Canaan, so God provides for the believer in every situation (Phil 4:12–13). To Him belongs the glory (Ps 115:1).

Joshua called Israel to choose to serve God alone (24:14–29)

In response to God's grace, Joshua called Israel to obey, fear, and serve God sincerely and faithfully (Josh 24:14). The right response to grace is to surrender oneself to God (Rom 12:1–2), for God's grace binds His people to Him (1 Pet 1:14–19).

Fearing God in sincerity and truth requires getting rid of all other gods. Israel was notorious for worshiping false gods alongside the worship of the LORD, the true God. Even after the golden calf, many Israelites still carried idols with them during the 40 years of wilderness wandering (Ezek 20:7–24; Amos 5:25–26; Acts 7:43). They continued to carry them despite their rededication to God (Josh 5) and the warning of

Achan's punishment (Josh 7).

Of course, continuing to worship God along with idols is not worshiping God at all. So Joshua urged a decision: choose

whom you will serve (24:15). It is impossible to serve both God and idols (Matt 6:24).

The people confidently responded to Joshua's challenge, promising that they would not forsake the LORD to serve other gods (24:16–18). So Joshua challenged them a second time so that they would consider the magnitude of their commitment to worship God alone (24:19–20). The LORD is a *jealous* God: He will not allow His people's hearts to be drawn away. Joshua wanted Israel to count the cost (Luke 14:28), for it is deadly to claim the LORD as Lord while being ruled by something else.

The people responded to Joshua's challenge, declaring again that they would serve the LORD (Josh 24:21). So Joshua was very clear: they needed to throw away the idols that were in their midst (24:23). Joshua made a covenant with them, recorded it in the book of the law, and set up a stone as a witness against Israel if they should ever turn from the LORD (24:25–27). They did worship God, so long as Joshua and the older generation were living (24:31). But the very next generation turned right back to idols (Judges 2:11–12).

The people of God of every age are those who make a definite choice to serve Him. As Joshua urged Israel to respond to God's grace by making a decisive commitment to the LORD Yahweh alone, so Christians today are to daily renew their minds according to the image of Christ (Rom 12:1–2). In Christ, believers are no longer under condemnation, but this should result in a bitter war against sin (Rom 8:13). If we allow idols to remain in our hearts, combining the worship of Christ with anything else, we fall short of God's purpose for our lives, which is glorifying Christ.

THINK ABOUT IT

Those who claim the LORD but are not devoted to His will are rejected by Christ (Matt 7:21–23).



THINK ABOUT IT

Either God will rule a person's life, or something else will. But it cannot be both God and idols.

Lesson Outline

God's people are those who make a definite choice to serve Him.



AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. God had been faithful to defeat Israel's enemies (23:1–5; 24:1–13).
2. So Israel needed to trust that God would keep defeating their enemies (23:6–16).
3. And Israel needed to choose to serve God alone (24:14–29).



AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Joshua encouraged Israel to continue the conquest by faith in God (23:1–16).
 - God had given victory and would continue to defeat the rest of the Canaanites (23:1–5).
 - Be strong, obey, do not worship the Canaanites' gods, and you will win (23:6–10).
 - Love the LORD and not the Canaanites, or they will become a trap (23:11–13).
 - Keep the LORD's covenant or He will drive you out of Canaan (23:14–16).
2. Joshua reminded Israel of God's blessings of grace (24:1–13).
 - Unearned blessing to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (24:1–4).
 - Unearned freedom from slavery in Egypt (24:5–7).
 - Unearned victory over enemies (24:8–12).
 - Unearned land, cities, and crops (24:13–14).
3. Joshua called Israel to choose to serve God alone (24:14–29).
 - Fear God in sincerity and truth, getting rid of other gods (24:14).
 - Make a choice: you cannot worship God and other gods at the same time (24:15–24).
 - A stone monument would witness against Israel if they denied God (24:25–28).
 - Israel obeyed until Joshua and the elders died (24:29–33).





Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **Did God defeat Israel's enemies?**
Yes.
2. **Did God promise to keep defeating Israel's enemies if Israel would trust and obey Him?**
Yes.
3. **So what should Israel do?**
They should choose to serve God.
4. **Could they serve God and idols at the same time?**
No. They needed to get rid of their idols and choose to serve God alone.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **In Joshua 23:1–5, what reasons did Joshua give for Israel to obey God?**
Joshua reminded them that God had fought for them in the past and would keep fighting for them in the future if they would obey.
2. **What might draw Israel away from God?**
The Canaanites and their idols could draw Israel away from God.
3. **If Israel chose to love the Canaanites instead of God, what would happen?**
Instead of driving the Canaanites out of the land, God would drive Israel out of the land.
4. **What are some ways God proved His grace toward Israel?**
He chose Abraham and made him a great nation, rescued Israel from Egypt, defeated the nations east of the Jordan, blessed them through Balaam, defeated the nations west of the Jordan, and gave them cities, fields, and crops.
5. **How was Israel supposed to respond to God's grace?**
Israel was to be firm in their obedience and love for God.
6. **Why did Israel need to get rid of their idols?**
No one can serve God and something else at the same time.
7. **Did Israel serve God like they said they would?**
They obeyed God, but only until the old generation died.
8. **How can the world or idols draw us away from serving God today?**
If we want to be friends of the world, we will be enemies of God. Anything that we are not willing to let go can be an idol getting between us and God.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

CONQUER-AND-DIVIDE SNACK

Much of the Promised Land had been conquered and divided. After conquering the land, Joshua divided it among the people as their inheritance. Illustrate this with a snack. Instruct the children to carry over the snack and bring it to you. Divide and distribute the snack among the class.

MAGNET CENTER

Bring magnets of various sizes and shapes to class. Also bring various items that are attracted to magnets and various items that are not. Demonstrate that the magnets attract some items and not others. In today's Bible lesson, Joshua told the Israelites to serve the Lord God and to obey Him. They were to stay close to God, just like the magnets and items they attract. Explain that we are to stay close to God too, just as some of the objects wanted to stay close to the magnets.



ILLUSTRATE

WALK THE STRAIGHT PATH

Use a balance beam, wooden board, or wide tape line on the floor to teach the children about walking the straight path. Instruct the children to walk along the line without falling or moving away from it. This was how the Israelites were to live their lives: they were not to turn to the right or left of what God had said. Joshua told the Israelites, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh 24:15). God would help His people to obey by being with them wherever they walked the path that He had instructed.

WHAT GOES DOWN...?

Ask the children what they think will happen if you drop a bouncy ball. Drop it. Do it several times, each time asking what will happen. Ask the children how they know. It falls and bounces every time, so we are sure it will fall and bounce the next time. God's care for Israel was like that: over and over God cared for them, showed grace to them, and won victories for them. They should trust that He will keep doing the same, and we should trust Him too.



APPLY

HOUSE DOOR HANGER

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*.

Materials: Craft sheet, scissors, glitter glue, and crayons.

Directions: Pre-cut door hangers from craft sheet. Have children color and decorate the door hangers. Cut, color, and paste the family and verse from craft page onto the door hanger.

House Door Hanger
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God is chosen by Israel • Joshua 23:1–24:29



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

THE CLING TEST

Bring in a weight that would be difficult, but not impossible, for the children to pick up. Tell the children that they must hold the weight out in front of them for as long as they can. Time each child. Then have the children try again, but this time, they can “cling” to the object by holding it tightly to their bodies. They should be able to hold the object considerably longer than the first time. Ask the class what it means to “cling” to something. In today’s Bible lesson, Joshua told the people to “cling to the Lord.” Only by clinging to God would the Israelites be able to be devoted to Him.

TAKING POSSESSION OF THE PROMISED LAND

Use this to help children understand Israel’s conquest and division of the land. Divide the classroom into 12 sections of various sizes. Do not number the areas so that the land inheritance will be a surprise. Give each child a numbered index card and call forward each of the 12 tribes of Israel, telling them which part of the Promised Land they inherit. With all the children in the land, read Joshua 21:43–45 to the class.



ILLUSTRATE

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

Talk about how God instructed Israel to look different and be different. Today, Christians basically look the same as everyone else. Yet we are called to be different, too. Draw or tape two identical child images to a dry-erase board. How can we tell which one is a Christian? What does a Christian do that others do not? Obey God. Christians do all things because they love God and want to obey Him. Place a red heart sticker on one child to make him different. Talk about ways we can be different from the heart.

OIL AND WATER

Fill a clear glass container with water. Pour some oil into the water and ask the children to observe what happens. Does the oil mix with the water? No. Try mixing the oil and water together with a spoon or mixer. Now observe what happens. Does the oil stay mixed with the water once you’re done mixing? No. Oil and water do not mix together, just like God and idols. Joshua called the people to make a clear choice between God and idols because they cannot be combined together.



APPLY

JOSHUA’S HOUSE

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*.

Materials: Craft sheet, craft sticks, pipe cleaner or yarn, glue, glitter glue or markers, and scissors.

Directions: Direct the students to build a house by making a square base and triangle roof from craft sticks. Students should glue the sticks together and set them aside to dry. Give each student a copy of the memory verse, and direct them to cut around the square with scissors. Instruct students to glue the verse onto the back of the house so that the words show through the center. Students can decorate the house with glitter glue or markers. Tie a pipe cleaner or strip of yarn onto the roof to serve as a hanger.



Joshua’s House
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*

AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

REMEMBER WHEN

Ask the children about past events in their lives. Do they remember their first day of kindergarten? What was their favorite place to visit? Where did they first go on a vacation with their family? Do they remember the day that their little brother or sister was born? This morning we will see Joshua tell the Israelites that it is an important thing to remember what happened in the past. Remembering today's lesson's events should cause us to be obedient to God's instructions and thankful for God's special care for His people.

BEING SEPARATE

Discuss the concept of holy living with your children. Ask the children to name some of the unholy things that they observe throughout their day. What does it mean to be separate from the world? What things would make you "set apart" and different from those around you? What are the areas in your life that you need to work on to be the young man or woman that God desires you to be? This may start with trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior.



ILLUSTRATE

MONKEY FIST

Tell "The Monkey's Fist" story. A monkey is trapped by putting nuts or rice into a coconut tied to a tree. The hole in the coconut is big enough for the monkey's open hand to go in, but not big enough for the monkey's closed fist to come out. Even when the trapper comes to get the monkey, the monkey will not let go of the snack he wants, so the monkey gets caught. This is what would happen to Israel if they held on to idols or friendship and marriage with the Canaanites.

MANY FACES OF IDOLATRY

Ask the children to define idolatry in their own words (one example: a greedy desire for something else more than God). Ask the children to describe what an idol looks like. Does it have to be a statue that a person physically bows down to? Explain that idolatry has many forms. It can even include something good (a sport, a hobby, the latest technological gadget, fashionable clothes, etc.) that becomes an idol because it becomes something we value above God. Discuss how the way we use our time and money says a lot about who or what we worship.



APPLY

REMEMBERING LAST WEEK

Talk to the children about what they did throughout the week. Ask them what types of choices they made. As they remember the events and decisions that they made throughout the week, ask them whom they were serving; was it God or themselves? It may be helpful to offer several examples from your own week to get the children thinking and talking. Some examples might include: they were tired of obeying their parents, they grumbled while doing their chores, they did not faithfully serve the Lord, or they spent all their leisure time watching television, playing on the computer, or surfing the Internet. In each of these cases, they would be serving themselves and not God. Discuss with the children what things they should have done and what spirit that they should have done them with.