

Joshua Becomes Israel's New Leader

Joshua 1

Memory Verse:

JOSHUA 1:8

“This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A magnet, paper and paper clips.

As many 6” - 8”strips of leather, or 6”- 8” strips of string as the number of children in your class.

As many copies of the enclosed artwork sheets as the number of children in your class, markers or crayons, scissors and brads (paper fasteners).

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Not Seeing Is Believing

You will need a magnet and some paper clips. Using a sheet of paper, put some paper clips on top of the sheet of paper and the magnet underneath. Move the paper clips around using the magnet. You can also allow some of the children to experiment with this, as time allows.

As you are moving the paper clips explain that even though we do not “see” the magnet it is still there moving the paper clips. It is like that with God. We may not actually “see” Him, but we know that He has always promised to be with us because He has promised to never leave nor forsake us in His word.

LESSON TIME!

Forty years have passed since the children of Israel first started wandering in the wilderness. It is now time for them to march into Canaan and take possession of the land God had promised them. Last week, we learned that Moses died; God will appoint a new leader. Leading God's people into battle could seem pretty scary. But, God will encourage His new leader, just as He encourages us. **We need not fear, for God is with us.**

JOSHUA 1:1-9

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying:

"Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them; the children of Israel.

"Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.

"From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

"No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

"Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

"Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

After the death of Moses, God spoke to Joshua and commissioned him to be the new leader. God promised him the land of Canaan, just as He had promised Moses. He told him that every place the sole of his foot touched would belong to the children of Israel! He assured Joshua that as long as He was with him, no man could stand against him. God promised to be with him all the days of his life, "as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you."

What an awesome promise! Joshua may have felt overwhelmed by his commission. It was probably scary to look out at those millions of people knowing the responsibility for leading them rested on his shoulders. Was Joshua to do this by himself? No, that's why God promised to be with him and told Joshua not to be afraid. **We need not fear, for God is with us.**

How would Joshua know what to do? How would he know he was making wise decisions? God commanded him to meditate on His Word day and night and not to turn from His Word to the right hand or to the left. If he followed God's law, he would become prosperous and have good success.

We, as children of God, have the very same promise that God gave to Joshua! God will never leave us nor forsake us. He is always with us; we need not be afraid. It says in Romans 8:31b, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" **We need not fear, for God is with us.**

As Joshua, we need direction for our lives. As God commanded Joshua to meditate on His Word day and night, so we will know His will as we read our Bibles and make His Word our meditation.

What kind of person can God choose to be a leader? A person cannot just jump in and lead a group of people in his own strength. First, one who leads must be led, submitted to God--a person who will follow God's Word; he must be a person who knows who God is and represents God to others. Joshua was one of the twelve spies sent to scout out the land of Canaan; he and another spy (Caleb) were the only ones to give a favorable report (see Numbers 13:8, 16, 17; 14:6-9). Joshua spent over 40 years watching God work. He spent years by Moses' side humbly learning all that he could—sort of like a "school of faith" that would prepare him to handle difficult situations in the future and to lead God's people.

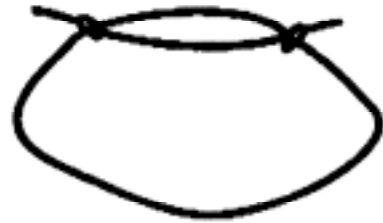
God will take us through situations where the only thing we can do is trust God. He uses tough times to take us through a "school of faith" just as He took the great people of the Bible through a school of faith. We need not be afraid, for God is with us and will strengthen us to fulfill His calling for our lives. **We need not fear, for God is with us.**

4-Ever Bracelets

You will need strips of leather or string. The age group of your class will determine how much assistance will be needed to do the craft. Tie the strip or string around the child's wrist according to the diagram below. Slide knots apart to tighten; slide knots together to loosen.

During this activity, explain to the children that their bracelets are in the shape of circles. Like a circle that has no beginning or end, God has promised to be with us forever.

Example of tying knot:



JOSHUA 1:10-15

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

"Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'"

And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying,

"Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.'

"Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them,

"until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He gave you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the Lord's servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise."

Joshua assumed the position God gave to him. Stepping out in faith, he gave commands to the tribes of Israel to prepare themselves for the conquest of Canaan. He also reminded the tribes of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh (tribes that chose to remain and settle outside the promised land) that, according to the word of Moses, they must help their brethren with their conquest of Canaan.

Note: Moses exhorted the tribes (those who chose to remain settled outside the land) to help their brethren though the tribes would gain nothing themselves for their efforts. We should always be willing to help others, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus said that people will know that we are His disciples by our love for one another.

JOSHUA 1:16-18

So they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

"Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses.

"Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage."

Here we see the people promising Joshua their obedience, not only as a people, but as soldiers facing the battle. Whenever we step into God's promises for us, we must realize that we have a very real enemy who will try to do everything he can to stop us.

Just as the people promised they would obey in all things, without questioning him or murmuring against him, so when our "General," the Lord, gives us a command, we must obey without questioning or murmuring.

The people cried, "Only the Lord your God be with you, as He was with Moses." The people trusted that God would be with Joshua and that God would be the source of his power.

Then, the people encouraged Joshua with the same encouragement that the Lord gave to Joshua, "Only be strong and of a good courage." If we feel like our 'enemy' is attacking us, we too can take comfort as did Joshua and "be strong and of good courage." In Ephesians 6:10, we are exhorted "to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Ephesians 6:10).

Memory Verse Reminder

Refer to the enclosed artwork. Have the children cut out the memory verse rectangle with the memory verse on it. Then, color and cut out the sun, moon, and stars disk. Attach with a brad to the back of the sheet with the window. Pictures should show through the cut out window to represent day and night. Option: Gluing the rectangle to construction paper will make it sturdier.

As the children are constructing, remind them, “God will always be there for us, day or night, all of the time!”

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer to ask the Lord to help them remember that He will never leave them nor forsake them; they have nothing to fear. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them the opportunity.

