



CROSSING THE JORDAN



JOSHUA 1-4

Instructions

The curriculum we use for elementary aged children goes through the Bible chronologically. Currently we are finishing up the book of Deuteronomy. So that your child can continue their journey through the Bible we will be putting together VERY basic Bible lessons for you to do at home. Below you will find a summary of this week's Bible passage. All you have to do is read it with your kids. Then you will see two different sets of discussion questions. One for older kids (3rd-4th grade range) and one for younger kids (Kinder-2nd grade range). Read the discussion questions with your kids. Remember, discussion is not one-sided, it's different people talking together. Give your kids the opportunity to think and speak. I pray the Lord speaks to you and your family as you dive into His word together.

Tell the Bible Story

God had promised Abraham that his descendants would live in Canaan (KAY nuhn). After wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, it was time for the remaining people to enter Canaan. Moses was dead, and God chose Joshua to be the new leader of Israel. God told Joshua, "Be strong and courageous."

Now the only thing keeping the Israelites from the land God promised to them was the Jordan River. The river was deep and wide. The Israelites could never get across on their own. But God was going to help them.

God told Joshua and the other leaders what to do. The leaders obeyed God. The priests carried the ark of God ahead of the people to the edge of the river. The ark reminded them that God was with them. The rest of the Israelites followed behind the ark.

Joshua said, "Listen. God is going to do something great. When these men carry the ark of God into the river, God will stop the water in the river. Then you will know God is with us." The people watched. The priests carrying the ark took a step into the river. God made the water stop! The priests stood on dry ground in the middle of the river, and all of the Israelites crossed safely on dry ground.



God told Joshua, “Tell the people to take 12 stones from the middle of the river where the priests are standing with the ark. They should carry the stones with them and put them down where they spend the night tonight.”

God wanted the stones to be a memorial. A memorial is something that helps people remember a person or something that happened. The people would see the stones and remember that God helped them cross the river. In the future, when children saw the stones and said, “Why are these rocks here?” The people could tell their children that God stopped the water, and everyone would know that God is mighty.

The Israelites did exactly what God told them to do. They picked up 12 huge stones and made a memorial. The priests with the ark crossed the river, and the water began to flow again. The river was deep and wide like it had been before. At last, God’s people were in the promised land!

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God went ahead of Joshua and the Israelites into the promised land. He showed His power to them so they would trust in Him. When Jesus came to earth, He showed His power so people would trust in Him and be saved from sin.

Discussion & Bible Skills - Older

1. How do you think Joshua and the Israelites felt as they entered the promised land?

Guide kids to recall that 40 years earlier, Joshua was one of the spies who scouted out the promised land but the Israelites refused to go in. Prompt kids to consider how they might feel entering a place they’ve never been and how they feel when someone powerful and loving accompanies them. Point out that God went before His people.

2. What did the Israelites do to remember what God had done for them? How can we remember what Jesus has done for us?

Lead kids to retell how the Israelites carried 12 stones from the river bed and set them up as a reminder that the Lord is mighty. Invite kids to share ideas for remembering Jesus. Point out that believers celebrate the Lord’s Supper as one way of remembering Jesus.



3. How can we trust God and move forward even when we feel afraid?

Help kids identify faith as a necessary means of trusting God in the face of fear. Explain that the Bible says faith is a gift from God, and learning about God through His Word can strengthen our faith. When we see how God has been faithful in the past, we can trust Him with our future.

Discussion & Bible Skills - Younger

1. What did God tell Joshua as he became the new leader of the Israelites?

Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid; Josh. 1:9

2. How did God help the people cross the Jordan?

God stopped the flow of the water so that it piled up on one side, Josh. 3:16

3. What did Joshua do to remember the amazing thing God had done for His people?

He instructed men from the twelve tribes to take 12 stones from the middle of the riverbed and set them up as a memorial, Josh. 4:3-7

4. Why do you think God helped His people cross the Jordan?

Guide kids to discuss the fact that most of the people who had seen God's amazing miracles in Egypt and at the Red Sea had died. God helped them cross the Jordan River in an amazing way to demonstrate His power to them and strengthen their faith in Him.

5. Why do you think God wanted the people to have the stones to remember what He did for them?

Guide kids to discuss the fact that God proves His faithfulness again and again, but people tend to forget and walk into sin. God wanted them to have a reminder that He is good and trustworthy.

6. God told Joshua to be strong and courageous and to obey His commands. What commands do Christians need strength and courage to obey?

Discuss the different commands Jesus talks about, such as loving God, loving people, sharing the gospel, and so forth.



SAY:

God held back the Jordan River for His people to cross. He is good and provides for His people. We see that very clearly in the way He sent Jesus for us.