

The Israelites Cross the Jordan River

Joshua 3:1–4:24



Bible Point:



Remember to thank God.

Key Verse:





God's mighty hand cares for you (adapted from 1 Peter 5:6-7).

Weaving Faith Into Life:





Children will remember to thank God in daily life.



Infant

Lesson Sequence	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Teacher Pack Supplies
1 Getting Started	Sing and Celebrate Listen to "Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God" and "Give Thanks to the Lord."	CD player	CD: "Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God" (track 16) 
2 Bible Story Exploration	The River Look at the teaching picture and hear the story.	Scissors, glue	"River Jordan" teaching picture, blue tissue paper 
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Water, Water Everywhere Use washcloths to retell the story.	3 or 4 washcloths, water	
	Thank You, God Hear a song about giving thanks to God.		

Toddler

Lesson Sequence	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Teacher Pack Supplies
1 Getting Started	Sing and Celebrate Sing or listen to "Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God" and "Give Thanks to the Lord."	CD player	CD: "Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God" (track 16) 
2 Bible Story Exploration	Crossing the River See and hear the story.	Bible, roll of masking tape, spray bottle, water, scissors, glue	"River Jordan" teaching picture, blue tissue paper 
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Five Little Israelites Do a finger play about the Bible story.		
	Thank You, God, for My Five Senses Sing a song thanking God for his gifts.		

2-Year-Old

Lesson Sequence	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Teacher Pack Supplies
1 Getting Started	Sing and Celebrate Sing or listen to "Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God" and "Give Thanks to the Lord."	CD player	CD: "Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God" (track 16) 
2 Bible Story Exploration	Crossing the River Jordan Use motions to help retell the story.	Bible, dishpan of water, paper towels, scissors, glue	"River Jordan" teaching picture, blue tissue paper 
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	A Path Across the Water Paint pictures of the river and create a path to cross.	Small package of blue Jell-O, 4-ounce bottle of glue, a few small containers; per child: "Hand in Hand" handout (p. 138), paintbrush, 5 or 6 small craft sticks, paint smocks, spoon	
	We're Going to Cross the River Do an action "rhythm-pattern" about the story.		

The Israelites Cross the Jordan River

Joshua 3:1–4:24

Parts of this story seem like a rerun of the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea 40 years earlier. Remember, however, that apart from Joshua and Caleb, all of the people crossing the Jordan River were no older than children when Israel crossed the Red Sea. This totally new experience must have reminded them of the stories their parents had told them about the miracle of crossing the Red Sea.

Notice that the Jordan River was not just a trickling stream—it was at “flood stage.” In the area of Jericho, it would have been 10 to 12 feet deep, and the current quite strong.

The Israelites built a stone memorial with the rocks taken from the center of the Jordan River. The memorial would remind people of the wonders God had done for the Israelites as they entered the Promised Land, and the 12 stones together would remind them of the 12 tribes joined together as one nation.

The last verse of today's passage, Joshua 4:24, tells us why God dried up the Jordan for the people to cross: “so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God.” God wanted his people to fear him—to give him the worship and service he deserved. Remembering what God had done would give them encouragement and faith when they faced the difficulties of conquering this new land.



Devotion for Teachers

The 1 Thing: As we grow in relationship with Christ, we become more Christ-like. We can testify that we have been renewed and delivered from our different lives of the past.

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Reread Joshua 4:24. Note the public display of power that God left as a reminder of his love and power. In times of darkness, it is often helpful to rest in the truth of what we have experienced in the past. Encounters with our Savior remind us that he is with us. Sharing these experiences with others can give hope to the hopeless and bring glory to the work God has done in you. Identify five people to whom you will testify of God's power in your life this week. After you share, watch how God's power in you affects the people you share with.

For more about The 1 Thing, see page 4.

Understanding Infants, Toddlers & Twos for Teachers

Infants obviously cannot thank you for your loving care. However, they express a form of gratitude through smiles, coos, and cuddles. Toddlers show their thanks through giggles and hugs and an occasional parroted “thank you.” By the age of 2, some children have formed the habit of saying “please” and “thank you.” But you’re more likely to see gratitude through invitations to play and warm laughter.

Easy Prep for Teachers

Music—Place the *FaithWeaver Infants, Toddlers & Twos, Fall 2006* CD in your CD player.

Infant

The River

- Remove the blue tissue paper and the “River Jordan” teaching picture from the Teacher Pack.
- Cut the tissue paper to the size of the dry riverbed on the teaching picture.
- Glue the tissue paper to the dark line on the left-bank side of the dry riverbed on the teaching picture. This will make a flap of tissue paper that can be lifted during the story.

Toddler

Crossing the River

- Follow the easy prep instructions above for “The River” activity in the infant section.
- Tab Joshua 3 and 4 in your Bible.

2-Year-Old

Crossing the River Jordan—Follow the easy prep instructions above for “The River” activity in the infant section.

A Path Across the Water

- Make a copy of the “Hand in Hand” handout (p. 138) for each child.
- Mix one small package of blue Jell-O gelatin with one 4-ounce bottle of glue. Put about a teaspoon of the mixture in several small containers.

Web Help: Get bonus teacher tips and ideas at www.faithweaver.com.



Song Lyrics

Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God

(tune: “Oh, Be Careful”)

Oh, remember to give thanks unto God.
Oh, remember to give thanks unto God.
For the Father up above is looking down in love.
Oh, remember to give thanks unto God.



Track 16



Give Thanks to the Lord (not on CD) (tune: "The Farmer in the Dell")

Give thanks to the Lord.

Give thanks to the Lord.

Thank you, God, for this new day.

Give thanks to the Lord.



1 Sing and Celebrate

Infant

Sing or listen to the simple songs found on page 131 anytime during the lesson. Sing as you play the suggested games, as you change the infants, or as you hold and rock them. After singing "Give Thanks to the Lord" through several times, change the words, "this new day" to the children's names.

After singing "Oh, Remember to Give Thanks Unto God" (track

16) on the CD through a couple of times, change "unto God" to "little [child's name]."



Track 16

2 Bible Story Exploration

The River

Sit on the floor near an infant, and show the "River Jordan" teaching picture.

Say **Joshua and the Israelites needed to cross the big river. Can you see the people?** Help the infant point to the people. **See the big river?** Help the infant point to the river. **God helped the Israelites cross the river. When the people stepped in the water, the river opened up. Look what happened! God changed the river.** Pull back the tissue paper, and show the people walking on the dry ground. **Then the people walked across the River Jordan! See them walking through the river? The people said, "Thank you, God. Thank you for helping us cross the river." We should remember to thank God, too.**



3 Weaving Faith Into Life

Water, Water Everywhere

Pour a small amount of water on the floor or a table.

Say **The Israelites want to cross the river. How will they get across?** Help infants touch and splash the water. Use a washcloth to soak up the water. **God moved the water for the Israelites! Now the Israelites can cross the river and not get wet! Feel the wet ground.** Touch a baby's hand to the washcloth. **Feel the dry ground!** Touch the baby's hand to the area you wiped off.

Pour more water on the floor or table to repeat the activity with dry washcloths several times.

Thank You, God

Sing the following song to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” as you are rocking an infant or changing a diaper:

Sing Thank you, God, for giving me
The sun, and the moon, and the apple trees.
Thank you, God, for your beautiful world.
Thank you for the boys and girls.
Thank you, God, for everything.
Thank you, God, we like to sing.

1 Sing and Celebrate

Toddler

Sing the simple songs found on page 131 anytime during the lesson. Choose a toddler to sing “Give Thanks to the Lord” with you. Face the toddler, and hold both of the child’s hands in your hands. Gently swing your arms from side to side as you sing. Continue with each toddler so that everyone has a turn.



Track 16



2 Bible Story Exploration

Crossing the River

Put two parallel lines of masking tape about one foot apart on the floor of your story area. Gather a couple of toddlers, and sit on the floor. Open your Bible to Joshua 3 and 4. Show the “River Jordan” teaching picture.

Say Joshua and the Israelites needed to cross the River Jordan. Can you see the people? Have a child point to the Israelites on the teaching picture. Can you see the water? Have a child point to the river. There’s a lot of water there! “How will we cross the river?” the people asked. Joshua said, “Don’t worry. God will take care of us.”

Do you know what happened next? When the people stepped in the water, the river opened up! The people could see water on both sides and dry ground in the middle! Have a child fold back the tissue paper showing the dry ground. Now the people could cross the river—without even getting their feet wet! The people said, “Thank you, God. Thank you for helping us cross the river.” Let’s see if you can cross the river here in our room.

Encourage toddlers to walk between the lines of tape while you spray some water away from the children, so that they can hear and see the mist without getting wet. When they get to the end, praise the children for crossing the river as the Israelites did.

Say Remember to thank God for helping you cross the river and thank him for helping you every day.



3 Weaving Faith Into Life

Five Little Israelites

Do the following finger play while sitting near a toddler.

- Say** Five little Israelites needed to get across. (Hold up five fingers, and wiggle them back and forth.)
They looked up to Joshua. He was the boss. (Raise head slightly as if looking up at someone.)
The Israelites said, "We don't want to get wet!" (Shake your head back and forth.)
But Joshua said, "There's no need to fret. (Hold up one finger, and wag it back and forth.)
God will get us to the other side. (Point up.)
God will keep us safe and dry." (Cross arms over chest.)
Then the water opened up and moved out of sight. (Hold hands in front of you with palms together, then open them up wide.)
The people marched across—first left, then right. (Make walking motions with your fingers.)
The Israelites then began to pray. (Fold hands in prayer.)
"Thank you, God, for this glorious day!" (Bow head, keeping hands folded.)

Thank You, God, for My Five Senses

Sing this song to the tune of "Bingo."

- Sing** Thank you, God, for my two eyes
And all the things I see-o.
Thank you, thank you, God,
Thank you, thank you, God,
Thank you, thank you, God,
For all the things I see-o.
Thank you, God, for my two ears
And all the things I hear-o.
Thank you, thank you, God,
Thank you, thank you, God,
Thank you, thank you, God,
For all the things I hear-o.

Repeat the song using the words, "for my one nose and all the things I smell-o," "for my fingers and all the things I touch-o," and "for my red tongue and all the things I taste-o."



- Say** God has given us so much to be thankful for. Let's always remember to thank God.

1 Sing and Celebrate

2-Year Old

Sing the simple songs found on page 131 anytime during the lesson. Have the children hold hands and walk around in a circle while singing "Give Thanks to the Lord." After the children have learned the song, choose a child to stand in the center of the circle. Let that child choose something he or she is thankful for and replace the words, "this new day" with the thing the child chooses. Repeat this process until each child has had a turn in the circle.



2 Bible Story Exploration

Crossing the River Jordan

Before the activity fill a dishpan with water. Open your Bible to Joshua 3 and 4. Show the teaching picture.

Say ➤ **Joshua and the Israelites needed to cross the River Jordan. There's a lot of water there! "How will we cross the river?" the people asked. Joshua said, "Don't worry. God will take care of us."**

- Ask** ➤
- **What happens when we get in water? Let's see.** Allow each child to put his or her hand in the dishpan of water.
 - **What happened to your hand?** (It got wet; it dried off.)
 - **So what do you think happened to the Israelites?** (They got their clothes wet; they didn't want to get into the water.)

Let the children dry their hands with paper towels.

Say ➤ **When the Israelites stepped in the water, the river opened up! The people could see water on both sides and dry ground in the middle!** Let one child fold back the tissue paper on the teaching picture so that all of the children can see the dry land. **The people crossed the river on dry ground. The people said, "Thank you, God. Thank you for helping us cross the river."**

Let each child have a turn "walking" his or her fingers across the teaching picture. Press the tissue paper flat again to form the river. Then have children do the motions in the parentheses as you say the following rhyme.

Say ➤ **The Israelites need to cross the river. What will they do?** (*"Walk" fingers to the edge of the river on the teaching picture.*)

They don't want to get wet! How will they get through? (*Shrug shoulders.*)

God will help them cross. He piles the water high! (*Fold back the tissue paper to reveal the dry riverbed.*)

Now they walk on land, and they all stay dry. (*"Walk" fingers across the dry riverbed.*)

Say ➤ **We need to remember to thank God like the Israelites did.**



Extra Impact

If you have extra time after the "Crossing the River Jordan" activity, let the children have some fun water-play while exploring this story. Fill the dishpan with water three-fourths deep, and provide water-safe toy people. Let the children pretend to be the Israelites crossing the River Jordan without God's help. Be sure to provide smocks for the children to wear while playing.

Tips from the Trenches

Remember to give each family a copy of "Hand in Hand," even if the activity pictured has not been completed. Provide the families with a copy of the Daily Do-Its/Parent Pointers as well. Parents can use the suggested activities to reinforce this week's lesson at home.



3 Weaving Faith Into Life

A Path Across the Water

Put paint smocks on each child, and set out paintbrushes for them. Let the children paint the Jell-O and glue mixture on the handouts to make a Jordan River picture. Encourage children to cover as much of the paper as they wish. Tell the children that this is the river from the story today.

Say **The River was deep and wide. The Israelites couldn't get across. But God gave them a path of dry ground. Let's make the path across the water for the Israelites to cross.**

Have the children put craft sticks on their handouts to make dry ground. Encourage children to place the sticks together to form a path.

Say **When the Israelites got across safely, they praised and thanked God. We need to remember to thank God, too.**

We're Going to Cross the River

Tell the children that you are all pretending to be the Israelites. Have children echo each line and imitate your motions for the following action rhyme, using the rhythm pattern of "We're Going on a Bear Hunt."

Say **We're going to cross the river.** (*Slap hands on legs one at a time as if walking.*)
We have to get to the other side. (*Slap hands on legs one at a time as if walking.*)
The river is so deep. (*Hold hands far apart vertically to show "deep."*)
The river is so wide. (*Hold hands far apart horizontally to show "wide."*)
We can't swim through it. (*Pretend to swim.*)
We can't walk over it. (*"March" hands up and down high in the air.*)
We can't go around it. (*Lean to the side, and move hands one at a time from left to right.*)
What'll we do? (*Shrug shoulders, and raise hands.*)
God has the answer. (*Slap hands on legs one at a time as if walking.*)
God has the plan. (*Slap hands on legs one at a time as if walking.*)
He'll make the water move (*open hands far apart horizontally*),
And we'll walk on dry land. (*Slap hands on legs one at a time as if walking, and continue to do so for the rest of the rhyme.*)
Thank you, God!
Yippee!



Daily Do-Its/Parent Pointers

By looking at the story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River found in Joshua 3:1–4:24, your child learned that it is important to remember to thank God. Use one of the following activities this week with your child.

Infant

Thank You, God

Sing the following song to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” as you are rocking your infant or changing their diaper:

Sing Thank you, God, for giving me

The sun, and the moon, and the apple trees.

Thank you, God, for your beautiful world.

Thank you for the boys and girls.

Thank you, God, for everything.

Thank you, God, we like to sing.

Toddler

Five Little Israelites

Say Five little Israelites needed to get across. (*Wiggle five fingers.*)

They looked up to Joshua. He was the boss.

The Israelites said, “We don’t want to get wet!” (*Shake your head.*)

But Joshua said, “There’s no need to fret.

God will get us to the other side. (*Point up.*)

God will keep us safe and dry.”

Then the water opened up and moved out of sight. (*Hold hands over your eyes.*)

The people marched across—first left, then right.

The Israelites then began to pray. (*Fold hands in prayer.*)

“Thank you, God, for this glorious day!”

2-Year-Old

Cross the River

Do the following action rhyme, using the rhythm pattern of “We’re Going on a Bear Hunt.”

Say We’re going to cross the river. (*Slap hands on legs throughout.*)

We have to get to the other side.

The river is so deep.

The river is so wide.

We can’t swim through it.

We can’t walk over it.

We can’t go around it.

What’ll we do?

God has the answer.

God has the plan.

He’ll make the water move,

And we’ll walk on dry land.

Thank you, God!

Yippee!

Here are a few more ideas for helping your child become a FaithWeaver!

- Take a thanksgiving walk through your neighborhood. Give thanks to God for the things you see.
- Learn this new thank you prayer:

Dear God, thank you for your beautiful world
And all the many boys and girls. In Jesus’ name, amen.

The Power of “Please” and “Thank You”

In many households “please” and “thank you” are known as “magic words.” While these words may not make anything mysteriously appear, the effect they have on those who hear them is truly wonderful. As soon as a child is able to make his or her requests known through pointing or words, you can begin to teach the words *please* and *thank you*. A child who learns to give thanks to those around him or her will naturally learn to give thanks to God.

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Lesson **12**

Hand in Hand

God Gives the Israelites a Path of Dry Ground

and God Gives Me Loving Parents

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Encouragement for you

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up” (Galatians 6:9).

God knows your struggles. He also knows how you are making a difference in the individual lives of the children in your classroom.