

THE LAND AT LAST

Joshua
Joshua 3:1–4:18
1406 BC

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

God keeps His promises.

BIBLE VERSE

The LORD will do the thing that He has promised. 2 Kings 20:9

LEARNER GOAL

I know God keeps all His promises.

LAW & GOSPEL

We are hesitant to trust in God's promises, preferring to remain in the desert of our sins.

God keeps His promise to save us through His Son, Jesus, and leads us to our heavenly home.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

For forty years, the Israelites wandered on sandals that didn't wear out and daily doses of manna. Following Moses' death, Joshua prepares to lead a new generation into the Promised Land. This time, the floodwaters of the Jordan River stand in the way, but hearkening back to the Red Sea crossing, the people pass through on dry land and gather twelve stones as a memorial to God's faithful care for His people.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read Joshua 3:1–4:18 and notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read "Israel Enters the Promised Land" on pages 88–89 of *Know the Bible Now*.

IN DEPTH Read "The Ark of the Covenant" on page 203 of *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- Wooden or cardboard blocks
- Bread pan, water, toy figures & tub of sand, cornmeal, or rice
- Small backpack or duffel bag
- Brown construction paper or sandpaper
- Two jump ropes
- Puffed corn or mini shredded wheat cereal
- Construction paper, cornmeal & labels

FOR EVERY LESSON

- Bible, songbook & classroom supplies
- Copies of *Discover Leaflet*, stickers & music downloads
- Supplies for bonus activities



LEADER NOTE

Greet children and get them started in an activity that connects what they know to what they will learn, or omit this section and start with Jesus Time.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use “Storytelling Option” to tell the story.



LEADER NOTE

Try the action rhyme “Crossing the Jordan” from *Wiggle and Wonder* (p. 60) for an active review of the Bible story.

LAUNCH

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

BLOCKS Set out wooden or cardboard blocks. Challenge children to stack them twelve high. Say, **Today you’ll hear about a man named Joshua. He piled up twelve stones to help God’s people remember how God kept His promises to them.**

WATER Set a bread pan filled with water in the middle of a tub of sand or rice. Place toy figures around the pan of water. Say, **Pretend these people can’t go around the water. How will they get across?** (swim, take a boat, use a bridge) Say, **In today’s Bible story, God’s people are blocked by a big river. But God promises to help them.**

JESUS TIME

SING “We Are in God’s House Today” (digital resource center) or “Happy Now We Gather” (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 9)

SAY Ask, **Do you like going to new places? In today’s lesson, God’s people are going to a new land to live. It’s a place God promised they could live. God kept His promise to them. He keeps His promises to us too.**

PRAY Dear God,* **help us learn* how You keep* Your promises,* especially Your promise* to send Jesus* to be our Savior.* Amen.***
*At the asterisks, have children echo the phrase to God.

LEARN

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Show a child’s backpack or a duffel bag. Say, **Have you ever gone on a trip to someplace new? How did you feel? Excited? A little scared? Maybe your parents promised you that everything would be all right, and that made you feel better. God’s people had been wandering in the desert for a long time, and now it was time for them to go to a new land—the Promised Land! God promised that He would lead them and be with them, and they trusted God.**

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Show your Bible, and tell the children that all the stories in God’s Word are true. Use the *Discover Leaflet* to tell the story. Do the actions in the story with the children.

Review the story using the questions on the leaflet.

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE

Read 2 Kings 20:9 from your Bible. Have children say and do the actions with you:

The LORD	Point up.
will do the thing	Put one fist on top of the other.
that He	Point up.
has promised.	Sweep arm in an arc like a rainbow.

Tell the children that God keeps His promises. Ask, **What did God put in the sky after the flood that shows that?** (A rainbow) Say, **Today we heard how God kept His promise to lead His people to the Promised Land. God kept His promise to send Jesus to be our Savior too. We can trust God to keep all His promises to us!**

LIVE

DISCOVER LESSON TRUTHS

Separate each *Discover Leaflet* into two pages. Send the first page home with the children. Hand out the second page of the leaflets, stickers, and crayons.

SIDE 1 Have children color the stones or glue stones cut from brown construction paper or sandpaper to the stones in the riverbed.

SIDE 2 Have children connect the dashes to make a memorial of stones. Say, **Joshua stacked stones to make a memorial. When people looked at the stones, they would remember how God kept His promises and brought them to the Promised Land. God keeps His promises to us too. You just made a memorial of stones on your page. Let's add stickers to the stones to show some of God's promises to us.**

Talk about the sticker pictures: (*child praying*) God answers our prayers. (*parent helping child*) He helps us when we have troubles by giving us parents, doctors, and others to help us. (*food*) He cares for us by giving us food, family, a home, and the like. (*cross*) He saves us through Jesus, who died on the cross to pay for our sins. (*font*) He forgives our sins in Baptism and makes us His children. (*Bible*) He talks to us in His Word, telling us about Jesus and gives us strength to live as His children. Ask, **What are some other things God has promised to do for us?**

ENGAGE IN ACTIVE LEARNING

Reinforce the Learner Goal with one or more of these active learning options. Turn to “Active Learning” on the back page for instructions to do the activities below.

□ MOVE

Get children moving with this activity as you reinforce how God kept His promise to bring His people to the Promised Land. Talk about God's promises to us too.

□ SNACK

Have children try to stack their snack into a memorial as you talk about how God keeps His promises.

□ CREATE

Make sand pictures.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Can the children express that God stopped the waters so His people could cross into the Promised Land? Help them see that God was keeping His promise to bring them there. Check for understanding by asking children to name some of God's promises to them, including His promise to send Jesus to save us from our sins. Then say, **God keeps all His promises.**

LEAVE

SING “Father, Hear My Prayer” (digital resource center) or “God's Care” (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 24) or “I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus” (digital resource center)

SAY **God always does what He says He will do. He promised to bring His people to the Promised Land, and He did. He promised to send Jesus to be our Savior, and He did. He promises to love and care for us, and He does. God keeps all His promises!**

PRAY **Dear God, thank You for loving us and for helping us. Thank You for keeping Your promise to send Jesus to be our Savior. Help us to always trust in You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**



CHRIST CONNECTION

God brought His people to the Promised Land. Through His Son, He promises to deliver us into the promise of the new creation. We can be sure of this, even if we must wait to see it, because He is the God who keeps His promises.



BONUS ACTIVITY

See “Build a Memorial.”



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use “Live It Out.”

ACTIVE LEARNING

□ MOVE

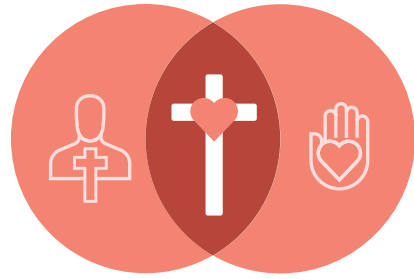
Place two jump ropes parallel to one another on the ground, about two feet apart. Pretend the open space is the Jordan River. Have the children listen for instructions on how to cross: hop, skip, crawl, and so forth. Say, **Could God's people cross the Jordan by hopping? skipping? walking? No, it was way too deep and dangerous! How did they get across? God made a dry path through the river! God promised to bring them to the Promised Land. We can find God's promises in the Bible. God keeps all His promises.** Ask the children to name some of God's promises to them (to send Jesus, to forgive them, to hear their prayers, to care for them, etc.).

□ SNACK

Give each child twelve pieces of puffed corn or frosted mini shredded wheat cereal. Have them try to stack their cereal. Ask, **What did Joshua make with the twelve stones from the river? What did he want the people to remember when they saw the stones? How do you remember what God has done for you?**

□ CREATE

Trace around each child's foot on construction paper. Let children color their footprints. Put a thin layer of glue over the rest of the page and sprinkle cornmeal over it for sand. Write the Bible Verse under the footprints or print it on labels to add. Review the story, reminding children how God helped the people walk through the river on dry ground to the Promised Land. Ask, **How does God help us and keep His promises to us?**



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

Christ has found me and leads me from sin and death to new life.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I trust God's promises and daily remember and thank Him for His faithfulness to me.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on learning for each age.

ADULT

I can relate the narrative to how God will one day fulfill His promise to bring His redeemed people into the promised land of the new creation.

YOUTH

I can share how God is faithful and always keeps His promises.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that God is faithful and keeps His promises to His people.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know God keeps all His promises.

BONUS ACTIVITIES

STORYTELLING OPTION

10 minutes

Use props to help tell the story. Cover a box with gold or yellow paper for the ark of the covenant. Use blue fabric cut in two long pieces for the river water. Overlap them in the middle, then separate them to make a dry path to walk through the middle. Wad up large brown grocery bags to make the twelve stones for the monument.

BUILD A MEMORIAL

10 minutes

Before class, make "memorial stones": Lightly stuff a brown paper grocery bag with crumpled newspaper. Slip a second paper bag over the open end of the first to make a large paper block. Make at least twelve blocks. Have children stack the blocks as high as they can. Then have them try to stack them in a pyramid.

Ask, **What did Joshua do with the twelve stones from the river? What did he want the people to remember when they saw the stones? (He wanted them to remember what God had done for them.) What are some things God does for us?**

LIVE IT OUT

15 minutes

Have children color simple cards that say, "God keeps His promises in Jesus." Give each child and family a small stone with a cross marked on it in permanent marker. Ask the family to share the card and the stone with a neighbor or a shut-in member.