

Lesson 3

Crossing the Jordan River



Theme: Faith – Trusting God to do what He says He will do

Sunday Morning Lesson

Pre-Class Activity

Bible Facts: Operation Bible Facts

Memory Verse: Reproduce a worksheet, such as the sample on page 63 of this Guide, providing one for each student. Have the students complete the worksheet, trying first without using a Bible. If necessary, allow students to use the Bible to finish or correct the worksheet. Remind students that next Sunday will be the day for each one to recite the Memory Verse in class.

Prayer

Teaching Today's Lesson

1. For non-reading students, read Joshua 4:4-9. Have reading students find and mark Joshua 4:4 in the classroom Bibles.
2. Ask students to bring the Bibles and move to the Bible Story Bunker.
3. Establish the setting of the lesson by asking a student to point to the place on the time line when today's events took place.
4. Further establish the setting by asking a student to show the Jordan River. At the appropriate time in the lesson, help students locate the place where Israel crossed the Jordan, between Mount Nebo to the east and Jericho to the west, on the Table Top Map.
5. Introduce *Lesson Graphics* using the Lord's Army Ammo Box as described on page 8 of this Guide.
6. Tell the story and teach the lesson emphasizing the following scenes and points, tailored to the students' ages:
 - God told Joshua to be strong and to have courage. God told Joshua, "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you."
 - Joshua sends spies into the land, and Rahab helps them. The spies promise to take care of Rahab when they return to Jericho.
 - God parts the waters of the Jordan and Joshua leads the people across.

- God told the people to make a memorial so they would always remember how He led them into the Promised Land.

7. This activity will take some time to prepare. It is somewhat elaborate, but crossing the Jordan was an elaborate occasion. Crumple long strips of blue bulletin board paper, blue cellophane, or two blue twin size flat bed sheets. Lay the material on the floor to be the Jordan River. Have one place where the paper overlaps and can be separated. Use a shoe-box for the ark of the covenant; use dowels stuck through the box for carrying it. Wad up large pieces of gray bulletin board paper and scatter them under the water for stones. When you push the water back, the stones will be exposed.

The students will reenact Israel's crossing the Jordan. Have priests carefully carry the ark of the covenant. When they step into the water, the water parts and walls up. You can push the paper back for a short distance to represent this. The priests stand in the middle of the river as the people cross. God commands Joshua to find one man from each tribe to take a large stone from the Jordan River. The men take the stones where they will camp and pile them up as a memorial – a way Israel will remember this important event. Joshua also made a pile of 12 stones in the middle of the river at the place where the priests stood with the ark of the covenant.

8. This lesson has many possibilities for reenacting the scenes. The spies at Rahab's house, crossing the Jordan River, setting up the twelve-stone memorial. In reenacting scenes from the Bible, always remember to teach the main point, such as Rahab's faith in God, the people's excitement in finally entering the Promised Land, and remembering the great things God does for His people.
9. To prepare this activity, carefully read Joshua 2. Make or purchase a visual showing Rahab's house on the wall of Jericho and the spies escaping. Retell the story of the spies and Rahab in four scenes.

<i>2:1-7</i>	<i>Two spies come to Rahab's house in Jericho; Rahab hides them</i>
<i>2:8-14</i>	<i>Rahab is not an Israelite, but she has faith in God; she asks the spies to spare her</i>
<i>2:15-21</i>	<i>Rahab helps the spies escape; they arrange a signal to identify her house</i>
<i>2:22-24</i>	<i>The spies escape and return to the Israelites</i>

Talk to the students about what Rahab learned and came to believe about God and her willingness to help God's people.

10. Read Joshua 4:4-9. Talk about how it is important to remember what God has done for us.

Things to Get or Do for Sunday Morning

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Lesson 3

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Theme: Faith – Trusting God to do what He says He will do

Wednesday Evening Lesson

Pre-Class Activity

Bible Facts: Operation Bible Facts

Memory Verse: Reproduce a worksheet, such as the sample on page 64 of this Guide, providing one for each student. Have the students complete the worksheet, trying first without using a Bible. If necessary, allow students to use the Bible to finish or correct the worksheet. Remind students that next Sunday will be the day for everyone to recite the Memory Verse in class. Work with struggling students as time allows.

Prayer

Starter

For three years you've wanted to fly on an airplane and go to Disney World. You've seen scenes of families at Disney World. You've read books about the park. You've talked with people about the rides and shows. You know the layout of the park and all about the rides. You've thought about and dreamed of going to Disney World, and finally you are going. Imagine you are on the plane headed toward Disney World. How do you feel? When you finally walk through the gates, what do you think and how do you feel?

God promised Israel the land of Canaan over 400 years before (Genesis 15:16). The present generation of Israelites knew this promise and had hopes and dreams of living in the land. They had heard and talked about "the land flowing with milk and honey" for a long time. For many years, they thought about going into Canaan. Now the time had come, and they were about to cross the Jordan River!

How would you have felt if you were the first one to cross the Jordan River and go into the land of Canaan? Would you be excited? Would you stroll across the riverbed or would you run? Would you shout or be silent?

Briefly review the lesson from Sunday morning and read Joshua 4:4-9 and allow students to show you the location of these events on the Table Top Map.

Illustrations and Applications

1. *Objective: God promised to be with Joshua, but Joshua had to trust God. Demonstrate that trusting means obeying even when we are afraid. If they choose not to obey, they cannot trust you to protect them.*

Begin by reassuring the students that you would not do anything to cause them pain or discomfort. Ask them if they trust you. If necessary, reassure them again. Take the cap off of a large red marker and tell the students you will mark on anyone who does not follow directions. Talk about how a marker can really mess up their clothes. Line them up facing away from you. Tell them the ones who close their eyes and stand still will not get red marker all over them. If they turn around or move, you'll make a mark on them. Let them stand facing away from you for a minute. Have them turn toward you and ask who expected to have marker on them because they looked back or wiggled. Ask them if it was difficult for them to trust you. When we don't trust God enough to obey Him, we risk removing His protection from us.

2. *Objective: Demonstrate trusting God.*

Have students fall backwards into the teacher's waiting arms. Ask the students why they trust the teacher to catch them. The teacher is big enough, strong enough, and reliable enough for students to trust her. Have students think back to Israel's leaving Egypt and to ways people did and did not trust God. What are ways that we trust God?

3. *Objective: Help students understand a memorial.*

Talk with the students about how a memorial works. Give some examples such as, holidays, statues, and national monuments. Discuss the memorial that Jesus gave us to remember His death, burial and resurrection.

Things to Get or Do for Wednesday Night

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