

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

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 the leader devotion for this lesson, found in the digital resource center.

IN DEPTH Read "Luther on Joshua" on page 338 in *The Lutheran Study Bible*. Review the story of Exodus 14, when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- Wrapped gift or a picture of an amusement park
- Cardboard box, blue fabric, brown paper bags, and cell phone or iPad
- Tan or gray paper

FOR EVERY LESSON

- Device with downloaded music
- Pens or pencils
- Student copies of *Explore Bible Guidebook*
- Bible
- Copies of downloadable activity page
- Supplies for bonus activities
- cph.org/digitalcontent



LEADER NOTE

Show the class a wrapped gift or a picture of a destination like Disney World or a water or amusement park.



GUIDEBOOKS

Hand out student copies of the *Explore Bible Guidebook* and turn to Lesson 10.



LEADER NOTE

Use your cell phone or a tablet to take a picture of each freeze-frame. Then review the story as you look back through the pictures you took.



DOWNLOADABLE PAGE

Extend learning by printing the downloadable activity page, found in the digital resource center. See the back page of this guide for details.

LAUNCH

PRAY Dear Lord, be with us today as we learn how You always keep Your promises to us. Bless our time together. In Your name we pray. Amen.

SING “We are in God’s House Today”
“God, Who Built This Wondrous Planet ”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

SAY Have you ever had to wait for a promise to come true? Maybe the promise of a gift or a trip to Disney World or Six Flags? Today we’ll hear how God kept His promise to bring the Israelites into the Promised Land!

LEARN

► How do you feel right before something big is about to happen, like your birthday or going on a trip with your family? Is it hard to sleep the night before? Do you have butterflies in your stomach? That’s probably how the Israelites felt as they were about to enter the Promised Land after forty years of wandering in the desert!

READ “THE LAND AT LAST”

Read the Bible narrative aloud to your students.

DO SOMETHING

FOR A LARGE GROUP Divide the students into two groups: the priests and the rest of the Israelites. Ask a volunteer to be Joshua. Then read the Bible narrative from the *Explore Bible Guidebook* aloud to your students, guiding them to create freeze-frames to illustrate the story.

Frame 1: The priests carry the ark as the other Israelites keep their distance. (Excited and awed pose)

Frame 2: All stop at the edge of the overflowing river. (Scared pose)

Frame 3: They remember how their fathers cried and complained. (Crying pose)

Frame 4: But these Israelites trusted God. (Arms raised to God pose)

Frame 5: The priests step into the river. (Priest group in the river pose)

Frame 6: The Israelites cross over. (Israelites crossing pose)

Frame 7: Twelve men gather stones. (Gathering stones pose)

Frame 8: Joshua makes a memorial. (Joshua stacking stones pose)

Frame 9: The memorial will help the Israelites remember. (Israelites point at rock memorial pose)

Frame 10: All have crossed into the Promised Land. (Rejoicing pose)

FOR VISUAL LEARNERS Use props to help tell the story: a cardboard box for the ark of the covenant, blue fabric for the river, wadded-up brown paper grocery bags for the stones.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- God is faithful. He kept His promise to bring His people into the Promised Land.
- The ark of the covenant represented God’s presence with His people, and so it was natural for the ark to lead God’s people into the Promised Land.
- God commanded a memorial to be made so the Israelites would not forget that He had brought them through the Jordan River.

LIVE

EXPLORE THE CONTEXT

Before you start the discussion questions, use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* to discuss other interesting facts related to Joshua and the Israelites crossing the Jordan River.

TALK ABOUT IT

- ▶ **Think back to when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea as they came out of Egypt. What did God do differently in that crossing? What things were the same?**
- ▶ **What was the purpose of the twelve stones that Joshua set up as a memorial? (They were to remind the Israelites of what God had done for them.) Who tells you about what God has done for you?**
- ▶ **God kept His promise to bring the Israelites into the Promised Land. What promises has God made for us today? (God promised to send a Savior. God promises to always be with us. God promises to take care of us.) Has He kept those promises?**

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE TOGETHER

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

DISCUSS GOD'S PROMISES TO SEND US A SAVIOR

- Genesis 3:14, 15 (to Adam and Eve): "The LORD God said to the serpent, . . . 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.'"
- Genesis 12:3 (to Abraham): "I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."
- Genesis 28:14 (to Jacob/Israel): "Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed."
- Matthew 1:20–21 (to Joseph): "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to explain how God kept His promise and was faithful to Moses through Joshua.

LEAVE

SAY Praise God that He is faithful and always keeps His promises!

SING "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"
"The Lord's Prayer"

Music can be found in the digital resource center.

PRAY Thank You, heavenly Father, for keeping Your promise to send us Jesus to be our Savior. Help us remember that You are always with us. In Your name we pray. Amen.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Check the bonus activity "Painted Rocks" on the back page for a craft to go with this lesson.



CHRIST CONNECTION

God kept His promises to the Israelites. Many years later, Jesus, our Savior, was born, and God's greatest promise was fulfilled.



LEADER NOTE

Write the Bible promises from the section "God's Promises to Send Us a Savior" on tan or gray sheets of paper. Wad them into "stone" balls and make a pile. Have students pick up one at a time, open, and read the promise. Then have them arrange the promises in chronological order.

DOWNLOADABLE PAGE HELPS

Make copies of the downloadable activity page by accessing the digital resource center. Use the helps below as a guide.

Give students crayons or colored pencils to color in God's promises. Encourage students to cut out each verse to use as bookmarks and to share with friends and family. You could also print this page on card stock to make the bookmarks more durable. Your class could make extra for your pastor to share with shut-ins and other people he visits.



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

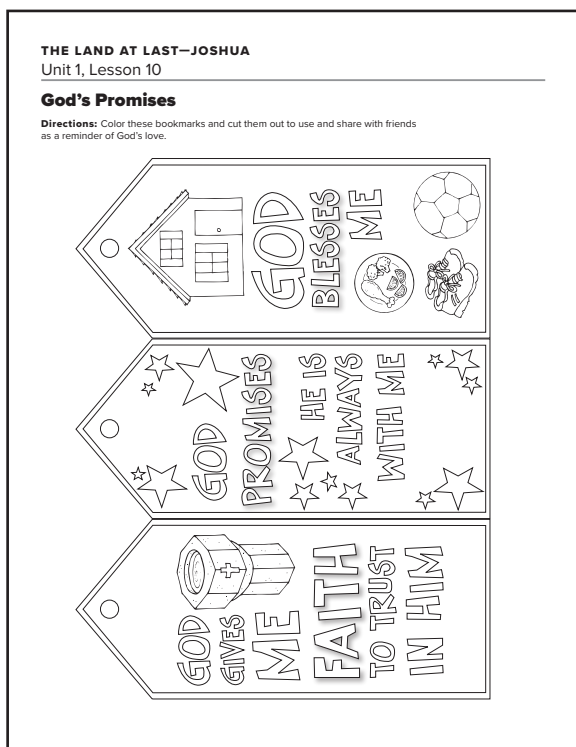
I can share how God is faithful and always keeps His promises.

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

RED SEA JELL-O

5 minutes

Here's a snack idea: serve blue Jell-O jigglers, cut into squares to pile up like the Red Sea was "piled up" as the Israelites walked through.

PAINTED ROCKS

Times may vary

Bring in river rocks for the students. Let each student paint a rock with acrylic paint. When dry, add a cross with a permanent marker or black paint to remind them that God keeps His promises in Jesus.

TRAVEL SUITCASE

15 minutes

Set out a travel suitcase and a variety of items for when you go on a trip (e.g., toothbrush, hairbrush, clothing item, shoes, stuffed toy, Bible, snack, video game, books). Let children choose three or four items. Have children empty the bag to give another child a turn. Or let them work cooperatively.