

## Crossing the Jordan

**Session Title:** Crossing the Jordan

**Bible Passage:** Joshua 1–4

**Story Point:** God held back the Jordan River for His people to cross.

**Key Passage:** Deuteronomy 31:8

**Big Picture Question:** How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

### Parent Devotional

Only one geographical barrier separated the Israelites from the promised land of Canaan: the Jordan River. When the Israelites arrived, the Jordan River was flooded due to spring rains and snowmelt. Any other time, the river would have been manageable, but crossing the swollen river would have been as daunting as crossing the Red Sea. (See Josh. 4:23.)

The Israelites had mourned Moses' death for 30 days (Deut. 34:8), but now this new generation looked to Joshua to lead them into the promised land. God had chosen Joshua and promised to be with him. Joshua prepared the people to cross the Jordan River, and they agreed to obey him as they obeyed Moses.

God gave Joshua a promise and a command. First, He promised to go before them and drive out all the people of the land. Then God commanded him to tell the priests to carry the ark of the Lord (a symbol of God's powerful presence) into the waters of the Jordan. Then the waters of the river would be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above would stand in one heap. When this happened, all of Israel would know that God was with Joshua.

All of the people passed over on dry ground. Joshua set up 12 memorial stones as a reminder of God's faithfulness in bringing Israel safely across the Jordan into the promised land.

The Israelites could do nothing apart from God. He was with them, and He was going to fight for them. In John 15:5, Jesus said, "You can do nothing without me."

As you teach kids this week, emphasize that God was still at work with His people. He was going to do even bigger things for the Israelites—saving them from their enemies and one day sending them a Savior. The cross is our reminder of what Jesus has done for us: a miraculous saving we could never do for ourselves.

**Memory Verse:**

**Deuteronomy 31:8**

**8** It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

## KINDERGARTEN - 5TH GRADE BIBLE STORY

### Crossing the Jordan

Joshua 1–4

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.*