



Mustard Seed Children's Summary for January 18, 2009
Released on Wednesday, January 14, 2009

"Following a Godly Leader"

Lesson Text: Joshua 3:1-13

Background Scripture: Joshua 3

Memory Verse: "The LORD said unto Joshua...as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee" (Joshua 3:7).

Joshua 3:1-13

- 1 And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.
- 2 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host;
- 3 And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.
- 4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.
- 5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.
- 6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.
- 7 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.
- 8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.
- 9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God.
- 10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.
- 11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.
- 12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.
- 13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon a heap.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that God wants us to follow the leaders He has given to teach us His Word.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God knew His people needed the kind of leader who would listen to Him, and He provided Joshua for them to follow.
2. God gives us leaders to follow today.
3. Jesus is the best leader of all.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS:

For Beginning the Lesson, find a picture of Joshua.

For Telling the Lesson, you will need pictures of a large crowd of Israelites, Joshua, the priests carrying the ark, and the Jordan crossing.

For Telling How to Live, draw a large question mark on a half sheet of construction paper.

For Helping to Remember, provide each student with safety scissors (blunt tip), crayons, and a half sheet of brown construction paper. For yourself you will need a black felt marking pen.

For the Lesson Activity, make a copy for each student.

LESSON BACKGROUND:

Time: 1405 B.C.

Place: at the Jordan River

The first chapter of the book of Joshua reveals God passing the leadership of Israel from Moses to the younger Joshua. It was Joshua's responsibility to lead the people into the Promised Land.

The first command that God gave Joshua was "Go over this Jordan" (Joshua 1:2). We learned in last week's lesson that Joshua sent spies who came back from Jericho and reported that the citizens of the land were afraid of the Israelites because of the things that God had done for them (2:23-24). God encouraged Joshua that He would be with him and would make him great in the sight of Israel (3:7). The stage was set for God to back up His words!

TEACHER'S NOTES:

Remind your student that the Israelites had spent 40 years in the wilderness and during that time they had been led by Moses. Moses was now gone, and Joshua was Israel's new leader. Just ahead lay the land of Canaan, waiting to be conquered.

Have you noticed how God especially equipped different Bible characters for the specific work He had for them to do? There was Noah, detailed ark-builder. There was Joseph, gifted administrator. There was Paul, able to explain the profound mysteries of the gospel.

And then there was Moses, who provided just the kind of leadership Israel needed when the people departed from Egypt and then had to survive forty years in the inhospitable wilderness. Moses served his generation well.

Yet when the time came to do battle in Canaan, the Lord chose someone else to lead the nation. He chose a soldier - Joshua was that man.

In each case, though, God chose a man of faith. Both Moses and Joshua were men who listened to Him and obeyed. Both had leadership gifts, and both also confidently put their special abilities at God's disposal. Both led well.

God does not call everyone to be a leader, however. He needs good followers too, and the people of Israel at this point were good followers. They recognized that Joshua was acting as God's spokesman. What he was telling them were God's words, not his own. Because he was speaking God's message, they could safely follow him, and they did. Strange as the command to walk into the Jordan River must have seemed, they followed the ark and saw what the Lord could do.

Let us teach the children that God has provided leadership in the church to help us know what He wants us to do. These leaders help us when they tell us what God says in His Word.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

Ben and his five friends were playing follow-the-leader. The boys had picked him to be the leader this time. First, Ben ran around the rosebush in his front yard. All the other boys ran around the rosebush. Ben jumped over the crack in the sidewalk. The others followed him and jumped over the crack. Ben skipped past the oak tree. His friends skipped past the oak tree.

The other boys went wherever Ben led them. Why? (Accept answers.) They followed because in this game Ben was the leader and they were good followers.

There are different kinds of leaders. Ben was just one kind. Who is the leader in your classroom at school? (Teacher.) Who is the leader of the whole school? (Principal.) Who is the leader of our country? (President, prime minister, or such.)

One time God knew His people needed a soldier to be their leader. At the same time, God needed the kind of soldier who would listen to Him and do what He said. So the Lord chose Joshua. (Show Joshua.)

TELLING THE LESSON:

God's people Israel had been in a mean king's country for a long time. (Show crowd.) You will remember how unkind that king was to them. He even tried to have all their boy babies killed.

Then the Lord gave His people a leader named Moses, and after that God did a wonderful thing. He sent a wind to dry up part of the sea for the people so that they could walk safely out of the mean king's country. After that they followed their leader Moses as they made a long trip to the new country the Lord was giving them. When today's lesson starts, they are right across the river from their new home.

A long time before, the Lord had said this good country would be their own place. It was a place where His people could live and be safe and happy. God promised it only to them. The bad news was that some other people got there first, and those other people were going to give them trouble.

That was why God's people needed a different kind of leader now. Moses had been a good leader, but they needed a soldier leader to take them into their new country. That was why they needed Joshua. (Show Joshua.)

Joshua knew that the first place that would make trouble for them would be the city of Jericho. Soon God's people were right there, across the river from Jericho, ready and waiting for their leader Joshua to tell them it was the right time to march into their new living place. (Show crowd.)

Now, Joshua was a good soldier, and he was a wise leader. First he sent two men across the river to find out how strong a city Jericho was. They came back saying, "Everyone over there is afraid of us! They have heard what the Lord did to save us from two kings."

But how would God's people get across the river? There was no bridge. God would have to do something special again, and He let Joshua know what that special thing would be.

Now, to understand what God was going to do, we must remember that the people of Israel had been traveling for a long time. They did not have a building to go to. They used a tent for a meeting place because they could just take down a tent and carry it with them. They carried all the little pieces of furniture that went inside the tent too.

One of those pieces of furniture was called the ark. It was not anything like Noah's ark. This ark was a very special box small enough to be carried like this. (Show priests with ark.) That special box helped the people remember that God was right there with them all the time.

Joshua wanted his helpers to know what the Lord had told him about getting across the river. He called them together, and he said something like this: "All of you, watch the ark. When you see the ark being picked up and carried ahead of you, then you follow it. The ark will show you the way to go."

Then the Lord made a special promise to Joshua. (Show Joshua.) "Joshua," He said, "just as I used to be with Moses to help him, now I will be with you."

Next Joshua called the people together. (Show crowd.) "Come hear what the Lord has said to do," he told them. "The Lord is with you. He will surely drive out all those people who

want to make trouble."

Then he said, "The ark of the Lord of all the earth is going ahead of you across the river. (Show priests and ark.) When the feet of the men carrying the ark step into the water, the river will stop flowing."

How could something like that ever happen? Well, just listen. First, the men carrying God's ark started to walk with it down to the river. (Show priests and ark.) The people began to follow, just as Joshua told them. The men carrying the ark stepped into the water—and the river stopped flowing!

Upstream, the water began to pile up like a hill of sand. Only God could do that, and He did!

Soon there was no water at all where the people were. They could walk right across where the river used to be. They did not even need a bridge. (Show crowd crossing the Jordan.)

God used the leader Joshua to tell His people what He wanted them to do. (Show Joshua.) They were wise people. They listened to the leader God gave them. They did what God told their leader they should do. And that is how God's people got into their good, new land, just where God wanted them to be.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Just as God provided leaders for Israel, He also gives us good leaders to follow today. Some of those leaders are the pastors, teachers, and other helpers in the church. What they teach us from God's Word helps us know how to live the way God wants us to. Let us be wise followers and do what they teach us.

Of course, the best leader of all is Jesus Himself. It is never a mistake to follow Him and do just what He says. Are you a good follower of Jesus? (Show question mark.)

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

With a felt pen, draw around each child's shoe on a half sheet of brown construction paper. Have the students cut out their shoe outlines. On one side each will print "I am (name)" and on the other side "I will follow Jesus." They can add designs as desired.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:

"The Lord said unto Joshua ... as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee" (Joshua 3:7).

God's people Israel had a new leader. Their leader used to be Moses, and God had been with him to help him lead the people. Now Joshua was leading the people, and God wanted Joshua to know he would not have to do this important job all by himself. So God told Joshua, "I was with Moses, to help him, and I will be with you too." Joshua did not need to be afraid. Our golden text says it like this: "I will be with thee." Remember, "thee" is just the way people used to say "you."

CONCLUSION:

Like the other people we are studying in this unit, Joshua was a person of great commitment. As Israel's leader, it was very important that Joshua trusted and obeyed God. In this week's lesson, we learn from Joshua that commitment is acting on the faith you have in God.

The Ark of the Covenant for the Israelites was a symbol of God's presence. Just as He was with Joshua and the Israelites, God is in our midst. Joshua and his commitment to God help us to understand the action part of faith. We learn that we must take the necessary steps to experience God's blessings: trust, obey, and act.

PRAYER:

Father God, we praise You for all the leaders that You have given us. Thank You for Jesus, Who is the best leader of all. Help us to be good followers as we learn Your Word, in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "Getting Ready for a Deliverer" and tells of the angel's announcement of the birth of Samson, who would begin to deliver Israel from her enemies. Study Judges 13:1-25.

LESSON SUMMARIZED BY:

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WORKS CITED

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The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books.

LESSON ACTIVITY:

“Following a Godly Leader” (Joshua 3:1-13)

Underline the word or words that correctly complete each sentence:

1. Joshua and the people of Israel camped near the (Dead Sea, Jordan River, Red Sea).
2. After (one, three, five) days, the officers went to the people to tell them that they would soon be crossing the river.
3. When the people saw the (officers, priests, soldiers) carrying the Ark of the Covenant, they were to leave the camp.
4. The people were to walk (in front of, beside, behind) the ark that the priests were carrying.
5. When the (hands, feet, rod) of the priests touched the water, the river stopped flowing.

Find these key words from the lesson:

FOLLOW	JOSHUA	JORDAN RIVER	LEADER
GODLY	ARK	WONDERS	PRIESTS

K O L A D R D O L R J S R J F Y O E J
W N N W D O L N J V J R A P D S P U L
O F R V P D I R A I A L R E J D L T U
L L L A E O R U V H A L P O R L O W O
U N A O D O O O H Y E R I U E J E R E
E K E W S O L S S I R O G O Y O N S R
S R W O L L O F N Y L L S O R S J T W
W A W U D R A L S N R E R H D R A S K
O E W A O S R O R R O O A R E L I E F
N R L J S L P D A W O L A D D R Y I L
D S R E L N H R R A E G A U I R A R O
E A J O R D A N R I V E R D H O D P E
R O R D O E A Y A S L R E D R S O O O
S S J O U O S N E R A O R O A R O K R
D O E A O R J L R R J N D R A O S J A
O A N O A A R J R S D T J N O N G D L

Answer Key to "Following a Godly Leader" (Joshua 3:1-13)

K G S
R W O L L O F O T
W A D R S
O E L E
N A D Y I
D A U R
E J O R D A N R I V E R H P
R L S
S O
J

Answers to: Underline the word or words that correctly complete each sentence

1. Joshua and the people of Israel camped near the (Dead Sea, Jordan River, Red Sea).
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