



Introduction

About ABC

Mission

Answers Bible Curriculum was developed to present the gospel, beginning in Genesis, to all generations; to train believers to know, obey, and defend God’s Word; and to encourage believers to become conformed to the image of Christ.

Overview

The 2009 book *Already Gone* by Ken Ham and Britt Beemer (and the scientific study on which the book is based) reveals the reasons why young people are leaving the church. In much of the teaching today in our churches, the Bible is disconnected from the real world, and the authority of Scripture is undermined and replaced with secular reasoning using man’s ideas.

The church has failed to teach the Bible as relevant fact. We have—intentionally or unintentionally—taught the Scriptures as nothing but “stories” that relate to spiritual matters but have avoided engaging the challenging questions from the secular world that bombard church children and adults the other 166 hours of their week. As a result, children are beginning to doubt the Bible—and the gospel message that it presents—as early as elementary school. Many studies confirm that more than 60% of young people leave the church after they graduate from high school.

Answers Bible Curriculum is designed and written to provide answers to the questions and issues that confront youth (and adults) in school, in the media, from friends, at work, etc. It is our hope and prayer that God will be pleased to use this curriculum to instill a lifelong trust in the Bible and in the God who authored it.

Guiding Principles

Certain principles guided our writers, editors, and reviewers as we developed Answers Bible Curriculum. These principles are reflected in the teaching, activities, and illustrations presented throughout the curriculum.

We can trust all of God's Word beginning in Genesis.

- God's Word is true; God does not lie.
- The historical record of the Bible is confirmed often by historical, archaeological, and scientific support.

God's attributes are displayed throughout the Bible.

- God's sovereignty is demonstrated in history as he fulfills his purposes through people and events.
- God's attributes (including his holiness, justice, love, and mercy) are demonstrated through his dealings with people.

The Bible presents true history.

- The Bible presents real history, showing the unfolding plan of God to redeem a people for himself.
- The historical accounts of the Bible intersect with secular history.

We must carefully and accurately interpret the Bible.

- The proper use of hermeneutics helps us understand the Bible accurately.
- Understanding the Bible requires time and effort.

God's plan of redemption is woven throughout Scripture.

- God's plan of redemption is presented throughout the Bible, beginning in Genesis.
- Many accounts in the Old Testament connect to the New Testament and point to Jesus and the gospel message.

We must be ready to give a defense for what we believe.

- Students and adults must be equipped with answers to questions skeptics ask.
- We can use science, history, archaeology, etc. to confirm the accuracy of the biblical record.

We are to live in light of what the Bible teaches.

- God's Word is applicable today.
- We can learn from scriptural examples of obedience (and disobedience) to God's Word.
- Believers are called to walk in obedience to God's Word.

Bible Version

Answers Bible Curriculum uses the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible.

Scope & Sequence

Answers Bible Curriculum is a 200-lesson curriculum that covers the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, in chronological fashion. The first 120 lessons survey the Old Testament, and the final 80 lessons survey the New Testament. Where appropriate, lessons include apologetics material confirming the accuracy of the biblical record, as well as historical background and life application.

Summary

- 200-lesson, four-year curriculum (50 lessons per year); but take as long as you need to complete it
- Available in six age levels: Pre-K-1, Grades 2-3, Grades 4-5, Middle School, High School, Adult
- Chronological Bible teaching for all levels
- Synchronized lessons—all ages study the same Scriptures each week
- Based on the ESV

How to Use ABC

Teacher Kit Components

Answers Bible Curriculum includes all the necessary elements for you to teach your students with excellence while engaging them in the learning process. The Teacher Kit for each unit of lessons includes the following items:

Teacher Guide—Ten lessons with lesson overview, background material, preparation chart, scripted lesson, and game instructions. The tenth lesson of each unit is a review lesson.

Student Take Home Sheets—Sample set of nine full-color, two-page take home sheets with lesson review and memory verse activities.

Lesson Theme Posters—Nine full-color, illustrated, 8.5 x 11 posters depicting the main point of each lesson. On the back of each poster is the Lesson Focus, Key Passages, and What You Heard in the Word. These posters are used for teaching and reviewing the lessons.

Memory Verse Posters—Two 17 x 22 posters per unit with the memory verses.

Classroom Posters—These large classroom posters enhance the lessons and provide visual reminders of important truths. The posters for this unit include:

- The Books of the Bible
- The Attributes of God
- Game Board
- Exodus to Malachi Timeline
- Ten Commandments

Optional Resources

The following additional resources may be purchased from AnswersBookstore.com or by calling 800-778-3390.

Books of the Bible Flashcards—Sixty-seven 5 x 7 flashcards. Each card has a colorful illustration on the front, and the back features key facts about each book's author, date of writing, key people, main message, and what each book reveals about God and his character.

Books of the Bible Trading Cards—The same as the flashcards, but each card measures 2.75 x 4.

Books of the Bible Coloring Book—Students will have fun coloring these scenes based on the accounts of Scripture. All 66 books of the Old and New Testaments are represented.

Seven C's of History Timeline—This large wall chart covers biblical and historical events from Creation (4004 BC) to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. It follows the chronology of Archbishop James Ussher and helps students to understand the flow of history and to see how biblical events fit with secular events.

Teacher Digital Resources

When you purchased Answers Bible Curriculum, you received access to a digital library that contains items such as student class notes, game and activity instructions, lesson illustrations, video clips, PowerPoint presentations, review questions, and skits. Be sure to leave enough time to look at the Lesson Preparation section of the lesson so that any needed items can be printed or gathered prior to class.

- Access these resources at MyAnswers.com/abc-resources using the **Resources Code** inside the back cover of this Teacher Guide.
- You may also purchase these resources on a USB flash drive from AnswersBookstore.com or by calling 800-778-3390.

Memory Verse Songs

We teamed up with Seeds Family Worship to produce original Memory Verse songs available as MP3s, lyric videos, and split-screen hand-motion/lyric videos.

- Access the songs at MyAnswers.com/abc-resources using the **Songs Code** inside the back cover of this Teacher Guide.
- CDs and DVDs for students and teachers are available for purchase at AnswersBookstore.com or by calling 800-778-3390.

Teacher Guide

We have designed the lessons so that they are easy to teach and provide everything needed to successfully guide your students in understanding the Bible and knowing God—the author of the Bible. Here is a breakdown of what is included in each lesson and how to get the most out of it.

Lesson Overview

Lesson Focus—Each lesson has a short statement with the main theme of the lesson for that week.

Key Passages—These are the Bible passages that will be studied in the lesson. Your teaching will be more rewarding if you familiarize yourself with the key passages before class.

Objectives—Each lesson teaches specific learning objectives. These are what we expect the students will understand by the end of the lesson.

Memory Verse—Students will work on memorizing two passages per unit. Our hope is that this will enable the students to really learn these Scriptures—to hide them in their hearts—and to know them well enough that they will be able to recite them from memory not only at the end of the unit but also at the end of the year!

Lesson Preparation

This chart shows everything you need to do to prepare for each week's lesson. Be sure to consult this several days before class so you can choose games, gather supplies, and print materials from the Teacher Digital Resources.

Optional Supplements—Many of the lessons include optional hands-on activities, a PowerPoint presentation, and video clips. These should be previewed and then incorporated into the lesson where appropriate. Slide numbers in the lessons coincide with the PowerPoint presentations. To properly view the slides, download the PowerPoint fonts from the Teacher Digital Resources and install them.

All pages that are instructions for the teacher will have the word “Teacher” in the footer,

while student pages will have the word “Student.” This should make it easy for an assistant to know which pages get multiple copies for students.

Large Group/Small Group Suggestions—While the lessons are written for graded classrooms, we have included suggestions for what order to teach the lesson elements for churches that use a large group/small group format.

Prepare to Share

We have provided background information to help you understand the biblical and historical context of the passage being studied. Where appropriate, we have also included apologetics information that will confirm the truth of the Scriptures.

Lesson Elements

The lessons are broken down into several elements to make it easier for you to teach and to allow for flexibility. We realize that some teachers have a full hour or more for Sunday school, while others may have only 20 minutes of teaching time. We have planned our lessons to take about 45–50 minutes to teach. Of course, this will vary greatly depending on your class size, student maturity level, etc.

Come On In—The Come On In activity is something for the students to do while they are arriving. The intent is to provide order as students come into the room by giving a specific assignment. The game materials and instructions are included in the Teacher Digital Resources and in the Appendix at the back of this Teacher Guide. These games use the Question Cards printed from the Teacher Digital Resources.

Memory Verse—Practice the memory verse every week using the Memory Verse Poster and the Memory Verse Song. There are also a number of games you can choose for the students to play. Game instructions are included in the Teacher Digital Resources and in the Appendix in the back of this Teacher Guide.

Studying God's Word—This is the main teaching part of the lesson including the introduction, Bible study, and application.

The lesson is written in a Say-Ask format so inexperienced teachers or substitutes will easily be able to step in and teach by following the script, while experienced teachers may want to “make it their own.” Throughout the lesson you will see margin notes with teacher tips, definitions, and other reminders to assist you in planning and teaching.

Group Prayer Time—We encourage you to pray with your students and take prayer requests as time allows.

Lesson Review—Each lesson includes a set of Review Questions to use with the lesson review

games. Game instructions can be found in the Teacher Digital Resources or in the Appendix at the back of this Teacher Guide.

Student Take Home Sheets

Nine lessons in each unit (Pre-K–Grade 5) include a full-color, two-page Student Take Home Sheet. The Student Take Home Sheets are designed to encourage lesson review, family discussion, and application to real-life situations. A sample set comes in the Teacher Kit. Additional sheets are available for purchase.

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Leading a Child to Christ

Many of the lessons present an ideal opportunity to share the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ with your students. Every teacher should be ready to clearly present the gospel and counsel those wanting to learn more. Children are usually soft-hearted toward things of the Lord, and some will be interested in becoming followers of Christ. Be ready, because eternal matters matter most!

Before

Pray. Salvation is God's work, not ours. We cannot bring about salvation for anyone. We need to ask God to prepare the children and open their hearts to him.

Prepare. Learn more about presenting the gospel and counseling a child about salvation.

During

The gospel is clearly presented in many of the lessons. You may give a group invitation or choose to share with a child one-on-one or with a small group of children. When you explain the gospel, please keep the following in mind:

- Becoming a child of God involves repenting of one's sin and having faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Repentance involves understanding what sin is (disobeying God's commands) and desiring to turn from that sin.
- Use your Bible to explain the plan of salvation. Children need to see and hear God's Word, so have your Bible open and marked ahead of time with the appropriate Scriptures.
Avoid abstract phrases like "asking Jesus into your heart." Instead, use terminology like "becoming a child of God." Most children still think in concrete terms and need examples that are easy to understand.
- If a child indicates an interest to know more after hearing the gospel, determine if the child has an understanding of his sin. This is very important. A child who cannot verbalize

sin, who does not seem to be repentant toward God because he is a sinner, or who does not realize that he must turn away from his sin cannot fully understand his need for a Savior. Ask questions about sin that require more than "yes" or "no" answers:

- Do you know what sin is? Can you explain it to me?
 - Can you think of some sins you have done?
 - Are you sorry for your sins? Who are you sorry to?
 - Why are you sorry for your sins?
 - What do you think you should do about these sins in your life?
- If you are not satisfied that God has revealed to this child that his sin is an offense against our holy God, we recommend that you present a booklet we have developed for children that explains the gospel further. It is called *How Can I Become a Child of God?* and can be ordered from AnswersBibleCurriculum.com.
 - If the child does seem to be sincerely sorry for his sins, you can proceed with more questions like the following:
 - Why did Jesus come to earth? Why did Jesus need to die? Why did Jesus rise again?
 - Why do you want Jesus to be your Savior?
 - Why should God let you into his family? (Make sure the child understands that salvation is not based on what he does but is a gracious gift of God through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus.)
 - When a child seems to have a basic understanding of salvation (belief in Jesus' death and resurrection, admission of and repentance from sin, and a desire to follow the Lord), encourage him to talk to his parents (if they are followers of Christ) about what it means to become a child of God. Encourage a child who comes from a non-Christian home to verbalize his un-

derstanding to the Lord through prayer. There is no specific prayer that should be prayed. Encourage him to ask the Lord to forgive him and help him know he is a child of God.

- Let him see in your words and your face that you are excited that he wants to become a child of God! Read Luke 15:10 to him.
- Some children may not be ready to make a decision for Christ but may want to learn more, to be assured of salvation, or to confess sin. Read Romans 10:9–10 and John 10:28–29 with children who are seeking assurance of their salvation. Encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are his children. Read 1 John 1:9 with children who want to confess sin and encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are forgiven when they repent.

After

- Review what it means to be a child of God.
 - How long does God keep his children? (Hebrews 13:5b, John 10:28–29)
 - Can anything separate God from his children? (Romans 8:38–39)

- What happens when God's children sin? (1 John 1:9)

- What do children of God believe? (Romans 10:9)

- Explain that Jesus loves his children and wants to spend time with them. Discuss practical ways to grow as a child of God. Provide him with the booklet *Growing Up in God's Family* (available at AnswersBookstore.com), and share the following:

- Read your Bible, and obey what you read. (Make sure he has a Bible at home, and if not, provide one. Write his name, the date, and the occasion on the presentation page.)

- Pray every day. Prayer is talking to God.

- Go to a church that believes and teaches the Bible as the Word of God.

- Tell others about Jesus. Tell your friends, family, and neighbors how they can become children of God.

- Stay in touch with the child through postcards, visits, or phone calls.

Unit 7 Syllabus

Lesson 61	Moses Sends the Spies	Exodus 3:8, 23:20–23; Numbers 13:23, 13:27–28, 13:32–33
Lesson 62	God Judges Rebellion	Numbers 16:1–3, 16:12–14, 21:5–9; John 3:14–15
Lesson 63	God Prepares the Way	Deuteronomy 3:1–5; Numbers 22:26–35, 23:8–12
Lesson 64	Rahab Helps the Spies	Joshua 1:5–6, 2:1, 2:11, 6:25; Hebrews 11:31
Lesson 65	Israel Crosses the Jordan	Joshua 3:14–17, 4:19–24; Luke 22:19–20
Lesson 66	Israel Conquers Jericho	Joshua 6:1–6, 6:15–17, 6:20, 6:23, 6:25
Lesson 67	God Gives the Victory	Joshua 7:1, 7:4–6, 7:20–22, 10:9–14
Lesson 68	Israel Receives a Land	Joshua 11:4–5, 11:23; Genesis 17:6–8; Joshua 14:11–13, 24:14–15
Lesson 69	Israel Turns to Idols	Joshua 21:43–45; Judges 2:11–16, 3:7–12; Luke 18:18–23
Lesson 70	Unit Review	



Moses Sends the Spies

Moses sent twelve men to spy out the Promised Land.

Lesson Focus

When the time came for the Israelites to enter the land God promised to Abraham, they had a crisis of faith. Ten of the men who spied out the land were afraid of the giants and the fortified cities. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, trusted that God would give them victory.

Key Passages

Exodus 3:8, 23:20–23; Numbers 13:23, 13:27–28, 13:32–33

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe God's promise of a land for the Israelites.
- Compare the faith of Joshua and Caleb with the faith of the other spies.

Memory Verse

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print the following:

- One Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- One set of Clue Cards, cut out and taped around the room.
- One Israelites' Response Skit for each student. Keep one copy for your use.

Bring a timer/stopwatch and tape.

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Lord, help me to rely on the promises you have made in your Word. When I fear, please bring to my remembrance the faith of Joshua and Caleb—how they believed you, stood up for you, and did not fear! Please prepare the hearts of my students to hear from your Word and give them confidence to trust you even when they are afraid.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 61*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

Studying God's Word
Group Prayer

Small Group

Come On In
Memory Verse
Optional Activity
Lesson Review
Take Home Sheet

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

“To your offspring I will give this land” (Genesis 12:7). God had promised an inheritance to Abraham, and as the years went by it was passed to Isaac (Genesis 26:3), Jacob (Genesis 35:11–12), and Moses (Exodus 3:7–10). The Lord had promised to send an angel before Moses and the Israelites to guard and lead them. God would drive out the inhabitants of the Promised Land and bless the Israelites as they walked in obedience to his commands (Exodus 23:20–23).

The Israelites had witnessed the protection and omnipotence of God as he wiped out an entire army (Exodus 14:28) and as he provided water from a rock (Exodus 17:6), bread from heaven (Exodus 16:14–15), and meat from the wind (Numbers 11:31). They had seen his presence in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21). Yet they continued to doubt God, disobey him, and complain of their hardships.

At the border of the land of Canaan, the Israelites revealed their complete lack of trust in God. In the second year after the Israelites left Egypt, Moses sent 12 spies into Canaan, including Joshua and Caleb. Each spy was a representative of the tribe of his fathers (Numbers 13:1–20). The land was indeed abundant just as God had promised

(Numbers 13:27). Yet most of the spies, upon seeing the strong people, the fortified cities, and the giant descendants of Anak, were overcome by fear (Numbers 13:28–33). Only Joshua and Caleb spoke favorably of the land, pleading with the Israelites to have courage and faith in God’s promises and to trust that the Lord was with them—there was nothing to fear (Numbers 14:6–9).

Their cries to the people went unheeded; the Israelites refused to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:2–4) and threatened to kill Caleb and Joshua (Numbers 14:10). God’s judgment was both merciful and righteous as he pardoned their rebellion (Numbers 14:20) yet decreed that they would not enter into Canaan to see the land sworn to their fathers—none who had rejected God would ever see it (Numbers 14:23). All but Caleb, Joshua, and those under 20 years old would die in the wilderness and never see the fulfillment of the promise (Numbers 14:29–31). God also punished the 10 spies who spread the bad report by killing them with a plague (Numbers 14:36–37).

God is the same God today as he was then. He is immutable—he does not change. He will punish sin, but he rewards those who trust in him. We can stand on the promises as revealed in his Word just as surely as Caleb and Joshua believed him in the wilderness. He will not let us down; he will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Historical/Apologetics Background

We are told that when the Israelites left Egypt there were “about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds” (Exodus 12:37–38). In the second year after the Exodus, a census revealed that there were 603,550 men age 20 and above (Numbers 1:46). About 38 years after the first census, just before Israel was to finally enter the Promised Land, the total number of men age 20 and older came to 601,730 (Numbers 26:51). Many have estimated that when women and children are added, the total number of Israelites would have been between 2 and 3 million. That is quite a throng

of people to oversee, feed, care for, and move around the desert for 40 years.

Because of this seemingly impossible task, some have inferred that the number of Israelites was likely tens of thousands rather than millions. It is true that from a purely natural perspective it doesn’t seem possible that several million people could survive in the desert all those years. Critics have mentioned the amount of food needed, the waste that would be produced, the logistics of moving such a large group of people, and the space required for camping.

What many people fail to understand is that the Lord supernaturally cared for his people for 40 years:

He . . . fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years (Deuteronomy 8:3–4).

God provided quail and manna for them to eat (Exodus 16:13–15), water when they thirsted (Exodus 17:1–7), and even clothing that did not wear out. This sojourn in the wilderness was far from a natural phenomenon: beginning with God appearing in the burning bush, the display of his omnipotence during the plagues that seized Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, and the destruction of the Egyptian army. God himself had brought his people out of Egypt, and he had decreed that they would wander for 40 years. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the entire universe, so caring for them was a simple task because nothing is impossible with him (Luke 1:37).

Despite the miracles God performed on their behalf, the Israelites refused to trust and obey God at the border of the Promised Land. They feared the strong cities and giants, the descendants of Anak (Numbers 13:33). The fear of facing these giants in

battle kept them from moving forward, trusting God for protection, and finally seeing the land of Canaan.

Although the people were convinced not to attempt to fight the giants this time and ran in fear, Joshua, in God’s strength, later led a force against the Anakim (Joshua 11:21). But some giants remained in Gaza, Ashdod, and Gath (Joshua 11:22). It was from Gath that the Philistine warrior Goliath would later threaten the Israelites under King Saul (1 Samuel 17:4–11). This one man terrorized the entire Israelite army to the point that they doubted God’s ability to fight for them (1 Samuel 17:24).

There will always be the courageous few whose trust in God will bear witness to his faithfulness. In the account of the 12 spies, God’s strength accompanied Joshua and Caleb. In the account of Goliath, God’s strength was revealed through David as he took down the giant that an entire army cowered from.

Throughout the history of mankind, circumstances have threatened to sway our trust in the faithfulness of God. In spite of the abundant promises he makes to us in his Word, we are often tempted to believe the world and deny our Creator. But we can learn from God’s words to Joshua: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

Slide #2

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. When we started the book of Exodus, we learned that the Israelites were living in Egypt. God blessed them with many children, and they grew into a numerous people. Then a new pharaoh came to power, and he enslaved the Israelites.

- ? Who did God raise up to deliver the Israelites from slavery? *Moses.*

God protected Moses as a baby and called him to lead the people. God performed great miracles through Moses and Aaron to punish Pharaoh and the Egyptians for refusing to let the Israelites go. After the ten plagues and the Exodus, God continued to protect his people. He parted the Red Sea and destroyed Pharaoh's army when they chased after them. Then he provided food and water for them in the wilderness.

God gave Moses the Ten Commandments and instructions to build the tabernacle, a special place of worship.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Today we'll be talking about men who were sent to spy out the land of Canaan.

- ? What does a spy do? *Allow discussion.*

A spy is someone who secretly collects information, usually on an enemy, and reports it. The spies we'll read about today were sent by Moses at God's command to collect information on the land and people living in Canaan. The Canaanites lived there, along with other people who didn't worship God. God planned to lead his people to victory and give them the land as their inheritance.

Slide #3

The Promise of God

The Israelites followed God's direction and traveled until they reached the border of the land of Canaan. We also call this land the Promised Land because it's the land God promised to give Abraham and his descendants. This promise passed from Abraham to his son Isaac and then to his son Jacob. Then about 400 years went by, and God gave the promise to someone else.

► Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

Exodus 3:8

- ? Turn to Exodus 3:8. Who will read that for us? *Assign a reader.*
- ? Who are the characters in this verse? Who is talking to whom? You'll have to do some spy work and look in other verses nearby for the answer. *Give hint to look at verse 11, if necessary. God and Moses.*
- ? What was God promising to Moses in verse 8? *Land.*
- ? How did God describe the land he was promising to Moses and the Israelites? *A good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

 Slide #4

God promised an inheritance of this land to Abraham and his descendants. By the time of Moses, Abraham's descendants, the Israelites, were a numerous people. God delivered them from slavery in Egypt and led them to the Promised Land.

- ? But will they finally enter the land? *Allow guesses.*
- Look at the end of verse 8. See the list of all those names? The Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites were the names of the peoples living in the Promised Land then.
- ? Do you think these people knew and worshipped God? *No.*
- ? Do you think they wanted to give up their good land to a group of former slaves, the Israelites? *No!*

No. They wouldn't give up the land and their homes without a fight. God knew this would scare the Israelites, so he gave them another promise.

Exodus 23:20–23

- ? Who will read that promise in Exodus 23:20–23? *Assign readers.*
- ? Who did God promise to send before the people to guard them and guide them? *An angel.*

 Slides #5–6

God promised that his angel would lead them in the right direction and keep them safe as they entered the land.

- ? What did God command the Israelites to do in verse 22? *Obey his voice and do all that he said.*
- ? What would happen if they obeyed? *God would be an enemy to their enemies.*

Adversary is another word for an enemy, so God was promising that his angel would protect them and help them against their enemies when they came to the land with all those other people living in it.

- ? What did God say he would do to those peoples at the end of verse 23?
Blot them out.

That's another way of saying he would completely destroy them. Those are great promises for the Israelites!

Let's look at our Class Notes. Today, you will circle the correct answer for each question.

 Slide #7

- ? Who will read and answer #1? *Choose a reader. Land. Have students complete #1.*

- Remember to prepare Clue Cards and tape/place them around the room. They don't need to be hidden since students will have limited time to find them.

The Spies' Report

Now comes the spy part! God told Moses to send men to spy out the land. These 12 men were to come from each tribe of Israel. Joshua was one of the spies, and he was from the tribe of Ephraim, one of Joseph's sons. He was Moses' assistant, and he'd led the Israelites in the battle against the Amalekites. Caleb was another spy, and he was from the tribe of Judah. Their mission was to collect information on the land (if it was good or bad), the people (if they were weak or strong), and the cities (if they were camps or fortified with walls). Moses also asked them to bring back some fruit of the land. *On the board, write the title "Mission" with four headings underneath: Land, People, Cities, Fruit.*

The 12 spies left on their mission, and they traveled all over the land of Canaan to collect the information Moses asked for. They were gone for 40 days.

Today, you have a spy mission just like the 12 spies! Your mission is to collect 10 clues that are on cards in this room. When you find one, you have to race up to the board and stick it under one of these four categories. You may work together to guess what category the clue goes under, but you have limited time. Spies have to make decisions quickly, so I'm going to give you only two minutes (*or more/less time depending on class and room size*) to find and place all the clues on the board. We'll check the answers after to see how many you get right! Everyone ready? Go! *Set the timer and allow students to collect clues and put them on the board. Give a final countdown then have students return to their seats.*

Great job! Let's go to the Class Notes and answer some questions before we check your work on the board.

 Slide #8

- ? Who will answer #2 and tell us how many spies went into the Promised Land? *Choose a reader. 12. Have students complete #2.*
- ? And #3, how many days did they take to spy? *Choose a reader. 40. Have students complete #3.*

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's check your answers on the board now by turning to the fourth book of the Bible—Numbers.

Numbers 13:23

- ? Who will read Numbers 13:23? *Assign a reader.*
- ? This verse tells us about which category on the board? *Fruit.*
- ? Right! So, what fruits did the spies bring back from the Promised Land? *Grapes, pomegranates, figs.*
- ? Did you get those three clues under the Fruit category on the board? *Yes/no. Correct the clues on the board if they were incorrect.*
- ? So, what is the answer to #4 on the Class Notes? *Choose a reader. Apples. Have students complete #4.*

 Slides #9–10

Numbers 13:27–28

- ? Who will read Numbers 13:27? *Assign a reader.*
- ? Verse 27 gives the spies' report about the land. How did they describe it? *It flows with milk and honey.*
- ? Did you get the clues “milk” and “honey” under Land? *Yes/no. Correct the clues on the board if they were incorrect.*

 Slide #11

A land flowing with milk and honey may seem like a strange description to us, but it means that the land was rich and good! It doesn't mean there were actual rivers of milk and honey. It means that the land had plentiful trees and grass and water, so it was good for growing food, keeping animals, and building cities.

- ? How will you answer #5 on the Class Notes? *Choose a reader. Honey, milk. Have students complete #5.*
- ? Who will read verse 28? *Assign a reader.*
- ? This verse tells us about the people and the cities. What did the spies say about the people living in the land? *They are strong.*
- ? And what about the cities? *Fortified and very large.*
- ? Did you get “strong” under People and “fortified” and “large” under Cities? *Yes/no. Correct the clues on the board if they were incorrect.*

 Slides #12–13

Cities that were fortified back then usually had walls protecting them. Walled cities were harder to attack than those without walls. The Israelites were probably hoping that the cities in the land were open camps, which would be easier to attack.

Numbers 13:32–33

- ? Who will read Numbers 13:32–33? *Assign a reader.*
- ? What descriptions are given about the people in the land at the end of verse 32 and in verse 33? *Great height. Sons of Anak.*

 Slide #14

Great height means that the people were tall. They were called Nephilim, and they were the descendants of Anak. They were giants! That’s why the 10 spies said they felt like grasshoppers compared to them.

- ? Did you get “tall” and “giant” under People on the board? *Yes/no. Correct the clues on the board if they were incorrect.*

Joshua and Caleb reported that the land was good, and they could take it over with God on their side. But the other 10 spies gave a bad report by saying that the cities were large and fortified and the people were tall and strong. They didn’t think they could defeat these people in battle.

Slide #15

- ? Look at #6 on the Class Notes. What will you circle there? *Choose a reader. Giant, strong, tall. Have students complete #6.*

- Pass out the Israelites’ Response Skits and assign parts.

The Israelites’ Response

What do you think the Israelites did with the information from the spies? Did they listen to Joshua and Caleb and enter the Promised Land, or did they turn back in fear?

Israelites’ Response Skit

Let’s find out as you act out what happened next from Numbers 14:1–10. *Pass out the Israelites’ Response Skits and assign parts. You may assign the Children of Israel lines to different students or have all the students without another role read them together. Have students read and act out the skit.*

Good job, everyone! I’m going to ask some questions. Look at the skit to help with the answers.

- ? What were the people grumbling about? What were they afraid of? *They wished they had died in Egypt or the wilderness. They thought they and their families would be killed by enemies in the Promised Land.*
- ? What were they planning to do? *Choose a new leader and go back to Egypt.*
- ? How did Moses and Aaron react when they heard the people say this? *They fell on their faces!*

Yes. They were very upset at the people’s response to the spies’ report. They knew that God would not be pleased with the people’s fear, grumbling, and lack of trust in him.

- ? The people were afraid to go into the Promised Land, but how did Joshua and Caleb feel about the land? *They knew it was a good land.*
- ? What did Joshua and Caleb tell the people? *The Lord will give the land to us, just don’t rebel or be afraid.*
- ? How did the people respond when they heard from Joshua and Caleb? What were they going to do to them? *Stone them.*

- ? What happened to stop the people from hurting Joshua and Caleb? *The glory of the Lord appeared.*

The Lord appeared and spoke to Moses. He was furious with the Israelites. They had traveled such a long way and finally made it to the Promised Land. God had promised to send an angel to protect them and go before them. But the people would not listen. Even when the spies reported that the land was as wonderful as they could have imagined, they did not trust that God would give them victory over the people living there.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Of the 12 spies, Joshua and Caleb were the only ones who had faith in God. They knew that with God on their side, they could defeat any people—even giants! The Israelites were thinking about winning battles in their own strength, and they became afraid and lost faith that God would keep his promises.

 Slide #16

God had mercy on the Israelites and didn't destroy them all for their rebellion and lack of faith, but he promised that the Israelites would wander in the wilderness for 40 years until all the adults over 20 years old died. Then God struck the 10 spies, who gave a bad report, with a plague, and they died. Only Joshua and Caleb were spared because they believed the Lord. That whole generation, all those who had seen God deliver them from Egypt and Pharaoh's army, never got to see the land "flowing with milk and honey." But the young people under 20 would be the ones to enter the Promised Land.

- ? Let's complete our Class Notes. Who will answer #7 and tell us what Joshua and Caleb had that the 10 spies didn't? *Choose a reader. Faith. Have students complete #7.*

 Slide #17

Application

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. When the Israelites finally reached the Promised Land, Moses sent in the 12 spies. Ten of the spies came back afraid. Only Joshua and Caleb were courageous and trusted in the promise of the Lord. The Israelites listened to the 10 spies who were afraid, and they did not believe God's promise. And so they did not enter the land but wandered in the desert for 40 years.

 Slide #18

Like the Israelites and the 10 spies, we sometimes get scared, don't we? Maybe it is something like a bad storm, or your dog getting lost, or someone being sick, or having to move away, change schools, or go to a different church. Maybe your mom or dad lost a job. These things can frighten us. But God wants us to be like Joshua and Caleb. He wants us to trust him—even when things are really hard. Joshua and Caleb believed God's Word—that what he said was true. They had confidence and were not afraid.

When we go through hard times, God wants us to do the same thing. He wants us to trust him based on what his Word tells us about him. His Word tells us that he is faithful, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. When we believe these things about God, we can be just like Joshua and Caleb. We don't need to be afraid. *If time, review the meanings of these attributes from the Attributes of God Poster and discuss how believing them can keep us from being afraid.*

- ▶ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Thank God for his promises and faithfulness.
- Ask God for faith and courage like Joshua and Caleb to trust him even when we're afraid.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



God Judges Rebellion

God punished the people for rebelling and complaining.

Lesson Focus

Three men rebelled against Moses and Aaron's God-given leadership. God judged them by supernaturally opening the earth and swallowing them up, along with their tents and families. The people blamed Moses and Aaron and continued to complain about food and water. God sent fiery serpents that killed some. Only those who looked to the bronze serpent were saved from God's judgment.

Key Passages

Numbers 16:1–3, 16:12–14, 21:5–9; John 3:14–15

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain God's judgment on Korah for his rebellion against Moses.
- Explain God's mercy to the Israelites through the bronze serpent.

Memory Verse

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print one Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

Bring the following for the God's Judgment reenactment:

- Six name tags or sticky labels
- Marker for name tags
- Several foam/plastic cups
- One large tablecloth/sheet

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Lord, thank you for the warning of how you judge rebellion and complaining. Help me as I teach this lesson on your judgment and mercy. May my students understand the seriousness of sin and turn to Jesus for mercy and forgiveness. Guard our hearts from rebellion and our tongues from grumbling.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 62*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

Studying God's Word
Group Prayer

Small Group

Come On In
Memory Verse
Optional Activity
Lesson Review
Take Home Sheet

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

After hearing the report of the 10 spies about giants in the land, the Israelites refused to enter the Promised Land. For their rebellion, God decreed that all the people would wander in the wilderness for 40 years until the adults perished. Only Joshua and Caleb, the spies who gave a positive report and urged the people to trust God for victory, would get to take possession of the Promised Land along with the Israelites under age 20 (Numbers 14:28–32).

During the wilderness wanderings, several men instigated a rebellion against the leadership of Moses, Aaron, and ultimately, God. Korah was from the tribe of Levi and a cousin of Moses and Aaron. He desired leadership and authority. Korah gathered 250 Israelite leaders, including Dathan and Abiram who were leaders from the tribe of Reuben. They assembled against Moses and Aaron, claiming that all the Israelites were holy because God dwelt among them. Then they accused Moses and Aaron of exalting themselves to positions of authority (Numbers 16:1–3). Moses proposed a test where God would show whom he wanted to be priests. Moses recognized that pride and jealousy were behind the men’s actions. They were not only challenging his and Aaron’s authority but also God’s since he appointed them (Numbers 16:11). Dathan and Abiram refused to even answer Moses’ summons to talk. They falsely accused him of making himself a prince, trying to kill them in the wilderness, and not leading them into the Promised Land. These lies made Moses angry, and he asked the Lord to justify him (Numbers 16:12–15).

The next day, the rebels and the leaders assembled at the entrance of the tent of meeting. This rebellious gathering incurred the wrath of the Lord, who was ready to destroy the whole congregation of Israel

Historical/Apologetics Background

People may wonder why God instructed Moses to make the bronze serpent for the people to look to for healing. But there are several lessons God wanted to teach his people. First, God was teaching them about faith. There was nothing supernatural

if Moses and Aaron had not interceded for them. Instead, God in his mercy told Moses to warn the Israelites to move away from Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their dwellings (Numbers 16:23–26). Moses said that if God miraculously opened the earth and swallowed up the rebels, then the people would know that these men “despised the LORD” (Numbers 16:30). When he finished speaking, God did exactly that—an earthquake split the ground open, and those men, their families, and their belongings fell into the chasm—and the earth closed over them. The Israelites panicked and fled. Then fire from the Lord consumed the 250 leaders who were vying for the priesthood (Numbers 16:31–35).

In spite of these judgments, the Israelites continued to complain. The next day, they accused Moses of killing the rebels and leaders. God responded by sending a plague that was only halted by Aaron making atonement for them (Numbers 16:47–50). Later in their travels, the people became desperate and grumbled for water. Moses and Aaron did not follow God’s instructions for providing water from a rock, and for their disobedience, God said they would not enter the Promised Land either (Numbers 20:8–12). The complaining continued when the people griped about food and water, even saying they hated the manna God provided (Numbers 21:5). This time, God judged them with fiery serpents that bit the people, causing many to die. The people recognized their sin and came to Moses and asked him to pray on their behalf. God answered with an amazing picture of the coming Savior. He had Moses make a bronze serpent and set it on a pole in the camp. Anyone who was bitten by the snakes could look to the serpent and be healed (Numbers 21:6–9). Just as the bronze serpent saved the people from physical death, Christ was raised on a cross so that all who look to him for salvation may be saved from eternal death (John 3:14–15).

in the bronze serpent that could heal them; only God could do that. But he wanted the people to have faith in his Word that they would be healed if they looked to it. Second, the serpent on the pole was also a reminder of their sin, which brought the

judgment of the poisonous snakes. Finally, God was giving a picture of the coming Savior. Just as the serpent was raised up on a pole, so Jesus was raised up on the cross to suffer. The people had to believe God would save them when they looked to the serpent, and we must believe in Christ's sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection to be saved from eternal death (John 3:14–15). Unfortunately, even this great picture of salvation was twisted for pagan worship. Years later in the Promised Land, the Israelites worshipped the bronze serpent until King Hezekiah destroyed it (2 Kings 18:4). How easy it was for them to slip into pagan practices instead of worshipping God alone.

One question that arises from Korah's rebellion and God's judgment is why the families of the rebels were destroyed along with the men. Numbers 16:27 records that Dathan and Abiram came out of their tents and stood with their wives, sons, and little ones. When the earth opened up, Korah and these men, along with their households and possessions, fell alive into the pit, and the earth closed over them (Numbers 16:32–33). This may seem like a harsh punishment for the families of those men, but there are several things to keep in mind. First, all people, no matter their age, are sinners by nature deserving of God's wrath. It is only by his great mercy that we are not all consumed (Lamentations 3:22–23 KJV). Second, God emphasized the seriousness of rebellion by including the families in the punishment. Rebellion spreads and affects others. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram involved the 250 leaders from other tribes. The Bible even lists rebellion with the sin of witchcraft (1 Samuel 15:23). God knew that the Israelites would not survive as a fledgling nation if they rebelled against his authority and his appointed leaders. They had to be unified in their obedience to God and his laws. This lesson

had to be memorable for the people, and it was. Over 1,000 years later, Jude warns against false teachers who reject God's authority and follow in the footsteps of Korah's rebellion (Jude 1:8, 1:11). Finally, God still demonstrated mercy in this account. Moses told the men to return the next day, which gave them time to repent, but they didn't. He also showed mercy to the people by warning them to remove themselves from the rebellious men. Korah's sons heeded this warning and were spared (Numbers 26:11), and their descendants would include the prophet Samuel, musicians in the service of King David (1 Chronicles 6:31–38), and warriors in David's army (1 Chronicles 12:6). God would have been just to punish all the people for assembling against him, but they were spared. Although the people didn't heed the warning—even in the miracle of an earthquake—and spoke against Moses the following day, God mercifully allowed Aaron to stand in the gap for them to stop the ensuing plague (Numbers 16:41–48).

These accounts of rebellion and judgment should be warnings to us. In fact, the Apostle Paul said that they were written down for our instruction (1 Corinthians 10:1–13). The apostle warns us not to desire evil, not to indulge in sexual immorality, and not to put Christ to the test or grumble as some of them did. Like they were, we too are weak and prone to sin. But thankfully, God gives us this promise: "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). May we take the way of escape that God provides. And when we don't, may we have soft hearts to recognize our sin and confess it quickly, looking to Jesus for forgiveness and cleansing!

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

 Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

 Slide #2

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 61 Theme Poster. God told Moses to send 12 spies into the land of Canaan. These men spied for 40 days. They brought back fruit including grapes, pomegranates, and figs. They reported that the land was good and plentiful!

- ? How many of the spies were frightened and said they shouldn't try to take the land? *10 of the spies.*
- ? Which spies disagreed and trusted God's promises? *Joshua and Caleb.*

Joshua and Caleb encouraged the people to trust God and not to fear. But the people didn't listen to them. They wanted to return to Egypt, and they refused to enter the good land God promised them. For their rebellion, God said they would wander in the wilderness for 40 years until all those people who didn't believe and obey him had died. Only Joshua, Caleb, and the young people under age 20 would enter the land.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. You would think that the Israelites would learn not to rebel against the Lord, but in today's lesson, they do the same thing again and experience some terrible judgments!

 Slide #5

- ? What does it mean "to rebel"? *Allow answers.*

Rebel: to purposely disobey a recognized authority

To rebel is to purposely disobey a recognized authority, or someone in charge.

For example, let's say I needed to leave the room, and I chose _____ *(insert name of student)* to be in charge while I was gone. That student is supposed to watch over the class and report to me when I return. Suppose that while I'm away, several students decide that they should be in charge of the class. They leave their seats and complain to the student I left in charge.

- ? Who are those students rebelling against? The student in charge or the teacher who gave the student authority? *The teacher.*

That's right. A similar situation happened with Moses and the Israelites. Whenever the Israelites disobeyed or complained to Moses, they were really rebelling against God. God was leading his people, and he knew they had to learn to obey him and the leaders he appointed or they would not survive as a nation.

Korah's Rebellion

After the Israelites rebelled and refused to enter the Promised Land, all those age 20 and older knew that they would wander in the wilderness until they died. This made some of them upset. Then three men decided to stir up trouble. Let's find out who they were.

Numbers 16:1–3

Turn to Numbers 16. Follow along as I read verses 1–3. *Read the verses.*

There are three names I want you to notice in verse 1: Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Korah was from the tribe of Levi while Dathan and Abiram were from the tribe of Reuben. A man named On is also mentioned here, but because he isn't included later in the chapter, he likely withdrew from the rebellion.

- ? These men came to Moses and Aaron, but they didn't come alone. How many chiefs came with them? Look in verse 2. *250.*

Right. These men were chiefs, or leaders, who were well-known and respected.

- ? What did these men accuse Moses and Aaron of in verse 3? *Exalting themselves above the assembly of the Lord.*

These men said that all the Israelites were holy because the Lord dwelt among them in the tabernacle. Then they accused Moses and Aaron of exalting themselves above the rest of the Israelites.

- ? Was that true? Did Moses and Aaron make themselves leaders? *No.*

- ? No, they didn't. Who put Moses and Aaron in charge? *God.*

God called Moses at the burning bush and chose him to lead the Israelites. Moses didn't even want to, at first! But he obeyed God. Then God chose Aaron and his sons to serve as priests. This made some other men jealous.

- ? Who remembers what the Levites were put in charge of? What special responsibility did God give them? *Caring for the tabernacle.*

Korah, who was from the tribe of Levi like Aaron was, already had a special job from God to help with the tabernacle. But he wanted more. He wanted to be a priest and a leader, and Moses knew that.

► Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

🖥️ Slides #6–7

Moses also knew that when these men spoke against him and Aaron, they were really speaking against God! He fell on his face because he recognized the great sin the men were committing. He told the 250 men to come back the next day with censers to offer incense like the priests did. He said God would show who he wanted to be priests.

Numbers 16:12–14

🖥️ Slides #8–9

- ? Then Moses called for Dathan and Abiram to come talk to him. Let's see what they said. Who will read Numbers 16:12–14? *Assign a reader.*
- ? Did Dathan and Abiram obey and come talk to Moses? *No.*
- ? What were they angry about? What did they say Moses had done? *Made himself a prince over them, tried to kill them in the wilderness, and did not take them into the Promised Land.*
- ? Were any of their complaints true? *No.*

The things they said were totally wrong! God made Moses a ruler over the people. Moses never harmed anyone. In fact, if he hadn't prayed on their behalf, they all would have been destroyed for their sins—many times! And it was the people's fault for not entering the Promised Land. They rebelled and refused to go in! These lies made Moses very angry, and he asked God not to respect their offering the next day.

🖥️ Slide #10

- ? Let's start the Class Notes. Who will answer #1 and give us the names of the three men who led the rebellion? Look in Numbers 16:1 for help. *Choose a reader. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Have students complete #1.*
- ? In #2, what did the 250 men want to be? *Choose a reader. Priests. Have students complete #2.*

- Prepare for the reenactment by writing the characters' names on the name tags/labels ahead of time. Have cups ready and a tablecloth/sheet within reach.

God's Judgment

The next day the three rebels—Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—assembled against Moses and Aaron at the entrance to the tent of meeting along with the 250 leaders and a crowd of supporters.

Let's act out what happened. Everyone can participate as long as you're listening and following instructions. I need three volunteers to be Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. *Choose three students to come up front. Give them name tags with their characters' names written on them.*

Note: if you have a small class, have one student represent the three rebels (label "Rebel"), one represent the 250 leaders (label "Leader"), one for Moses and one for Aaron, and let the remaining students be the Israelites.

- ? Who would like to be Moses and Aaron? *Choose two students and give them character name tags. Have them stand opposite the three rebels with some distance between them. Give Aaron a cup "censer."*

Now, I need several students to represent the 250 leaders who are offering incense in their censers. Remember that incense was sweet-smelling spices. Those would have been placed over hot coals in the censers. *Choose several students to be the leaders and give them cups as censers.*

Everyone else stand up and go behind the three rebels. You'll be the Israelites who came to see what would happen.

Listen and be ready to follow directions or repeat a line when I tell you. Let's begin!

Korah said, "You've gone too far, Moses!" *Instruct Korah to repeat line and shake his fist at Moses and Aaron.*

The glory of the Lord appeared, and God spoke to Moses saying, "Move away from the people that I may destroy them!"

Moses and Aaron fell down on their faces. *Have Moses and Aaron fall down as though praying.*

Moses prayed, "O God, please don't punish all the people for the sin of a few men!"

God answered, "Tell the people to get away from Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."

Moses went to the people and warned them, "Hurry! Move away from the tents of these wicked men, and don't touch anything of theirs. Otherwise, you will be punished along with them!" *Have Moses walk over to the Israelites and wave arms to disperse them.*

The Israelites moved back from the three men. *Have students take several steps back from Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.*

Moses said, "If these men die a normal death, then God hasn't sent me to lead you. But if the Lord does something new and the ground opens up and swallows them and all their belongings, then you will know that these men have rebelled against the Lord."

As soon as Moses said this, the ground under the three men split apart! Rebels, look frightened and yell, "It's an earthquake!" *Have rebels repeat.*

Then the earth opened and swallowed up all three men, their tents, and their families! Rebels, yell "No!" and fall to the ground! *Have rebels act this out.*

So those men fell alive into the ground, and the earth closed back up over them. *Throw a tablecloth or sheet over the three rebels to represent the ground covering them.*

The Israelites were terrified and fled! Israelites, run around the room once and then return here. *Wait for them to run and return. The rebels may return to their seats.*

The Israelites thought that the earth would swallow them up, too!

Then fire came from the Lord and burned the 250 men offering the incense! Leaders, pretend to be on fire and then run to your seats. *Have leaders act this out and then return to their seats. Keep Moses and Aaron up front with the Israelites.*

God took the rebellion of these men seriously, didn't he? He knew that they were challenging his authority when they complained against Moses and Aaron. The 250 leaders were punished because they didn't accept their roles to lead in their families and tribes. They wanted to be priests, but God had given that job to Aaron and his sons.

The next day, the people grumbled against Moses and Aaron and blamed THEM for killing the rebels and the leaders. God knew the people were grumbling against him, and he was angry. He sent a plague among the people. People started to die! *Have several students at the edge of the Israelites' group fall to the ground as though dying.*

Moses said to Aaron, "Quickly! Take your censer and put fire from the altar and incense on it. Carry it quickly to the people to make atonement for them because the wrath of God is upon them!" *Have Aaron pretend to light a fire in his cup, run around the Israelites, and then stop between the "dead" Israelites and the others.*

So Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. Over 14,000 Israelites died in the plague. Even though the people complained against them, Moses and Aaron prayed for God to spare the people, and Aaron was the one who ran among the people to stop the plague. That was pretty forgiving of them, wasn't it? *Have all students return to their seats.*

Good job acting out the account of Korah's rebellion and God's judgment! Let's review with our Class Notes.

 Slides #11–12

- ? Look at #3. What did God tell Moses to do? *Choose a reader. Warn. Have students complete #3.*
- ? Who will read #4 and give the answer? *Choose a reader. Earth. Have students complete #4.*
- ? And #5, what happened to the 250 men offering incense in their censers? *Choose a reader. Fire. Have students complete #5.*
- ? Who will read #6 and tell us who made atonement for the people's sin? *Choose a reader. Aaron. Have students complete #6.*

The Bronze Serpent

After Korah's rebellion, the Israelites continued their travels in the wilderness. Then they reached a place where there was no water. The situation was so desperate that the people said they wished they had

died along with Korah and the other rebels! Once again, they complained about being thirsty and having no food to eat.

God told Moses and Aaron to gather the people and speak to a rock, and he would provide water. But Moses and Aaron didn't obey God's instructions. Moses struck the rock with his staff twice instead of speaking to it, and he and Aaron took credit for the miracle before God caused water to gush out of the rock.

God was angry with Moses and Aaron for disobeying, and he said they would not enter the Promised Land. That was terrible news for Moses and Aaron! They had been faithful, but their disobedience had consequences just like the Israelites' disobedience always brought consequences.

As they continued to travel through the wilderness, the Israelites got impatient. They gathered against God and Moses again and complained about the food and water. They even said they hated the manna God provided for them!

- ? This wasn't good! What usually happens when the people complained and spoke against God? *They were punished.*

Raise your hand if you think God will punish them. *Show of hands.*

Numbers 21:5–9

- ? Let's see if you're right. Who will read Numbers 21:5–9 for us? *Assign readers.*

 Slides #13–15

- ? If you raised your hand earlier, you were right! What punishment did God send among the people? *Fiery serpents.*

- ? What happened if the people were bitten by the serpents? *They died.*

The people recognized that they had sinned, and they asked Moses to pray for them.

- ? God had Moses do something a bit unusual. What did he tell Moses to make? *A bronze serpent on a pole.*

- ? What happened to the people who were bitten when they looked at the bronze serpent? *They lived. They didn't die.*

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Here, God showed his mercy. He was holy and just to punish the people for their sin. But he had Moses make a bronze serpent and set it up on a pole where everyone could see it. Those who were bitten could look to the serpent and be saved from the punishment of the snakes.

- ? Was it the bronze serpent, Moses, or God who healed the people when they looked to the serpent? *God!*

Yes, God was the one who healed them, but they had to look for help and healing. This may seem like a strange way to show mercy, but God was giving a picture of something to come.

- ? How many of you know John 3:16? *Have students raise their hands or quote the verse together.*
- ? Did you know that the verses before John 3:16 talk about the bronze serpent Moses set up in the wilderness? *Yes/no.*

John 3:14–15

Slide #16

Listen as I read those verses. *Read John 3:14–15.*

- ? Who did it say must be lifted up just like Moses lifted up the serpent? *The Son of Man.*
- ? Who is the Son of Man? *Jesus.*
- ? What was Jesus “lifted up” or crucified on? *A cross.*

Slide #17

Refer to the bronze serpent in the Lesson Theme Poster. The bronze serpent on a pole was a picture of Jesus on the cross.

- ? The bronze serpent saved the Israelites from physical death when they looked at it. What did our verses say would be given to whoever looks to Jesus on the cross and believes in him? *Reread verse 15, if necessary. Eternal life.*

Jesus saves us from eternal death just as the serpent saved people from physical death from the snakebites. Jesus’ death on the cross was the greatest act of mercy shown to us. Like the Israelites, we deserve punishment for our sins. But thanks to the love and mercy of God, we can believe in Jesus, turn from our sin, and receive forgiveness. What a great picture God gave to his people in the wilderness of the coming Savior!

Slide #18

- ? Let’s finish our Class Notes. Who will read #7 and tell us what punishment God sent for the people’s complaining? *Choose a reader. Fiery serpents. Have students complete #7.*
- ? And #8, what did Moses set up to save the people from death from the snakebites? *Choose a reader. Bronze serpent. Have students complete #8.*

Application

Slide #19

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. The three men who rebelled against God and Moses received punishment from God. The earth opened up, swallowed them and their families, and then closed over. A lot of trouble came from a few men who didn’t want to obey God or the leaders he put in charge.

- ? Who are some people God has put in charge of you? *Allow answers. Parents, teachers, babysitters, principals, police, government, etc.*

The world teaches us that it’s okay to rebel. They say it’s the only way we can be who we’re meant to be. Many movies show young people rebelling against their parents or other authorities so they can do their

own thing and be free to be who they want to be. Then they often end up as heroes in the story.

- ? Can you think of any movies or TV shows you've seen where this has happened? *Allow discussion.*
- ? Is that what the Bible teaches? *Allow discussion.*

God knows who we are and what his plans are for each one of us. Rebelling against our parents is not part of his plan. Sometimes we may not feel like obeying the authorities God has placed over us. But he has commanded us to obey them unless they tell us to do something against God's laws. We should trust God's plan for our lives and look to him to show us how to be who he wants us to be instead of rebelling and going our own way.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Ask God for help to obey him and the authorities he has placed over us.
- Thank God for his mercy and forgiveness when we confess our sin and trust in Jesus.

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



God Prepares the Way

*God helped the Israelites defeat Amorite kings
and receive blessings from Balaam.*

Lesson Focus

To prepare the way into Canaan, God gave Moses and the Israelites two great victories over the Amorite kings Sihon and Og. The Israelites took possession of their lands, and two and a half tribes settled there. Moab and Midian hired the false prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites, but God caused him to bless them instead.

Key Passages

Deuteronomy 3:1–5; Numbers 22:26–35, 23:8–12

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe the battles won over the Amorites.
- Describe how God protected the Israelites from Balaam’s curse.

Memory Verse

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print the following:

- One Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- One Journey to Canaan Map.
- One Donkey Poster and copies of the tail for each student.
- One Twelve Tribes Map.

Bring the following:

- Blindfold
- Tape or poster putty
- Treat/prize for winner of pin the tail on the donkey

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Lord, thank you for your faithfulness. You upheld your promise to Abraham to bless his descendants by protecting them from those who wanted them cursed. May I not be led astray as the Israelites were by people who pretended to be friends. Help my students learn the lessons from the Israelites and their interaction with their neighbors. Protect them from the influence of wrong friends and keep them close to you and far from evil.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 63*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

Studying God's Word
Group Prayer

Small Group

Come On In
Memory Verse
Optional Activity
Lesson Review
Take Home Sheet

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

The 40 years of wandering ended, and the Israelites left the wilderness for Mount Seir, the land God gave to Esau and his descendants. The Israelites were forbidden peaceful passage through Edom, so they traveled around it to avoid conflict as God directed (Deuteronomy 2:5). The rebellious men of war age 20 and older had died, and God told Moses to head north toward Moab but not to engage Moab or Ammon in battle because their land was given to Lot (Deuteronomy 2:19). After skirting these lands, the Israelites requested permission to pass peacefully through the territory of the Amorite king Sihon. He refused and gathered his people to fight against them. God gave the Israelites victory over Sihon, and they captured his lands and settled in his cities, including his capital, Heshbon (Numbers 21:21–26). Moses then turned north to the land of Bashan, which was ruled by a giant king named Og. Og is described as the last of a race of giants called the Rephaim, and the dimensions of his bed indicate he was 9–12 feet tall (Deuteronomy 3:11)! Og and his people fought against the Israelites and were defeated. The Israelites wiped out Og, his sons, and all his people and possessed his land (Numbers 21:33–35). These victories gave the Israelites confidence in God’s power to drive out their enemies as he promised. They did not need to fear giants or fortified cities. The land of the Amorite kings conquered by Moses and the Israelites became the inheritance of the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh (Deuteronomy 3:12–17).

Balak, the king of Moab, heard about the victories of Israel against the Amorites and was overcome

Historical/Apologetics Background

Several people groups are mentioned in the account of the Israelites’ travel from the wilderness to the land of Canaan. Because few artifacts survived from these peoples who lived 2,000 to 3,000 years ago, many archaeologists were skeptical about their existence. However, evidence from modern-day Jordan reveals that these people did live at the eastern border of what would become Israel’s land. The

with fear. He gathered the leaders of Midian and devised a plan to hire Balaam to curse the Israelites. Balaam practiced divination and was known for effective curses. Balaam refused to come at first, but then he agreed to accompany the princes of Moab to King Balak (Numbers 22:1–21). But God knew Balaam’s motives were not good, so he sent an angel to stand in his path. Three times the angel of the Lord appeared, and Balaam’s donkey saw him and saved Balaam’s life by refusing to go forward. Angry at his seemingly disobedient donkey, Balaam struck her each time she saved his life. Then the Lord miraculously enabled the donkey to speak, and the conversation between Balaam and his donkey revealed the dullness of Balaam to recognize his error. When God opened his eyes to see the angel, Balaam admitted his sin and said he would return home. But God told him to continue to Balak but to speak only the word God told him (Numbers 22:22–35). Balak took Balaam to three locations overlooking the Israelites, and each time Balaam pronounced a blessing on them (Numbers 23–24). Balak was angry with Balaam and refused to honor him (Numbers 24:10–11).

Although Balaam was used to bless the Israelites, he also caused great punishment to fall on them. It was Balaam who recommended that the Moabites and Midianites entice Israel to sin by worshipping pagan gods and intermarrying with their neighbors (Revelation 2:14). This led to God’s punishment of a plague that destroyed 24,000 Israelites (Numbers 25:9). God later commanded Moses to retaliate against Midian (Numbers 25:16–18), and Balaam was killed along with five Midianite kings (Numbers 31:7–8).

Edomites were the descendants of Esau, Jacob’s twin brother (Genesis 36). The mountain region of Seir was given by God to Esau, which is why he forbade the Israelites from engaging the Edomites in battle. The origin of *Edom*, meaning “red” in Hebrew, was associated with Esau (Genesis 25:30) and may also be connected to the red sandstone of the region. Evidence of the by-product of smelting ore has

been found in the region, indicating the presence of extensive copper mining in Edom.

The Moabites and Ammonites were both descended from Abraham's nephew, Lot, by his own daughters (Genesis 19:37–38). An Ammonite palace with defensive walls was found at archaeological sites at the Citadel in Amman, Jordan. The Moabite Stone, discovered in 1868, confirmed the names of many Old Testament places as well as Chemosh, the Moabite god.

The miracle of Balaam's donkey speaking to him on the road is another area skeptics like to mock. However, in the case of Balaam's donkey and the serpent in the Garden of Eden, the animals were a vessel enabled by another being to speak. Satan spoke through the serpent to Eve, enticing her to doubt God's Word and disobey his command. But it was the Lord who opened the mouth of Balaam's donkey (Numbers 22:28) to rebuke the false prophet and stop his mad course for material gain (2 Peter 2:15–16; cf. Jude 11). The dialogue between a "stubborn" donkey and her angry master also serves to accentuate the stubbornness of Balaam to pursue his own course. It was not until God opened his

eyes to the angel of the Lord blocking his path with a drawn sword that Balaam admitted his sin and offered to return home (Numbers 22:31–35).

Although Balaam prophesied the words God gave him and blessed the Israelites, he is remembered as the one who caused the Israelites to stumble and receive God's punishment. Balaam gave Balak the idea to intermarry his people with the Israelites and invite them to their pagan feasts. In so doing, the Israelites were led astray to idolatry and immorality (Numbers 25:1–8; Revelation 2:14). This compromising practice of Balaam is dangerous for any time and culture. The Israelites let their pagan neighbors influence them rather than standing firm on the Word of God and his laws. During the early days of the church, Jesus rebuked the church at Pergamos for the same sin—allowing people to compromise the Word of God with pagan ideas. Today, Satan uses the same tactic in churches as he tricks many Christians and their leaders into compromising with the world rather than standing firm on the authority of Scripture. May we not trust in the fallible assumptions of man, but rather trust in the Word of the omniscient God.

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

 Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

 Slide #2

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

? *Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline.* Let's review what's happened to the Israelites since the beginning of Exodus. What special child was born who would lead the Israelites out of Egypt? *Moses.*

? And what was that event called when God sent plagues against Egypt and brought his people out of slavery? *The Exodus.*

God guided the people in a pillar of cloud and fire and rescued them by parting the Red Sea so they could escape from Pharaoh and his army. He provided for them and brought them to the Promised Land, the land of Canaan.

Refer to Lesson 61 Theme Poster. When they got there, Moses sent 12 spies into Canaan. The spies reported that the land was very good! But only two spies trusted God and urged the people to enter the Promised Land.

? Who were those two spies? *Joshua and Caleb.*

The other 10 spies were afraid, and their report scared the Israelites, who rebelled against God's command to enter the Promised Land. Because of this, only Joshua, Caleb, and the young people under age 20 would get to enter the land.

Refer to Lesson 62 Theme Poster. The Israelites lived in the wilderness for 40 years. But some people became impatient and unhappy following God and Moses.

? Who remembers the names of the three men who rebelled? *Korah, Dathan, Abiram.*

These men gathered other leaders and challenged Moses and Aaron. Some wanted to be priests, like Aaron.

 Slides #3–4

- ? How did God judge Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? What happened to them? *An earthquake split the ground, and they and their families and belongings fell into the earth.*

Right. Then God sent fire to destroy the 250 men who were trying to make themselves priests. But the Israelites continued to complain against God and Moses. One time when they grumbled about food and water, God sent poisonous snakes into the camp.

- ? What did the people have to do to be saved from the snakebites? *Look to the bronze serpent so they would not die.*

The bronze serpent was a picture of Jesus, who would come to die on the cross and take the punishment for sin so we can have eternal life.

We saw how God used poisonous snakes to teach the Israelites not to complain. In today's lesson, God will use another animal to get someone's attention.

- ? This animal talked to its owner! Anyone know what it is? *Allow guesses.*

- ? This animal was ridden back in Bible times. Any guesses? *Allow guesses. Donkey.*

Put the Donkey Poster for pin the tail on the donkey on the board. That's right! A donkey! God supernaturally enabled a donkey to talk! Let's see who can pin a tail where it should go while blindfolded! Choose volunteers or let all students have a turn. Blindfold them, spin them around, and then have them pin a tail on the Donkey Poster using tape or poster putty. Award prize to the student whose tail is the closest to the right spot.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Today, we'll jump to the end of the 40 years of the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness. We'll read how they faced some battles preparing the way into the Promised Land. We'll also read about a talking donkey God used to warn a false prophet named Balaam.

- Gather supplies for pin the tail on the donkey: Donkey Poster, tails, blindfold, tape, and optional prize.

🖥️ Slide #5

- Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

Victories over Sihon and Og

Refer to the Journey to Canaan Map and point out the land of Edom. The Israelites left the wilderness and traveled to the land of Edom.

- ? Who knows who the Edomites were descended from? He had a twin brother, Jacob! *Esau.*

The Edomites, the descendants of Jacob's brother Esau, lived in a mountainous region called Seir. The Israelites asked for permission to pass through the Edomites' land, but the Edomites said no. God would not let the Israelites fight against them because he promised that land to Esau. So, the Israelites had to take the long way around. This map shows a route they may have taken around Edom. *Show the path from the wilderness to Elath on the map.*

🖥️ Slide #6

Slide #7

Refer to the Journey to Canaan Map and point out the lands of Moab and Ammon. God also told his people not to fight against the people of Moab or Ammon because they were descendants of Lot.

- ? How was Lot related to Abraham? Does anyone know? *He was Abraham's nephew.*

God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites. But God also promised to give land to Lot and his descendants, so he didn't want the Israelites to fight against them and take it away.

Refer to the Journey to Canaan Map and the path north to Gilead. Next, the Israelites came to the land of Gilead, which was controlled by an Amorite king named Sihon. Moses asked for permission to travel through Sihon's land. Moses said they wouldn't take anything; they would pay for any food or water they needed. But King Sihon said, "No, you can't come through my land." Then he gathered his army and came to fight the Israelites. He was a proud king and thought he could easily beat them. But God helped the Israelites win the battle, and they defeated King Sihon. They destroyed his army and then took over all the cities in his land, including King Sihon's capital city, Heshbon. *Point out Heshbon on the Journey to Canaan Map.*

Slide #8

Point out Bashan on the Journey to Canaan Map. Then Moses sent spies into the land of Bashan, which was a rich land, full of grass for livestock and tall cedar trees for building. But the land of Bashan had many walled cities and was controlled by a giant king named Og.

Og slept in a bed that was about 13.5 feet long and 6 feet wide. That means he was probably 9–12 feet tall! That's at least 2 feet taller than the tallest basketball players in the NBA. Think about this: most home ceilings are about 8 feet high, so Og would have to duck down to walk around inside your house; otherwise his head would crash through the ceiling!

- ? Remember what the Israelites were afraid of when the 12 spies returned from the land 40 years before? *Giants and fortified cities.*

Uh oh! Will the Israelites trust God and go to battle against Og? Let's find out!

Deuteronomy 3:1–5

Slides #9–11

- ? Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Turn to Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the Bible, and find chapter 3. Who will read verses 1–5? *Assign readers or you read the passage.*

Slide #12

Og and all his people came to fight at a place called Edrei. The Israelite army met them there. *Point out Edrei on the Journey to Canaan Map.*

- ? What did the Lord say to Moses in verse 2? *Do not fear, for I have given him, his people, and his land into your hand.*

God promised to give the Israelites victory over this giant king! And he did! They struck down Og and left no survivors. Then they took over all his cities.

- ? How many cities did they get? Look in verse 4. *60 cities.*
- ? And how are those cities described in verse 5? *The cities were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars.*

God helped the Israelites defeat Og and his people and take over their cities. These cities were well-protected by walls, gates, and bars, but that didn't stop the Israelites from conquering them!

- ? How do you think these victories made the Israelites feel? *Allow discussion.*

These victories against a giant king and strong cities gave the Israelites faith and courage. They could trust God to give them victory. They didn't need to fear with God on their side. The way was now clear for them to enter the Promised Land without worrying about enemies behind them. Plus, they now had land with cities to live in! Several tribes liked this land so much that they asked Moses if they could have it as their possession instead of land on the other side of the Jordan River.

Show the Twelve Tribes Map and point out the lands east of the Jordan River.

Moses agreed to give the Reubenites, Gadites, and half of Manasseh's tribe the land of the Amorites as long as the men would still cross over the Jordan River and fight with the other tribes to conquer the Promised Land. The tribe of Manasseh, descendants of Joseph's oldest son, had so many people that half of the tribe stayed in the land of Bashan while the other half chose to wait and receive land on the other side of the Jordan. *Point out East and West Manasseh on the map.*

 Slide #13

Let's start the Class Notes. Each statement is a clue that you will use to select the answer from the word bank and write in the crossword.

- ? Who will read #1 and give us the answer from the word bank? *Choose a reader. Edomites. Have students complete #1.*
- ? And #2? Who was the Amorite king who attacked Israel first? *Choose a reader. Sihon. Have students complete #2.*
- ? Who will read #3 about the giant king? *Choose a reader. Og. Have students complete #3.*
- ? And who gave the Israelites their victories? Who will read #4? *Choose a reader. God. Have students complete #4.*

 Slides #14–15

Blessings from Balaam

Now Balak, the king of Moab, heard about the victories of Israelites over the Amorite kings Sihon and Og—and he was scared! He didn't

know that God had forbidden the Israelites to attack him and his people. He came up with a plan to stop them, and he got his neighbors, the Midianites, to help him. Balak knew of a false prophet named Balaam. When Balaam spoke a curse against someone, that bad thing happened! King Balak sent princes to Balaam to ask him to come and curse the Israelites for him. Balaam asked God if he should go with the princes of Moab, but God told him not to go. Balaam obeyed God and didn't go with the princes.

King Balak didn't give up though. He sent even more important princes to Balaam, offering him honor, silver, and gold if he would come curse the Israelite people. Balaam again asked God what he should do. This time God said he could go, but he must only say what God told him to.

So Balaam saddled his donkey and traveled to meet King Balak. But Balaam's heart was not right, and God knew this. Balaam may have been going only because he wanted the reward from the king not because his heart was truly obedient to God.

The angel of the Lord stood in the road with a drawn sword to block Balaam's path. Balaam couldn't see the angel, but his donkey could. She didn't want to face an angel with a drawn sword! She turned off the road and went into a field. Balaam was angry with his donkey because she wasn't obeying him. He struck her with his stick to get her back on the road.

Next, they came to a narrow path between vineyards. This time the angel of the Lord blocked the road where there was a wall on either side. Balaam's donkey tried to avoid the angel and pushed against the wall. Balaam's foot got squished against the wall, so he struck his poor donkey again!

Numbers 22:26–35

☐ Slides #16–20

- ❓ Let's read what happened the third time the angel of the Lord appeared. Who will read Numbers 22:26–35? *Assign readers.*
- ❓ Where did the angel of the Lord stand this third time? *Numbers 22:26. In a narrow place, where there was no way to turn to the right or left.*
- ❓ What did the donkey do when she saw the angel? *She lay down.*

☐ Slide #21

- Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. The donkey couldn't turn off the road to avoid the angel, so she just lay down on the road.*
- ❓ And what did Balaam do to his donkey? *Struck the donkey with his staff.*
 - ❓ What amazing thing did the Lord do next? *He opened the mouth of the donkey so she spoke to Balaam.*
 - ❓ Can you imagine having a donkey speak to you? What did the donkey say? *She asked why Balaam struck her three times.*

Balaam answered that she was making a fool of him and he wished he had a sword to kill her! The donkey then asked if she usually acted this way, going off the road, pushing against the wall, and laying down. Balaam said no.

- ? Then what did God do in verse 31? *He opened Balaam's eyes so he could see the angel of the Lord with the sword.*
- ? What did Balaam do when he saw the angel? *He bowed down and fell on his face.*
- ? What did the angel of the Lord tell Balaam he would have done if his donkey hadn't turned aside those three times? *Killed Balaam and let the donkey live.*

That's right. The Lord was showing Balaam that he was against him. Balaam acknowledged his sin and offered to return home instead of going with the princes to King Balak. The angel of the Lord said for Balaam to go with them, but to only speak what God told him to. God used a talking donkey to prepare Balaam to be obedient.

King Balak was really glad that Balaam came. He wanted Balaam to curse the Israelites because he knew he couldn't defeat them in battle. King Balak took Balaam to an area where they could see some of the Israelites. They offered sacrifices and then God gave Balaam the words to say.

Numbers 23:8–12

- ? Who will read what Balaam said in Numbers 23:8–12? *Assign a reader.*
- ? Did Balaam give a curse or a blessing on the Israelites? *Blessing.*
Right. In verse 8, he says he can't curse whom God has not cursed.
- ? What did King Balak say after Balaam spoke? Was he happy with what happened? *No, he was angry that Balaam blessed the Israelites instead of cursing them.*
- ? How did Balaam answer? *He said he had to speak what the Lord puts in his mouth.*

 Slides #22–24

Well, King Balak didn't learn his lesson. He took Balaam to two more spots where he hoped Balaam would curse the Israelites. But each time Balaam spoke, he gave blessings from God instead of curses. Balak was so angry he refused to pay Balaam for coming. He even threatened Balaam and told him to flee for his life. Balaam had hoped for honor and wealth from King Balak, but he got neither. However, God still used Balaam to bless his chosen people even though Balaam was hoping for personal gain.

But Balaam did something terrible before he returned home. He gave King Balak advice on how to defeat the Israelites. He knew that they couldn't curse the people or defeat them in battle. Instead, he told Balak how to get the Israelites to disobey so God would have to punish them.

The Moabites and Midianites came to the Israelites and acted friendly. They invited them to sacrifice to their false god, Baal. This was Balaam's idea, and it worked! The Israelites went with their new neighbors to their feasts and bowed down to Baal. The Israelites also married Midianite women, who led them to worship their false gods.

- ? Refer to the *Ten Commandments Poster*. What commandments did the Israelites disobey when they worshipped Baal? *The first and second commandments. Have students read those from the poster.*

Balaam was right that God would punish the people for their sin. God sent a plague that killed 24,000 Israelites. The people had to learn not to follow the false gods of the people around them. They were to worship only God.

God also punished the Moabites and the Midianites for tricking his people. He told Moses to attack them. The Israelites destroyed five kings of Midian, and the false prophet Balaam was also killed.

 Slides #25–26

- ? Let's complete the Class Notes. Who will read #5 and give us the name of the king of Moab? *Choose a reader. Balak. Have students complete #5.*
- ? And who was the false prophet in #6? *Choose a reader. Balaam. Have students complete #6.*
- ? Who will read #7? *Choose a reader. Donkey. Have students complete #7.*
- ? And #8, what did Balaam give the Israelites? *Choose a reader. Blessing. Have students complete #8.*
- ? And #9, what false god did the Israelites worship? *Choose a reader. Baal. Have students complete #9.*
- ? And #10, who will read about God's punishment? *Choose a reader. Plague. Have students complete #10.*

Application

 Slide #27

Refer to the *Journey to Canaan Map*. Moses and the Israelites had to travel around the land of Edom, Moab, and Ammon. But when they came to the land of the Amorites and asked to pass through, King Sihon attacked them. God gave them victory, and Sihon was defeated. Then the giant King Og attacked Israel. God gave them victory over this giant and his fortified cities. The Israelites took over the Amorite lands of Gilead and Bashan and settled in their cities.

When they heard about the victories of the Israelites, the kings of Moab and Midian became afraid. They hired Balaam, a false prophet, to curse the Israelites for them.

- ? Why did God send the angel of the Lord to block Balaam's path? *He knew Balaam's heart was not obedient. Balaam just wanted honor and money.*

? Who saved Balaam from the angel of the Lord three times? *His donkey.*

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Balaam couldn't see the angel in the road, so he got mad every time his donkey went off the road. Finally, his donkey lay down in the road, and God enabled her to speak to Balaam. Then God opened Balaam's eyes to see the angel. Balaam recognized his sin and said he would speak only what God wanted him to.

Some people don't believe that Balaam's donkey spoke. But we read it in God's Word!

? Why do you think people don't believe this? *Allow discussion. Animals don't talk today.*

It would be amazing if animals did talk today. It's not something we've ever seen, so some people doubt that it could have ever happened. However, we need to remember who God is and what he can do. God is the omnipotent Creator!

? *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster.* What is the definition of omnipotent? *Choose a reader. Omnipotent: all-powerful to do whatever he wants.*

? Don't you think that our all-powerful God can make one of his creations, a donkey, speak if he wanted to? *Yes!*

I do! God can do whatever he pleases because he is sovereign. We should never doubt God's Word just because we have never seen or heard an animal speak today. God did many amazing miracles to deliver the Israelites from Egypt and bring them safely through the wilderness. Those were special signs he did back then. In the account of Balaam, God was faithful to keep his promise to bless the descendants of Abraham and protect them from those who wanted to curse them. God used a talking donkey to get the attention of Balaam so he would speak only what God told him. And that's what Balaam did!

 Slide #28



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Thank God for the victories he gives us every day over sin.
- Ask God for faith to trust him and his Word completely.

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



Rahab Helps the Spies

Rahab believed in God and helped the Israelite spies in Jericho.

Lesson Focus

God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites after Moses' death. Joshua sent spies into Jericho, but they were discovered. The prostitute Rahab hid the spies and helped them escape because she had faith in God. God rewarded her faith by sparing her and her family, and she was included in the genealogy of Jesus and listed in Hebrews as an example of faith.

Key Passages

Joshua 1:5–6, 2:1, 2:11, 6:25; Hebrews 11:31

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify how Joshua became the leader of the Israelites.
- Describe how God used Rahab to accomplish his plan for his people.

Memory Verse

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print the following:

- One Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- Eight copies of the Rahab and the Spies Skit. Keep one for your use.
- One Lesson Illustration.

Bring the following for the Rahab and the Spies Skit:

- Blanket or tablecloth
- Red streamer or rope
- Tape
- Optional: costumes (see skit for details)

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for your sovereignty and mercy. The prostitute Rahab had faith in you, and she fulfilled your will by helping the spies. Please help me present your truth in a way my students will understand. May this account give the students hope, courage, and strength as they see how you can use them to accomplish your perfect plan.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 64*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

Studying God's Word
Optional Video Clip
Group Prayer

Small Group

Come On In
Memory Verse
Optional Activity
Lesson Review
Take Home Sheet

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

The Amorites on the east side of the Jordan River were defeated, and the time came for Moses to die. God called him up to a mountain and let him see the Promised Land before he died at age 120 (Deuteronomy 34:1, 34:5–8). God chose Joshua to lead the people and promised to be with him just as he had been with Moses (Deuteronomy 34:9; Joshua 1:5). The Israelites under Joshua’s leadership were to begin the conquest of the Promised Land. The generation of Moses’ day had died for its lack of faith and obedience to God. The new generation of Israelites had many nations to conquer, yet God would provide the strength and courage needed for success as long as the Israelites remained obedient.

Joshua, as the new leader, sent two men on a spying mission to view the land, especially Jericho (Joshua 2:1). The two spies entered Jericho and found lodging with Rahab, the prostitute. Although this may seem odd at first, upon further consideration, Rahab’s home on the wall could offer a safe and inconspicuous haven for the men. However, in God’s divine providence, the men were found out. When Rahab realized who the spies were, she was introduced firsthand to the God of Israel whom she had heard of and feared. Rahab demonstrated her faith by declaring the Lord to be the true God and offering protection to the spies (Joshua 2:3–6, 2:8–12, 2:15–16).

The question we might ask is how could this woman, a prostitute, know about the God of Israel?

Historical/Apologetics Background

Many raise the question as to whether God blessed Rahab’s lie to the king’s men when they came for the Israelite spies. If so, is it okay to lie in some circumstances? The answer is no—it is never okay to lie. Lying is a sin against a holy, perfect God (Proverbs 12:22). However, God frequently uses the sinful acts of both the righteous and unrighteous to execute his purposes.

God wanted to show his amazing grace and sovereignty in this situation. Rahab had been a deliberate sinner, and likely an idolater, given that

she was well aware, as apparently all in Jericho were, that Israel was a nation whose God had delivered his people in a dramatic, miraculous fashion from Egypt. This God had also provided victory for his people over the most notorious kings on the other side of the Jordan, including King Og of Bashan (Deuteronomy 3:4; Joshua 2:10).

Rahab was willing to stake her life and her family members’ lives on the ability of God to defeat her own people and yet deliver her! She misled the pursuers who were sent by the king of Jericho to capture the spies, and she concealed the spies until she helped them escape back to Joshua (Joshua 2:2–6, 2:15–16). Rahab acted on her belief that the God of Israel would carry out his promises to give the land to his people, and by doing so, she showed an utter dependence upon him. This faith was remarkable enough to be held up to all future believers as an example of faith (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25).

The fact that God would bring to saving faith and use a Gentile woman to fulfill his purpose foreshadowed his intention to break down the “dividing wall of hostility” (Ephesians 2:14) between Jews and Gentiles in Christ and to make Gentiles “fellow heirs, members of the same body” with Jews in Christ (Ephesians 3:6). This grand scheme of Christ’s salvation of sinners from every nation was in the background when God used Rahab to help deliver Israel’s spies in return for protection for her and her family during Jericho’s destruction (Joshua 6:25). Rahab and her family lived with the Israelites, and Rahab married a man from the tribe of Judah.

she had lived an immoral life in a pagan city. Her knowledge of the true God was no doubt incomplete, being based on what was discussed among her people and not on a principled or careful instruction from Scripture. Her people had not been given the Ten Commandments or the other laws that God gave his people. Thus, it was from this incomplete knowledge of God that she chose to lie on behalf of the spies. And in God’s mercy, he covered the sin, acknowledged her faith, and redeemed the situation.

To focus on the lie instead of the reward that our holy, sovereign, merciful God granted her does not give God the glory due his name. One lesson to be learned from Rahab is not about Rahab at all, but about God—how he did not judge her or reward her according to her sin but saved her by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). God does the same for all those who repent and believe in Jesus.

Rahab's imperfect actions of faith and courage resulted not only in her salvation from destruction but also in a place in history as an ancestor of Jesus (Matthew 1:5). If we wonder why God would use a woman like Rahab to fulfill his purposes, perhaps we have not fully faced the effect our own sin has against a holy God. Only then can we recognize the greatness of God's mercy in offering forgiveness to us through Jesus' death and resurrection.

 Slide #1

 **Come On In**

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

 **Memory Verse**

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

 Slide #2

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

 **Studying God's Word**

Introduction

 Slides #3–6

Refer to Lesson 61 Theme Poster. In this lesson, Moses sent 12 spies into the Promised Land, but only Joshua and Caleb gave a good report. The other 10 spies scared the people and didn't believe that God could help them defeat giants and walled cities. The people refused to enter the land God promised them, and they were punished by having to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

Refer to Lesson 62 Theme Poster. In the wilderness, three rebels rose up against Moses and Aaron. Their names were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. They challenged God's authority and the positions of leadership given to Moses and Aaron. God punished their rebellion with an earthquake that swallowed up the men and their families.

The Israelites didn't learn the lesson about obedience, and they grumbled against God and Moses. God sent poisonous snakes to show the people they had sinned. When they asked for forgiveness, God had Moses set up a bronze serpent on a pole in the camp.

- ? What would happen to those who had been bitten and looked at the bronze serpent? *They didn't die. They were healed.*

Yes. This bronze serpent in the wilderness was a picture of Jesus, who would come to die on the cross and take the punishment for sin so we can have eternal life.

Refer to Lesson 63 Theme Poster. The wilderness wanderings were almost over, and God led Moses and the Israelites around several countries to where they would enter the Promised Land. Two powerful Amorite kings attacked the Israelites, but God gave the Israelites victory. They destroyed those kings and their people and took over their land and

cities. The king of Moab, Balak, was afraid that the Israelites would attack him next.

? Who did he hire to curse the Israelites for him? *Balaam.*

Balaam was a false prophet. When he rode his donkey to visit the king, the angel of the Lord blocked his way.

? How did Balaam's donkey save his life? *She avoided the angel of the Lord three times.*

But Balaam didn't know what his donkey was doing, going off the road and then lying down. He was angry and hit her. Then God caused his donkey to speak! Balaam still didn't understand what was happening until God opened his eyes to see the angel. Balaam traveled to King Balak, but he blessed the Israelites three times instead of cursing them.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Today, we'll find out who God chose to replace Moses as the leader of the Israelites. Then we'll see how an unlikely hero helped two Israelite spies!

To get us thinking like spies, I have a special "spy mission" for you. I need **two volunteers**. Choose two students. Give them a simple task like counting how many students are in the next classroom without being seen. Have them go and then report back to the class. If time, send other volunteers on similar "missions" (e.g., count how many boys and girls are in a hallway or lobby/foyer, see how many people have their Bibles in another classroom, or count the number of doors in a hallway, windows in a classroom, or chairs in the kitchen, etc.). Be sure the students are not disruptive or venturing too far from class without supervision. You may send a co-teacher or assistant with them to keep watch.

Great work collecting information!

? Was it hard to complete your mission without being seen? *Yes/no.*

Most spies try to blend in so that people won't know what they're really doing. That may be what you did—just acted like you were where you were supposed to be.

Joshua Becomes the Leader

Joshua knew what it was like to be a spy. He was one of the 12 spies Moses had sent into the Promised Land almost 40 years earlier. The people age 20 and older had all died in the wilderness except for Joshua and Caleb. Even Moses and Aaron were not allowed to enter the Promised Land because they disobeyed God's instructions for getting water from the rock.

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. God called Moses to the top of a mountain where Moses could see the land promised to his people. Before he went, Moses laid his hands on Joshua, showing that he was

► Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

chosen to be the new leader. Moses traveled up the mountain and saw the beautiful Promised Land from a distance. Then he died at age 120 on the mountain. The people mourned for him for 30 days.

Joshua was now in charge of hundreds of thousands of people! Joshua had been Moses' assistant, and he knew how the people could grumble and disobey. He also knew that his job was to lead the armies of Israel to conquer the Canaanites living in the Promised Land. That's a scary task!

Joshua 1:5–6

Slide #7

- ? Turn to the book of Joshua, the sixth book of the Bible, and go to chapter 1. Who will read what God said to Joshua in verses 5–6? *Assign a reader.*

God promised to be with Joshua just like he was with Moses.

- ? What else did God promise in verse 5? *I will not leave you or forsake you.*
- ? What did God command Joshua to be in verse 6? *Strong and courageous.*
- ? Right! What did God say Joshua would do for the people? *Cause them to inherit the land God promised them.*

Notice that God talked to Joshua like he did to Moses. He gave clear instructions. He comforted Joshua by telling him he was not alone, and he promised to be with him always. God also encouraged Joshua to be strong and courageous.

Joshua would need God's strength and courage to lead the people into battle. There were giants, strong armies, and walled cities in the land of Canaan that would scare most people. But Joshua didn't need to fear because God was with him.

Slide #8

- ? Let's start the Class Notes. Who will read #1 and tell us where Moses died? *Choose a reader. Mountain. Have students complete #1.*
- ? And #2? Who became the next leader? *Choose a reader. Joshua. Have students complete #2.*

Rahab Helps the Spies

Joshua decided he needed information about the first city they would encounter in the Promised Land. That city was Jericho, and it was protected by several walls.

Rahab and the Spies Skit

Joshua sent two spies ahead. I need seven volunteers to act out what happened to the spies and what unlikely hero helped them. *Choose volunteers and give them each a copy of the skit. You may want to be the narrator. Set a blanket/tablecloth and red streamer/cord by Rahab. If you have costumes or other props, give those to the volunteers.*

Have students perform the skit. When it's over, clap for them and have them return to their seats.

Joshua 2:1

- ? Let's learn a bit more about our unlikely hero, the woman who helped the spies. Who will read Joshua 2:1? *Assign a reader.*

 Slides #9–10

- ? What was the name of the woman who the spies came to in Jericho? *Rahab.*

Rahab was a prostitute. A prostitute was a woman who didn't obey God's command to be faithful to only one husband. She led a sinful life. But her home was a place where the spies could learn a lot about the city.

Show the Lesson Illustration. Rahab's home was also unique. It was built right into one of the walls of Jericho! Her home offered a safe place for the spies to hide.

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. As we saw in the skit, the king found out where they were and sent his men to find them. Rahab protected the spies by hiding them on her roof. She also lied to the king's men.

 Slide #11

- ? Where did she say the spies had gone? *Out the gate of the city.*

- ? Was it okay for Rahab to lie? *Allow discussion.*

- ? Refer to the Ten Commandments Poster. God hates all sin, and lying is a sin. God commanded his people not to lie. Which commandment is that on the Ten Commandments Poster? *Choose a reader. 9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

Remember, though, that God had just given these commandments to Moses and the Israelites, so Rahab didn't know them.

- ? In the skit, what did Rahab tell the spies she had heard about God? *The miracles he had done for the Israelites.*

Rahab said that everyone in Jericho was afraid when they heard about how God parted the Red Sea and gave the Israelites victory over the Amorite kings.

Joshua 2:11

- ? Let's see what she believed about God. Who will read Joshua 2:11? *Assign a reader.*

 Slide #12

- ? What did Rahab say about God in this verse? *"The Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath."*

The people in Jericho were wicked and worshipped false gods. But Rahab believed that the God of the Israelites was the one true God—only he controlled the heavens and the earth.

- ? What is that called when we believe the truth about God? *Faith.*

Rahab had so much faith in God that she chose to help the enemies of her people, the Israelites, because she knew that God was with them.

She would have been in big trouble if the king's men had found the spies on her roof or learned that she helped them escape!

- ? What did Rahab ask the spies to do for her? *Spare her and her family when they took over the city.*
- ? What did the spies tell her she had to do for them to keep their promise? *Not tell anyone their plans, tie a scarlet cord in her window, make sure all her family was in her house.*
- ? What color is scarlet? *Bright red.*
- ? Why do you think the spies told her to use that color for the cord hanging from her window? *Allow guesses.*

Scarlet is a bright color that would show up against the wall so the Israelites would be able to see it. A regular rope may have blended in with the wall.

- ? How did Rahab help the spies get away? *She let them down the wall with a rope from her window.*

 Slide #13

Refer to the Lesson Illustration. Remember that Rahab's house was built into the wall. When she let the men climb out her window, they were outside the city walls and didn't have to go through the gate, which was closed at night.

 Slides #14–15

- ? Let's fill in some more Class Notes. Who will read #3 and tell us the name of the city the spies went to? *Assign a reader. Jericho. Complete #3.*
- ? How did Rahab help the spies? Who will read #4? *Assign a reader. Hid. Complete #4.*
- ? And #5, why were the people in Jericho afraid? *Assign a reader. Miracles. Complete #5.*
- ? What did Rahab understand about the God of the Israelites in #6? *Assign a reader. Lord. Complete #6.*
- ? And who will read #7? *Assign a reader. Faith. Complete #7.*
- ? Who thinks that Rahab kept quiet about the spies and was saved from the destruction of Jericho? *Show of hands.*

Joshua 6:25

 Slide #16

- ? Turn to Joshua 6:25, and we'll find out! Who will read that? *Choose a reader.*
- ? What happened to Rahab and her family? *They were saved.*

We'll take a closer look at the battle of Jericho in another lesson, but we see here that Rahab kept her word—and so did the Israelites! They saw the scarlet cord in her window and spared everyone in her family. God showed mercy to Rahab because she had faith in him. She and her family lived with the Israelites.

Rahab married an Israelite man named Salmon from the tribe of Judah. Rahab and her husband Salmon had a son named Boaz, who became the ancestor of King David! The line of King David eventually led to Jesus! You can read the genealogy in Matthew 1 and see Rahab listed in verse 5. Rahab was a sinner saved by faith and used by God to help the Israelite spies. She was a Gentile, not an Israelite, but she was included in Jesus' family line!

Hebrews 11:31

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Rahab is also included in a special chapter of the Bible. Turn to Hebrews 11:31 in the New Testament. This chapter is sometimes called the "Hall of Faith" because it lists great "heroes" of the faith.

 Slides #17–18

? Who will read Hebrews 11:31 for us? *Assign a reader.*

? *Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster.* Rahab is in this chapter along with great people like Abraham, Joseph, and Moses! This verse says that Rahab did not perish with the disobedient. Perish means die. Who is the disobedient referring to? *The other people of Jericho who rejected God.*

Out of all the people in the city, it was Rahab who believed God and feared him.

? What does the verse say Rahab did for the spies? *Gave them a friendly welcome.*

Right. She did even more than welcome them; she helped hide and protect them from the king's men. For her faith in God and her actions toward the spies, Rahab was given praise and honor.

Rahab's life shows us that God can use anyone, no matter what they've done or where they live, to accomplish his purpose. Rahab may be an unlikely hero, but she is a great example of faith. And for her faith, God showed her grace and mercy.

? *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster.* Who will read the definitions of gracious and merciful from the Attributes of God Poster? *Assign readers.*
Gracious: gives great gifts to his children even when they are not deserved.
Merciful: kind to those in misery; withholds deserved punishment.

? Let's complete the Class Notes. Who will read #8? *Assign a reader. Spared.*
Have students complete #8.

 Slide #19

? Rahab and her family lived with the Israelites, and Rahab married a man from the tribe of Judah. Who can read #9 and answer who came from Rahab's family line? *Assign a reader. David, Jesus. Have students complete #9.*

? And #10, who will read that? *Choose a reader. Heroes. Have students complete #10.*

Slide #20

Application

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Today we learned about an unlikely hero named Rahab. Rahab was a Gentile woman, not an Israelite, and she led a sinful life in the pagan city of Jericho. But Rahab chose to help the two Israelite spies. She hid them on her roof and then helped them escape from the king's men.

- ? Think about how this account of Rahab can apply to us. If God used this Gentile woman to accomplish his plans, couldn't God use us, too? *Yes.*
- ? Let's see if we have anything in common with Rahab. Raise your hand if any of these questions apply to you. Are any of you Gentiles (not Israelites)? *Show of hands.*
- ? Do any of you come from unbelieving families or cities? *Show of hands.*
- ? Have you ever sinned by breaking God's laws? *Show of hands.*

Most of us are a lot more like Rahab than we may have realized. Even though Rahab was an ordinary, sinful woman, she came to believe in the one true God, who used her to help the Israelites conquer the Promised Land. God even included her in Jesus' family line. She was a sinner just like us, but God in his mercy will forgive us if we ask him to. When we have faith and believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from sin. Then God can use us to fulfill his purposes, just like he used Rahab!

- Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Thank God for the example of Rahab in the Bible so that we can trust him to do great things through us, too.
- Ask God for faith to live in obedience to his Word.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



Israel Crosses the Jordan

God provided safe passage across the Jordan River for Joshua and the Israelites.

Lesson Focus

God blocked the Jordan River so the Israelites could cross into the Promised Land. The priests, carrying the ark of the covenant, showed faith by leading the people and stepping into the flooded river before it dried up. Joshua set up 12 memorial stones to remind future generations of this miracle.

Key Passages

Joshua 3:14–17, 4:19–24; Luke 22:19–20

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how God provided safe passage through the Jordan River.
- Identify the purpose of the memorial stones.

Memory Verse

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print one Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

Bring the following:

- Pictures of famous monuments/memorials (3–5) from the Internet or books
- Paper and pencils/pens for each team
- Timer

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for your awesome power over creation! You stopped the overflowing Jordan River so the Israelites could cross into the Promised Land. Your miracle inspired the fear and reverence of all the people. Please help my students to recognize that this account is true history and to trust you more. May they also learn the importance of remembering your works and telling them to others.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 65*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

Studying God's Word
Group Prayer

Small Group

Come On In
Memory Verse
Optional Activity
Lesson Review
Take Home Sheet

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

Unlike the previous spy mission that Moses sent into the Promised Land, Joshua's spies came back from Jericho with the encouraging news that all the people in the land were afraid of them (Joshua 2:24). Joshua was ready to enter the land and begin the conquest. There was only one problem—the Jordan River lay between Israel's camp and the Promised Land! To make matters worse, the river was at flood stage, overflowing its banks (Joshua 3:15). God commanded Joshua to have the priests carry the ark of the covenant and lead the way to the river. The people were commanded to consecrate themselves as they would before a festival or worship. Consecration usually involved physical cleansing (bathing and washing clothes) and abstaining from unclean or common things or activities. Consecration prepared them for an encounter with God. The people were also to remain a respectful distance behind the priests carrying the ark (Joshua 3:2–6).

Next came a true test of faith. The priests were commanded to step into the waters of the Jordan River. They obeyed and witnessed an amazing display of God's power. When their feet entered the water, the Lord stopped the waters of the river north of their location, at a city named Adam about 15 miles away. The water heaped up, and the ground

dried up. The priests carried the ark into the middle of the riverbed and stood there while the people hurried to cross over (Joshua 3:15–17).

Joshua collected 12 stones and piled them where the priests stood as a marker of God's power and presence. As commanded by God and Joshua, a leader from each tribe of Israel also collected a stone from the riverbed, but they brought their stones to the other side (Joshua 4:8–9). After everyone was safely across, Joshua told the priests to follow. This time, when their feet reached the opposite bank, the waters of the Jordan were unblocked and returned to their normal flooded area (Joshua 4:18).

The Israelites set up their first camp in the Promised Land and called it Gilgal. Here, Joshua took the 12 stones from each tribe and set them up as a memorial of God's miracle at the Jordan. He commanded the people to teach their children the meaning of the stones. They were a reminder of God's faithfulness and power so they would fear the Lord always (Joshua 4:19–24).

The miracles of God parting the Red Sea for Moses and stopping the Jordan River for Joshua marked the beginning and ending of Israel's journey through the wilderness. The miracles also exalted the leadership of Moses and Joshua so the people would respect and obey them (Joshua 3:7). News of these miracles spread throughout the land of Canaan, causing the people to fear the Lord and recognize his power.

Historical/Apologetics Background

There are natural theories that have been used to explain God's miracle of stopping the Jordan River. In 1927, an earthquake and landslide occurred in a similar location to the ancient city of Adam on the Jordan River, blocking its flow. While this may be the method God chose, several details indicate divine intervention. For example, the timing of the miracle to have the waters stop when the priests stepped into the river required God's intervention. The timing of the stoppage could have been hours to an entire day, but the waters returned to flood stage the moment the priests crossed to the opposite bank. We don't always need to search for natural explanations to God's miracles; we can trust his Word is true.

However God chose to accomplish this miracle, he marked its importance in the history of Israel by having Joshua erect the 12 memorial stones. Knowing how quickly the next generation could forget and turn away from him, God commanded Joshua to tell parents to teach their children what the stones meant. Future generations needed to hear how God worked on behalf of his people.

In addition to its significance as a miraculous event in Israel's history, the Jordan River remains an important geographical landmark with applications for the spiritual life. The winding 223 miles of the river actually cover a distance of only 124 miles from its source at Mount Hermon through the Sea

of Galilee to where it empties into the Dead Sea. It has the lowest elevation of any other river on earth. Today, it forms the border between Israel and the country of Jordan. In Joshua's day, it was the final obstacle before he and the Israelites could enter the land of Canaan and take possession of the land God promised them. In contrast, the Red Sea marked the first obstacle in Israel's journey from bondage to freedom. The Red Sea crossing has been compared to the rescue of the sinner from bondage to sin through Jesus. And the Jordan River has been said to signify the transition to new life through victorious Christian living. During the wilderness wanderings, the Israelites were free from Egypt, yet they often longed to return. Egypt was still in their hearts just as sin remains in our flesh. It was with the new generation raised in the wilderness that God chose to give the Promised Land. They crossed with eagerness and faith into a new land.

The Jordan River also signified transitions for individual people. It showed a transition of leadership from Moses to Joshua and from Elijah to Elisha. The same miracle of the Jordan parting occurred for both Elijah and Elisha as the mantle of God's Spirit passed from teacher to student (2 Kings 2:6-14). The correlation of transition and the Jordan River continued in the New Testament. The Jordan River was where John the Baptist baptized people coming to repentance (Matthew 3:1-6). It was also where John baptized Jesus, signifying the beginning of his earthly ministry.

Just as God dried up the Red Sea to deliver his people from bondage in Egypt and dried up the Jordan River to lead his people to victory in the Promised Land, he has delivered us from the penalty of sin through faith in Christ and is delivering us from the power of sin by the sanctifying work of his Holy Spirit. And one day he will deliver us from the very presence of sin. Blessed be his holy name!

Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Slide #2

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.
- ▶ Have pictures of several memorials or monuments your students will recognize.

Slides #3–4

Memorial: honors the memory of a person or event

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

Have pictures of several national or local monuments ready to show. To start today, I have some pictures to show you. I want to see if you can name what they are and then tell me what or who they remind us of. Here's the first one. Show first picture.

- ? **What is this?** *Allow answers.*
- ? **What person/event does it remind us of?** *Allow answers. Continue to show the pictures you brought and ask these two questions. Give hints if students need help guessing them.*

Great job! What I showed you today are important memorials.

- ? **Why do we have memorials? What is their purpose?** *Allow answers.*

A memorial is something, like a monument or holiday, intended to honor the memory of a person or event. Even though we didn't necessarily live at the same time as these people or events, we use these memorials to remember them.

In today's lesson, we'll see how God commanded Joshua to set up an important memorial to remind the Israelites of an amazing event.

Refer to Lesson 64 Theme Poster. We've seen how God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites after Moses' death. The generation that rebelled and refused to enter the Promised Land had all died, except for Joshua and Caleb. Now Joshua was preparing to lead the people into the land of Canaan. He sent two spies, who went into Jericho and stayed at Rahab's house.

Rahab had led a sinful life, but she had heard about the miracles God had done for the Israelites. She believed that their God was the one true God and that he would give the land to his people.

She chose to hide the spies on her roof and then help them escape the city. She asked the spies to spare her and her family. They said they would if she didn't tell her people what they were planning. She also had to tie a scarlet cord in her window and gather her family in her house.

The spies reported to Joshua that all the people of the land were terrified of them. Joshua was encouraged to move forward. There was only one problem—the flooded Jordan River was in between the Israelites' camp and the city of Jericho!

God Stops the Jordan River

God was about to do a great miracle, but he wanted the people ready. He gave Joshua instructions to give the people.

First, God commanded that when the people set out, the priests were supposed to lead, carrying the ark of the covenant.

- ? Who remembers where the ark of the covenant was kept when the Israelites camped? *Most holy place in the tent of meeting/tabernacle.*
- ? What did it look like? *Wooden box overlaid with gold, covered with a mercy seat and two cherubim.*

That's right. Two cherubim, or angels, were carved on either side of the mercy seat with their wings spread over it. Inside the ark of the covenant were the tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments. The ark of the covenant represented God's presence among his people. By having the priests go first with the ark, God was showing the people to follow and trust him.

Second, God commanded that the people consecrate themselves. That meant the people were supposed to wash themselves and their clothing and separate themselves from anything unclean. It was often what the people did before special festivals or times when they came to worship God. By consecrating themselves, the people were preparing for an encounter with God.

Let's read what happened when the priests reached the Jordan River!

Joshua 3:14–17

- ? *Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster.* Turn to the book of Joshua. It's the fifth book in the Old Testament. Who will read Joshua 3:14–17? *Assign readers.*
- ? Wow! This account is amazing! What does verse 15 say about the Jordan River at harvest time? *It overflows its banks.*

This was the flood season when the waters of the river were high and strong. This wasn't a little trickle of water!

- ? What did the priests carrying the ark of the covenant have to do before anything happened? Look in verse 15. *Put their feet into the water.*

► Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

🖥 Slides #5–7

- ? The priests had to show great faith in God by stepping into the river. But once their feet entered the water, what did God do? *God stopped up the waters in a heap far away, allowing the people to cross.*

God blocked the river at a city about 15 miles north of where the Israelites were crossing. God's timing was perfect to block the river miles away so that it would dry up at the right spot for the Israelites to cross.

- ? What city was close to where the Israelites crossed? It's the city they're planning to attack. *Joshua 3:16. Jericho.*
- ? Where did the priests stand while all the people crossed over? *Joshua 3:17. They stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the river.*

 Slides #8–10

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. The priests stood with the ark in the middle of the river while all the people passed over on dry ground. They were able to bring everyone and everything safely across and into the Promised Land. The ark was a reminder that it was God's hand holding back the waters.

- ? Let's start the Class Notes. You have questions with multiple choice answers to circle. Who will read #1 and give the correct answer? *Assign a reader. C. Flooded river. Have students complete #1.*
- ? And #2? Who will read that? *Assign a reader. C. Priests. Have students complete #2.*
- ? Who will read and answer #3 about how God stopped the Jordan River? *Assign a reader. A. He blocked it miles away. Have students complete #3.*
- ? And #4? What did the priests carry? *Assign a reader. B. Ark of the covenant. Have students complete #4.*

Joshua Sets Up the Memorial Stones

God commanded Joshua to collect something from the riverbed. Joshua told one leader from each of the twelve tribes of Israel to take a stone from the middle of the river to the other side. Then Joshua set up 12 stones in the river where the priests were standing to mark where the ark had been held. After all the people had passed over, God gave the command to Joshua, who told the priests to leave their place in the river.

When the priests' feet came up out of the riverbed on the other side from where they started, the waters of the Jordan were unblocked until it overflowed its banks like before the miracle. Everyone made it safely across!

Joshua 4:19–24

 Slides #11–13

- ? Let's read what Joshua did with the 12 stones the men brought out from the riverbed. Who will read Joshua 4:19–24? *Assign readers or you read the passage.*
- ? What did Joshua do with the stones? *Joshua 4:20. He set them up at Gilgal.*

Gilgal was the Israelites' first camp in the Promised Land! It was close to Jericho.

- ? What did Joshua say the stones were supposed to do? *Remind the people about how God dried up the Jordan River so they could pass over.*

We call these 12 stones the memorial stones because they were set up to help the people remember God's miracle to bring them into the Promised Land. The people were supposed to teach their children what these stones meant.

- ? The stones would remind the people about crossing the Jordan, but what other crossing would they remind the people of? *Joshua 4:23. The Red Sea crossing.*

That's right! God parted the waters of the Red Sea for the Israelites to escape the Egyptians, and then he stopped the Jordan River so the people could cross into the Promised Land. These miracles were quite similar even though they happened about 40 years apart. They marked the beginning and the end of the Israelites' journey through the wilderness. The first crossing at the Red Sea was witnessed by the generation of Israelites who were slaves, but the second crossing at the Jordan was witnessed by the next generation of Israelites who had grown up in the wilderness. God wanted this generation to share his miracles with their children.

God also used these miracles to exalt the leaders he had chosen. At the Red Sea, God's miracle exalted Moses as the leader. At the Jordan River, God's miracle exalted Joshua in the eyes of the people so they would understand that Joshua was the new leader chosen by God. They needed to respect Joshua the same way they had respected Moses.

- ? Look at the end of verse 24. What did God want the Israelites to do because they knew of these great miracles? *Fear the Lord your God forever.*
- ? God's miracle also had a purpose beyond the Israelites. What would it show the peoples of the earth? *Joshua 4:24. That the hand of the Lord is mighty.*

Because the city of Jericho was built on a hill, it was likely that the people there saw the Jordan River dry up and the Israelites cross over.

- ? How do you think that made them feel? *Allow answers. Scared. Afraid.*

The people in Jericho were wicked and worshipped false gods. But God showed them his power. They saw that God was with the Israelites, and he could do things that their false gods couldn't!

- ? Let's return to the Class Notes. Who will read #5 and tell us where Joshua set up 12 stones? *Assign a reader. D. The middle of the river and Gilgal. Complete #5.*

 Slide #14

- ? Who will read #6? *Assign a reader. A. God dried up the Jordan so they could cross. Complete #6.*

Memorials Today

The 12 memorial stones that Joshua set up in Gilgal served as a reminder of God’s miraculous work to bring the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land by parting the waters for them.

We have different memorials today that help us remember important events. These memorials may be monuments, like I showed you at the start of the lesson, or they can be holidays or events in church.

We’re going to have a competition. I’ll divide you into teams, and I want each team to list as many memorials as they can think of, along with what they help us remember. The memorials can be national ones, or they can be Christian memorials, like those for a religious person or holiday (i.e., Lord’s supper, Christmas). When your time is up, each team will get to share their list, and we’ll see who came up with the most memorials! Let’s get started! *Divide the class into teams and give each team paper and pencils/pens. Set a timer (i.e., 5 minutes) and give updates on how much time is left. Adjust time as necessary.*

When time is up, let teams share their lists and explanations. Recognize the winning team. Conclude the activity by mentioning any memorials that were missed or by summarizing the meaning of any that the students didn’t know (e.g., did students emphasize the spiritual meaning of holidays like Christmas and Easter?).

Great work, everyone! You came up with some important memorials for different events and people.

- ? One important memorial we have in church is called communion or the Lord’s supper. What are we remembering when we have the Lord’s supper together? *Allow discussion.*

We have the Lord’s supper to remember Jesus’ death on the cross. The bread represents his body, broken for us, and the drink represents his blood, shed for our sins.

Luke 22:19–20

 Slides #15–16

Listen to what Jesus said when he shared the last supper with his disciples. *Read Luke 22:19–20.*

Did you hear what Jesus said after he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples? He said, “Do this in remembrance of me.” So, the Lord’s supper is meant to remind us of what Jesus did for us on the cross. God knew that we, as people, forget things. We need reminders of what he has done, and we need to learn what these things mean. Otherwise, we may not appreciate the wonderful things God has done to show his great love and mercy toward us.

- ? Let’s finish our Class Notes. Who will read #7 and answer it? *Assign a reader. C. Honor the memory of a person or event. Complete #7.*
- ? And #8? What is the answer there? *Assign a reader. A. Animal. Complete #8.*

Application

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. God gave his people an awesome demonstration of his power when he stopped the waters of the Jordan River so the Israelites could cross on dry ground.

 Slide #17

- ? What did Joshua set up where the priests were standing? *12 stones as a memorial.*

Joshua set up stones in the river, but he also had leaders from the 12 tribes of Israel collect a stone and bring it to their camp on the other side. At their camp, named Gilgal, Joshua set up these 12 memorial stones as a reminder of God's miracle at the Jordan River.

Think about some things God has done for you. God doesn't part waters for us on the way to church or school, but he still works in our lives. He answers our prayers, helps us with problems, and provides for us.

- ? Does anyone have something you'd like to share that God has done for you? It could be something in the past or something God did for your family. *Allow discussion or share a personal example.*

When we recall the good things God has done for us, it encourages us and others. We don't have memorials for these events in our lives, but we can still share them with others and give God the glory.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Praise God for his mighty acts on behalf of his people.
- Ask God to help us remember all that he has done for us and to share those things with others.

- Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



Israel Conquers Jericho

*God collapsed the walls of Jericho so
Israel could conquer the city.*

Lesson Focus

God commanded Joshua to have the priests carry the ark of the covenant and blow trumpets while they and the fighting men of Israel marched around Jericho once every morning for six days. On the seventh day, they marched seven times around the city, gave a great shout, and watched the Lord collapse the walls. Israel destroyed the city but spared Rahab and her family as promised.

Key Passages

Joshua 6:1–6, 6:15–17, 6:20, 6:23, 6:25

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how God gave victory to the Israelites.
- Describe how God was faithful to his promises to Israel and to Rahab.

Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print the following:

- One Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- One set of five Lesson Illustrations.

Bring the following for the Jericho Reenactment (see lesson for details):

- Option 1: blocks or playing cards, toy figures
- Option 2: edible supplies (e.g., pretzels, marshmallows, licorice)
- Option 3: chairs, tables, or boxes
- Options 1 & 3: kazoos or construction paper for trumpets
- Optional: markers or stickers for decorating paper trumpets

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you that you fight battles for us that we can't win. You appeared to Joshua and gave him instructions on how to take the city. Help my students see your power and faithfulness in this victory at Jericho. May they seek to obey you as Joshua and the people did. May they ask for your saving mercy and trust you as Rahab did to be saved.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 66*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

Studying God's Word
Optional Video Clip
Group Prayer

Small Group

Come On In
Memory Verse
Optional Activity
Lesson Review
Take Home Sheet

Optional Supplements

Hands-On Activities

Do these activities when you think best—before, during, or after the lesson.

- Coloring Sheet
Students will color as you review today's lesson with them.
- Word Scramble
Students will unscramble words from today's lesson and answer a final question. Make it a challenge: have students race against each other or the clock.

Video Clips

Preview the recommended video(s) before class. If appropriate, show to your class and discuss before, during, or after the lesson.

- Jericho's Walls (6:40)
- The Grain in Jericho (5:10)
- Rahab's Wall (3:21)

PowerPoint

You may want to use the PowerPoint presentation provided to enhance your teaching.

Notes

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

After the episode of Rahab and the spies, God charged Joshua to lead the nation of Israel into the Promised Land. The Israelites were on the eastern banks of the Jordan River and had not yet crossed into the land that God had promised them. Joshua chapters 3–4 tell of the miraculous stopping of the Jordan River’s waters, allowing Israel to cross on dry land, and of the memorial stones that Israel placed on the other side to commemorate God’s faithfulness. The bearing of the ark of the covenant before the nation (Joshua 3:11) declared that God was fulfilling his purpose to establish a nation for his own glory.

The first obstacle before Israel was the city of Jericho. In Joshua 5:13–15, a man identified as the “commander of the army of the LORD” appeared to Joshua. This man represents a *Christophany*, a pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus. If that were not the case, the man would not have commanded Joshua to remove his sandals. This was the Son of God himself in human form, declaring that he would lead and fight for Israel. This would be no ordinary battle!

The battle plan from the Lord must have seemed very strange to Joshua. Jericho responded to Israel’s approach by securely shutting up the city (Joshua 6:1), an indication that they expected a siege. God’s instructions to Joshua were for the army of Israel to march around the city once each day for six days, with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant and blowing trumpets (Joshua 6). But the people were commanded to make no other noise. Then on the seventh day, the Israelites would circle the city seven times instead of once as they’d done the previous six days. Finally, the Israelites would shout, and God promised that he would miraculously destroy the walls, leaving a path for them to march directly in (Joshua 6:4–5).

Historical/Apologetics Background

For much of the twentieth century, archaeologists declared that the biblical account of Jericho could not have happened as the Bible said it did. More recent discoveries, however, have not only led to an archaeological revision of the date of Jericho’s destruction

No other battles had been fought by Israel in this manner, and no others would be. God had a particular purpose to mark this victory, the first in the Promised Land, with a miraculous triumph that would follow a week of ceremony. God desired to conquer Jericho in a way that could not be attributed to Israel’s military prowess. Israel would have had every reason, from a standpoint of military tactics and wisdom, to doubt whether God’s directions for the battle would be successful. On the other hand, the Israelites knew the faithfulness of God’s care for 40 years in the wilderness, had heard from the previous generation of their great deliverance from Egypt, and had experienced victories over the Amorite kings Sihon and Og (Deuteronomy 2:26–3:11). The Israelites were convinced that God’s promise was to be trusted, and they obeyed his seemingly strange commands for the battle of Jericho.

Israel’s faith at Jericho is mentioned in Hebrews 11 along with many others who demonstrated faith in God, such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Rahab. These saints of God had faith that led them to look beyond immediate circumstances and trust that God’s ways would lead to blessing beyond any earthly situation. In all of the examples, faith led to obedient action (Hebrews 11:7–31). Israel obeyed God’s instructions for the battle, trusting his goodness and faithfulness. After the seventh circle around the city on the seventh day, Israel shouted, and the walls of Jericho fell. The Israelites went straight into the city and destroyed their enemies (Joshua 6:20–21).

Just as the spies had promised, Rahab and her family were spared because she protected the spies before the battle. Joshua 6:25 records that Rahab lived in Israel “to this day,” showing that she became one of God’s people. It also shows that the book of Joshua wasn’t written very long after the events of the book occurred since Rahab was still living.

that accords with Joshua’s time in history, but have also shown that the ruins were destroyed in a way that is consistent with the Bible’s description of the event. What was once considered a “problem” of the Bible’s inconsistency with archaeological research

has turned out, upon further discovery and study, to be an example of archaeological evidence displaying the trustworthiness of the Bible. For example, archaeologists found evidence that the mudbrick city wall collapsed and was deposited at the base of the stone retaining wall at the time the city met its end. This shows how the Israelites were able to go “straight up” to capture the city after the walls fell (Joshua 6:20). A section of wall that remained intact could be where Rahab’s home was situated, showing God’s protection as he promised. In addition, ash and debris found at the site confirm that the Israelites burned the city (Joshua 6:24). Of course, God’s Word can be trusted completely, with or without such scientific “vindication.”

The Bible says that the Israelites marched around Jericho for seven days. But were these ordinary days or long periods of time? This question seems ridiculous, but it is the same question people ask regarding the length of days in the creation account of Genesis chapter 1. No Christian believes that the Israelites marched around Jericho for thousands of years. Why? Because Scripture is clear. Yet, why do some

Christians continue to question the clear meaning of Genesis 1? The answer is that they have been influenced by modern scientists who believe in millions and billions of years. Thus, they have allowed man’s ever-changing opinions to have authority over the unchanging Word of God. The word translated as “day” in Genesis 1 (and in the Jericho account) is the Hebrew word *yom*. In Genesis 1, *yom* is modified by a number and used in connection with the word “night” and the phrase “evening and morning.” Each time *yom* is used outside of Genesis 1 in just one of these ways, it means a normal-length day. There should be absolutely no question that “day” means a literal 24-hour day in Genesis 1 because that chapter uses *yom* with the combination of all three: a number, the word “night,” and the phrase “evening and morning.”

Isn’t it exciting that we can trust the history in God’s Word? Whether or not we have scientific “evidence” or archaeological “proof,” we know that the Bible is the inspired Word of our God and it is entirely trustworthy.

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

Slide #2

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 64 Theme Poster. Remember what happened in this lesson? Joshua sent two spies into Jericho to get information on the city, the people, and the land. The spies were almost captured by the king's men.

- ? What Gentile woman hid the spies and helped them escape the city? *Rahab.*

Rahab had led a sinful life, but she believed that the God of the Israelites was the one true God. She asked the spies to spare her and her family when they attacked the city. The men agreed and then returned to Joshua. They reported that the people in the land of Canaan were afraid of them. The Canaanites had heard about the miracles God had done for them.

Refer to Lesson 65 Theme Poster. Joshua and the Israelites were eager to enter the Promised Land, but the Jordan River lay between them and the city of Jericho. What was worse—the river was flooded!

- ? How did God provide a way for them to cross? *He blocked the river so they could cross on dry ground.*

God performed an amazing miracle like he did at the Red Sea! This time, he stopped the Jordan River when the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stepped into the water. The priests stood in the middle of the Jordan while all the people hurried to the other side.

- ? What did Joshua do to help the people remember this miracle? *He set up 12 stones as a memorial.*

Right! One leader from each tribe collected a stone from the riverbed when he crossed. Then at their first camp in the Promised Land, Joshua took these stones and piled them up. God wanted the Israelites to see these stones and be reminded to teach their children about his miracle at the Jordan.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Joshua's next task was to conquer the city of Jericho. But this city had several walls protecting it, and it was built on a hill, which made it hard to attack. How would Joshua and the fighting men of Israel capture the city without being killed by the men on the city walls?

Jericho Conquered

God didn't leave Joshua to come up with a plan on his own. Jesus appeared to Joshua as the commander of the Lord's army. Jesus held a drawn sword. Joshua fell down and worshipped him. Jesus commanded Joshua to remove his sandals just like God told Moses to do at the burning bush. Then Jesus gave Joshua some unusual instructions. But these instructions weren't your typical battle strategies!

- ? What were some ways people usually attacked a walled city back in Bible times? Does anyone have a guess? *Allow discussion.*

When an army attacked a city like Jericho, they would usually do one of several things. They could surround the city and keep the people trapped inside until they ran out of food or water and surrendered. This strategy was called a siege. But a siege usually took several months or longer before the people inside gave up. Another strategy was to dig under a section of the wall until it collapsed. This could work, but it was very dangerous for the men doing the digging since they could be attacked by the defenders on top of the city walls. Other methods included piling dirt next to the walls to try to go up and over or even using catapults to hurl rocks at the walls. These strategies all required quite a bit of time and didn't always guarantee success.

Let's read what strategy God gave to Joshua.

Joshua 6:1–6

- ? Turn to Joshua 6. Who will read verses 1–6? *Assign readers.*
- ? In verse 1, what does it say about the city of Jericho? *It was shut up inside and out. No people could come in or go out.*
- Show Lesson Illustration #1. The people of Jericho closed up the city gates and kept everyone inside when they saw Israel coming! They couldn't go in or out of the city because the Israelites were camped close to them.*
- ? What did the Lord say to Joshua in verse 2? *I have given Jericho into your hand.*
- Before the battle, God promised to give Joshua victory over Jericho, its king, and its mighty men. That's an encouraging promise!
- ? What did God tell Joshua and the people to do for six days? *Joshua 6:3–4. March around the city with the men of war and the priests once every day.*

- Wait to pass out the Class Notes until before the Jericho Reenactment. Students will use the Class Notes as a review.

 Slides #6–8

 Slide #9

- ? What were the priests commanded to do? *Carry the ark of the covenant and blow seven trumpets.*
- ? What were the instructions for the seventh day? *Joshua 6:4–5. They were to march around the city seven times on the seventh day. The priests were commanded to blow the trumpets and the people were to shout. Then God would make the walls fall flat so the army could enter the city.*
- ? These instructions weren't like the strategies we talked about for taking a city, are they? *No.*

 Slides #10–11

Show Lesson Illustrations #2–3. But Joshua and the people obeyed. They rose early every morning for six days and marched once around the city of Jericho without shouting or speaking. Some fighting men went ahead and behind the priests, who carried the ark and blew the trumpets. Then they returned to their camp.

- ? What do you think the people in Jericho thought about what the Israelites were doing? *Allow answers.*

Joshua 6:15–17, 6:20

 Slides #12–14

- ? Let's see what happened on the seventh day. Who will read Joshua 6:15–17 and verse 20? *Assign readers.*

On the seventh day, the people of Jericho were probably nervous and wondered what those crazy Israelites would do next. Why were they walking around the city and not trying to dig under or come over the walls like other armies would?

- ? What did the Israelites do on the seventh day? *They rose early and marched around the city seven times. The priests blew the trumpets and the people shouted.*
- ? In verse 17, what did Joshua command the people to do? *Destroy everything in the city but spare Rahab and her family.*
- ? Joshua remembered the promise the spies had given to Rahab. She and her family would be protected in the battle. Who remembers how Rahab marked her house so the Israelites would know where she was? *She put a scarlet cord in the window.*

 Slide #15

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. She tied a scarlet cord in the window of her house, which was on the wall. The scarlet cord would be easily seen against the brown or gray walls of the city.

- ? Now look in verse 20. What did God do when the people shouted? *He made the wall fall down flat so the people could capture the city.*

Remember the city was on a hill, so climbing the hill and going over a wall would be hard for the attacking army. But God flattened the walls to rubble so that Israel's fighting men could run straight up and into the city.

 Slides #16–17

Joshua 6:23, 6:25

- ? What about Rahab? Who will read Joshua 6:23 and 25? *Assign a reader.*

? Who did Joshua send to get Rahab and her family? *The two spies she had saved.*

? I bet Rahab was glad to see those two men show up at her door! Rahab had followed their instructions to mark her house with the scarlet cord and to gather all her family in her house. Where did the spies bring Rahab's family? *To their camp outside the city.*

The Israelites destroyed Jericho with fire, but Rahab and her family were saved. They stayed with the Israelites.

? Look at the end of verse 25. Why was Rahab saved? *Because she hid the messengers/spies.*

God and Joshua honored the faith and actions of Rahab by sparing her and her family. They stayed with the Israelites, and Rahab married an Israelite man from the tribe of Judah.

? Who remembers what important people came from Rahab's family line in the tribe of Judah? *King David and Jesus.*

God, in his faithfulness and sovereignty, used Rahab, the spies, and Joshua to fulfill his promise to give Jericho to the Israelites. He also allowed Rahab to become an ancestor of the Messiah, who would save Jews and Gentiles from their sins.

? Why did the walls of Jericho come down? Was it because of the trumpet blasts and the great shout? *No. It was God.*

God again showed the Israelites that he was fighting for them. He gave them the victory. All they had to do was obey his instructions. That must have been hard to do—to follow instructions that didn't seem to make sense. But God was faithful to do what he promised Joshua. The city was conquered along with its king and mighty men.

Jericho Rediscovered

It is easy to read the Bible and hear about the great things God does without grasping just what a huge event it was. That can easily happen when talking about Joshua and the walls of Jericho.

Show Lesson Illustration #4. This drawing is based on what has been discovered at the actual site of Jericho by archaeologists—people who carefully clear the land to see what may be left and buried from people and cities long ago. There are no houses on this illustration, but this will give us an idea of how well-protected the city was.

 Slide #18

The city was built up on a steep hill—or earthen mound. This alone would make it difficult for enemies to attack. Then there was wall 1, a stone retaining wall. This was the first of three walls, and it was 12–15 feet tall. On top of that was wall 2. This was a mudbrick wall that was

about 20–25 feet tall! It is thought that this wall measured 6 feet thick! We are talking about a very strong and well-protected fortress.

But that is not all that was found! There was a third wall! The ground sloped up steeply from walls 1 and 2 and was topped by another sturdy mudbrick wall—wall 3.

▶ Slide #19

Show Lesson Illustration #5. Now, look at this. You will see that this space between walls 2 and 3 is probably where Rahab’s home was. The Bible tells us that her home was “on the city wall.” And we know that the spies escaped through her window. That leads us to believe that her house would have been one of those built right up against the outside wall of the city.

When we think of what the Israelites were doing—marching silently around the city and wondering how God would bring down these walls, we realize the faith and trust they had in almighty God.

We read in the Bible that the walls fell down flat! That would have been something to see. And the recent discoveries of archaeologists digging and studying the area of Jericho have confirmed that this is exactly what happened.

You see, they found the city and the walls were collapsed. Not only that, they have found evidence that places in the walls at the bottom actually crumbled forward, forming a ramp of rubble that would have made it possible for the Israelites to go “up into the city” just as described in Joshua 6:20! You can see what that may have looked like here in the picture.

What about Rahab’s house? Remember, God spared Rahab and her family. But, it seems her home would have been destroyed with the rest of the city walls. Well, excavations done in the early 1900s found that a portion of the lower city wall had not fallen with the rest of the city. This could have been where Rahab’s home was “on the wall.”

Archaeologists also found burned ash and debris at Jericho. This confirms the method Joshua used to destroy the city—fire!

The Lord performed a great miracle in Jericho. Israel destroyed Jericho, and Rahab was saved. God fulfilled his promises by bringing down the walls in a very unusual battle. Many details of the biblical description of the destruction of Jericho have been confirmed by recent archaeological digs. But even without these findings, we know that the Bible is true—it is the Word of God, and God can’t lie.

▶ Pass out the Class Notes.

▶ Slides #20–24

Let’s use the Class Notes to review what we’ve learned. You will fill in the blanks using the word bank, and then we’ll go over the order of the events together. *Pass out the Class Notes and allow time for students to fill in the blanks individually. When they’re finished, review the answers and number the events in order together, asking students which event comes next. Use your answer key to verify answers.*

Jericho Reenactment

We've read about how God delivered the city of Jericho to Joshua and the Israelites. Now, it's your turn to act out what happened!

Choose one of the options below for the reenactment. Be creative and add props or other details as desired.

Option 1: Divide class into groups. Give each group a stack of playing cards or blocks to build Jericho. You may give them toy figures to be the people and kazoos or rolled paper to be the trumpets. Give them time to build their Jericho and then practice their reenactment. When time is up, gather students and let groups watch each other's version of the account.

Option 2: Divide class into groups. Give each group edible supplies to build Jericho, such as pretzels, different sizes of marshmallows, graham crackers, icing, or licorice. You may give them gummy bears or Teddy Grahams to be the people. Give them time to build their Jericho and then practice their reenactment. When time is up, gather students and let groups watch each other's version of the account and then eat their Jericho "ruins."

Option 3: Have the whole class act out the account together using props in the room. Set up tables, chairs, or boxes to be the walls of Jericho. Give some or all students (the "priests") kazoos or rolled paper for trumpets. Simulate morning and night by turning the lights on and off for each day. Lead the students quietly around the walls one time for six days, using the "trumpets" to signal leaving and returning to the camp. On the seventh day, lead the students seven times around the walls. Have students blow the trumpets, shout, and knock down the "walls."

We learned a lot about God's instructions to Joshua to help him conquer the city of Jericho. On the outside, it looked like Jericho was too strong and fortified for the Israelites to attack. But God was not hindered by walls! He taught the Israelites to be patient and to follow his instructions. Then he fulfilled his promise to deliver the city into their hands. God even preserved a section of the wall where Rahab was so she and her family would be saved. I pray that we will trust and obey God like Joshua, Rahab, and the Israelites!

Application

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. God gave Joshua and the Israelite army victory over the walled city of Jericho. They simply marched around the city for seven days with the ark of the covenant. On the seventh day, the priests blew their trumpets, and the army gave a great shout. God made the walls fall down flat! And let's not forget that Rahab and her family came out of Jericho alive! God fulfilled his promises to give Joshua victory over Jericho and to save Rahab from destruction.

 Slide #25

How can the fulfillment of these promises apply to us? From learning about these promises—and all the others in God’s Word—we can be sure that God is faithful.

- ? Refer to the *Attributes of God Poster*. Who will read the definition of faithful from the *Attributes of God Poster*? Assign a reader. Will always keep his promises; does not lie.

Sometimes God asks us to do things that don’t make sense—like marching around a city and trusting God to do the rest! Sometimes life will be difficult, and it may not look like things will turn out okay. But God has promised that he will be with us. He will help us. He will strengthen us. And just like he did with Joshua and the Israelites, God commands that we obey him, even when it is very hard. We can always trust our faithful God!

- Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Thank God for giving us so many examples of his faithfulness in the Bible.
- Ask God to help us trust and obey him even when things are hard or don’t seem to make sense.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



God Gives the Victory

God gave the Israelites victories when they were obedient.

Lesson Focus

God let the Israelites lose the first battle at Ai to point out Achan's sin and show them that victory could come only through complete obedience. God gave the Israelites victory over Ai and then over five Amorite kings, making the sun stand still until they defeated their enemies.

Key Passages

Joshua 7:1, 7:4–6, 7:20–22, 10:9–14

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify why the Israelites lost the battle of Ai.
- Describe the victory over the Amorites.

Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board Game | <input type="checkbox"/> Crazy Dice Board Game |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Card Keep | <input type="checkbox"/> Oh No |

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Down the Line | <input type="checkbox"/> Popcorn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Egg Hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Review Card Relay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Look Behind You | <input type="checkbox"/> Stack Em Up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Now You See It | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Turn |

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print one Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

Optional: bring a globe, a flashlight, and small candies for the introduction quiz.

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Baseball | <input type="checkbox"/> Goofy Golf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box Toss | <input type="checkbox"/> Pick a Point |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draw Dice | <input type="checkbox"/> Racetrack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Four in a Row | <input type="checkbox"/> Toss for It |

Go to Prayer

Lord, your miracles are beyond human understanding, but I believe them. You made the sun stand still so Joshua and the Israelites could defeat their enemies. You also let them suffer a defeat to root out sin in the camp. May my students see that victory is related to obedience to you and your commands. May they never try to hide sin, like Achan, but may they be quick to confess it and turn from it.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 67*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Studying God's Word
- Real World Skit
- Optional Video Clip
- Group Prayer

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Optional Activity
- Lesson Review
- Take Home Sheet

Optional Supplements

Hands-On Activities

Do these activities when you think best—before, during, or after the lesson.

- Get the Gold
Students will race to get the “gold” and earn points for their team.
- Real World Skit
Students will read a skit discussing a problem caused by one person’s sin.
- Sunshine Photo Holder
Students will create a sun craft from paper plates and clothes pins.
- Coloring Sheet
Students will color as you review today’s lesson with them.
- Word Search
Students will search for words from today’s lesson. Make it a challenge: have students race against each other or the clock to find all the words.

Video Clips

Preview the recommended video(s) before class. If appropriate, show to your class and discuss before, during, or after the lesson.

- Joshua’s Conquest of Hazor (1:59)
- Sun (2:32)

PowerPoint

You may want to use the PowerPoint presentation provided to enhance your teaching.

Notes

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

God gave Joshua and the Israelites a great victory at the battle of Jericho. They saw God deliver the city into their hands by collapsing fortified walls. Joshua commanded the men entering the city to destroy everything except Rahab and her family and certain precious metals, which the men were to bring to the Lord's treasury (Joshua 6:17–19). The gold, silver, bronze, and iron objects were to be taken to the priests. One man, Achan of the tribe of Judah, disobeyed Joshua's command and took items from the spoil of Jericho, causing God's judgment to fall on all the people (Joshua 7:1). Joshua sent only 3,000 fighting men to the small city of Ai, but his men were defeated and 36 were killed (Joshua 7:4–5). The people were terrified, and Joshua and the Israelite elders mourned before the Lord. They knew that without the Lord on their side they would soon be destroyed.

God called Joshua to root out the sin in the camp, for that was why they had suffered a defeat. Using lots controlled by God, Joshua identified the guilty man among them as Achan. Achan confessed to taking a valuable cloak, 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold from Jericho (Joshua 7:16–21). Joshua sent men to find the items, which were buried in Achan's tent. With his sin exposed, Achan, his family, and all his possessions were taken to the Valley of Achor (trouble) and destroyed by the people.

God turned from his anger and commanded Joshua to attack Ai again, this time with the whole

fighting force and an ambush. God promised to deliver the city into Joshua's hands (Joshua 8:7). God gave the victory, and Joshua followed God's commands to destroy the city and its people. He burned the city and hanged the king of Ai.

News of Israel's victories reached the surrounding cities. Men in the city of Gibeon feared Israel and devised a way to trick them. They pretended to be from a distant land and came to the Israelites' camp at Gilgal. Joshua and the leaders failed to pray for guidance, and they were fooled by the Gibeonites' dry bread and worn clothing. They promised to let them live (Joshua 9:8–15). The Israelites were angry with their leaders when the deception was discovered, but Joshua refused to let them destroy the Gibeonites. Instead, he made them Israel's slaves (Joshua 9:23–27). But God used even this failure for his glory. Five Amorite kings surrounded Gibeon to attack them, forcing Israel to come to their aid. God again promised to deliver these enemies over to Joshua, and God threw them into a panic and then hurled hailstones down on them (Joshua 10:10–11). The Amorites fled. Not wanting any to escape when night fell, Joshua prayed and asked God to give him more daylight to pursue his enemies. God answered in a miraculous display of power over creation—the sun stood still and did not set for about another day (Joshua 10: 12–14). The coalition of kings was destroyed, and Israel took over their lands and cities in the southern area of Canaan. God fought for Israel and kept his promises of victory.

Historical/Apologetics Background

For many years, archaeologists excavated a site called et-Tell, which they believed was the Ai of Joshua. But evidence from this site did not line up well with details in Joshua 7–8, so they concluded the Bible was wrong. As is often the case, further investigation revealed that these scholars were in error. They were digging at the wrong site! A team of biblical archaeologists and researchers found an alternative site 9 miles north of Jerusalem called Khirbet el-Maqtar. The geography here fit the

biblical account well, so they began excavations. Their findings revealed many reasons to believe this location was the lost city of Ai:

- A hill lies north of Ai, which matches Joshua's force camping on the north side with a ravine between them and Ai (Joshua 8:11, 8:13).
- A fortress gate faces north, which matches Joshua's description as he "drew near before the city" from the north (Joshua 8:11).

- A spot for the ambush, which is a valley west of Maqatir that could easily hide Joshua’s ambush troops (Joshua 8:9, 8:12).
- The pottery and walls match Joshua’s time period.
- There is evidence of fire in the form of ash layers, heated bedrock, and burned stones and pottery (Joshua 8:19–20).

These evidences and more confirm what we already know—that the Bible can be trusted in every detail. Man’s ideas change, but the Word of the living God stands firm.

Another miracle under attack and often misunderstood is Joshua’s long day, when God made the sun stand still during his battle against the Amorites (Joshua 10:12–14). One false story that has circulated for decades is that NASA computers have “found” Joshua’s missing day. The story began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the space program was in full swing. Supposedly, a computer at NASA calculated the positions of the earth, moon, and other solar system bodies far into the past and the future. A glitch was found in the fifteenth century

BC, indicating that a day was missing from time. But this missing day could be explained by the biblical account of Joshua. As exciting as this story may sound, it is just that—a story. The main problem is that a computer can’t find a glitch in the positions of solar system bodies because we must know exactly where things were at some time in the past prior to Joshua’s day so the calculated positions can be compared. Today, computers can be used to determine how much the earth’s rotation has slowed over time due to the tidal interaction between the earth and the moon. They can also calculate into the past when and where total solar eclipses should have occurred on the earth. But locations and rotation speed can’t be compared when we don’t know locations of solar bodies from before Joshua’s time.

Despite the fact that NASA computers have not proven the account of Joshua’s long day, that does not mean the miracle didn’t occur. We have the inspired Word of God, which tells us this day happened: “There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded the voice of a man, for the LORD fought for Israel” (Joshua 10:14). We serve a mighty God!

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

Slide #2

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.
- ▶ Use a globe and a flashlight (for the sun) to illustrate the questions, if desired.

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

To start today, I have a pop quiz for you! I'll ask a question and then give you a few seconds to tell your neighbor what you think the answer is. Share your answer quickly and then listen when I give the answer because I'll be moving fast through these. Keep track of how many you get right.

- ? Everybody ready? The first question is how many days does it take the earth to complete its orbit around the sun: 7 days, 27 days, 30 days, or 365 days? *Wait a few seconds for students to share answers.*

If you said 365 days, you're . . . right! It takes 365¼ days, to be precise, which is the length of a year.

- ? As the earth orbits around the sun, it turns on its axis. How long does it take the earth to complete one rotation on its axis: 12 hours, 24 hours, 7 days, or 31 days? *Wait for students to share answers.*

If you said 7 days, you're . . . wrong! It's not 7 days; it's 24 hours. That's where we get our day! Technically, a day is just under 24 hours, but we round it up to make it easier to remember.

- ? Next question. True or false? The side of the earth that faces the sun has daytime. *Wait for students to share answers.*

True! The side of the earth facing the sun has daytime while the side facing away from the sun has nighttime.

- ? How many planets are closer to the sun than the earth? No options on this one! *Wait for students to share answers.*

If you said two, you're right! The earth is the third planet from the sun.

- ? Which two planets are closer to the sun than the earth? *Wait for students to share answers.*

Slides #3–6

Mercury and Venus. Raise your hand if you got those right. *Show of hands.*

- ? Great job! Next question. True or false? The sun rotates on its axis. *Wait for students to share answers.*

If you said false, you're . . . wrong! It's true that the sun rotates, although it has a slower rotation than the earth. On average, the sun rotates on its axis once every 27 days. Its rotation is also unusual because it isn't a solid object like a planet, so each region of the gaseous sun rotates at different speeds.

- ? Next question. About how many days does it take the moon to orbit the earth: 1 day, 7 days, 27 days, or 31 days? *Wait for students to share answers.*

If you said 27 days, you're . . . correct! Interestingly, it also takes about 27 days for the moon to rotate on its axis.

- ? Name one thing that controls the cycle of ocean tides on the earth. *Wait for students to share answers.*

That was a tough one! The answers include the gravity of the moon, the gravity of the sun, the rotation of the earth, and even local weather. While all of these factors are involved, the location and gravitational pull of the moon has the biggest effect on the earth's tides.

- ? Alright! How many of you got all eight questions right? Raise your hand. *Show of hands.*

- ? How many of you got five or more correct? *Show of hands.*

Hand out candies if you brought some. Great job! You may be wondering what all these questions have to do with our Bible lesson. All these things I asked you about—the rotation and cycles of the earth, sun, and moon—were part of a huge miracle God did for the Israelites! Before we get into that, let's review what we've learned so far.

Refer to Lesson 65 Theme Poster. Joshua and the Israelites crossed into the Promised Land when God miraculously stopped the overflowing waters of the Jordan River. The ark of the covenant, carried by the priests, was a reminder that God was with them. Joshua set up 12 memorial stones so that their descendants wouldn't forget God's miracle at the Jordan.

 Slides #7–8

Refer to Lesson 66 Theme Poster. The next obstacle after the river was the city of Jericho, which was protected by tall, sturdy walls. God gave the Israelites unusual directions for defeating this city.

- ? What did God tell them to do? *March around the city once every morning for six days. On the seventh day, they were commanded to march seven times around the city and then shout, and God would topple the walls.*

That's right. The priests carried the ark of the covenant and blew trumpets as they marched with the fighting men around the city. God made the walls fall flat so the men could run straight into the city and destroy it.

- ? But who did they save from Jericho? *Rahab and her family.*

God was faithful to his promise to save Rahab and to give Joshua and the Israelites victory.

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. Jericho was the first victory God gave Joshua in the Promised Land. The people probably felt excited and encouraged after seeing how God helped them at Jericho. But they would learn a hard lesson about obedience in their next battle.

- Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

The Loss at Ai

The trouble began back in Jericho. Before the Israelites shouted and God brought the walls down, Joshua commanded the men to destroy everything in the city. They were to take all the silver, gold, bronze, and iron items and bring them to the priests as an offering to God. These precious items were called “devoted things” because they were given to God. But everything else in the city the Israelites were supposed to destroy.

Joshua 7:1

🖥️ Slide #9

- ? Let’s find out if they obeyed this command. Turn to Joshua 7. Who will read verse 1? *Assign a reader.*
- ? What does it say the people of Israel did? *They broke faith in regard to the devoted things.*
- ? Who took some of the devoted things from Jericho? *Achan the son of Carmi.*
- Achan was from the tribe of Judah. He disobeyed God’s command, thinking no one knew and no one would find out what he’d done. But God knew.
- ? How did God feel about Achan’s sin? Look at the end of the verse. *He was angry.*

Notice that God wasn’t just angry with Achan but against the people of Israel!

After the victory at Jericho, Joshua sent spies to a nearby city called Ai. The spies reported that there weren’t many people in Ai, so Joshua decided to send just 3,000 fighting men rather than the whole army.

Joshua 7:4–6

🖥️ Slides #10–11

- ? Who will read what happened at Ai from Joshua 7:4–6? *Assign a reader.*
- ? What happened to the Israelites? Did they win or lose the battle? *They lost and fled from the battle.*
- ? About how many Israelite men were killed? *Joshua 7:5. 36 men.*
- ? What does the end of verse 5 say about the people’s response to this defeat? *Their hearts melted and became as water.*

- ? And what was Joshua’s response in verse 6? *He tore his clothes and fell on his face before the ark of the Lord.*

When they lost the battle at Ai, the people were terrified. Had God left them? Why had they lost the battle against such a small city after God had just delivered Jericho into their hands? Joshua and the Israelite leaders mourned before the Lord.

Then Joshua prayed and asked God why he brought them over the Jordan just to have them defeated by their enemies. He worried that their enemies would hear about Ai and attack them, and they would be destroyed.

God told Joshua to get up. There was sin in the camp. Israel had disobeyed and taken items from Jericho that were devoted to God. That was why they had lost the battle at Ai. If they wanted God’s blessing in their battles, they had to find who was guilty and punish him.

The Victory at Ai

The next morning, Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel. God had said he would show who was guilty, and Achan from the tribe of Judah was identified.

Joshua 7:20–22

- ? Joshua asked Achan what he had done. Who will read Achan’s response from Joshua 7:20–22? *Assign readers.*

 Slides #12–13

- ? What had Achan taken from Jericho? *A beautiful cloak from Shinar, 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold.*

The beautiful cloak from Shinar was a costly robe with intricate designs and possibly even jewels! It was the kind of robe a king would wear. This cloak should have been destroyed, and the silver and gold should have been brought to the priests.

Notice that before Achan took these items, he saw them and coveted them. After he took them, he hid them.

- ? Refer to the Ten Commandments Poster. Which of the Ten Commandments did Achan disobey? *The tenth, “You shall not covet.” The eighth, “You shall not steal.”*

Remember that coveting is wanting what belongs to someone else. Achan wanted to have that beautiful cloak and the money he found in Jericho. Achan also broke the eighth commandment, you shall not steal, because he kept items for himself that belonged to God.

- ? Where had he hidden them? *Joshua 7:21. In the earth inside his tent with the silver underneath.*

Slide #14

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Achan had dug a hole in the ground and hidden his stolen items. But God knew where they were, and now all of Israel knew about them. Joshua sent men, and they ran to Achan's tent. They found the items Achan had stolen and brought them back to Joshua and all the people.

Achan's sin was terrible because it removed God's blessing on the Israelites. They lost a battle, and over 30 fighting men had died. Now Joshua and the people had to punish Achan and his family for his disobedience. Achan and his family and all his possessions were taken outside the camp and destroyed.

God turned from his fierce anger and could once again bless and protect the Israelites. God told Joshua to take all the fighting men to Ai. They would lay an ambush behind the city—and this time God promised to give them victory.

Joshua sent a group of men to sneak behind Ai, and then he and the rest of the army marched to the city. The king of Ai and his fighting men came out to meet Joshua, but they didn't know about the men hiding behind their city.

The battle began, and Joshua and his men pretended to be afraid. They turned and ran toward the wilderness. The king called all the men from Ai to help him chase the Israelites. He thought he was winning!

Then Joshua stopped running and raised his javelin, which is a spear, toward Ai. That was a signal to his men hiding behind the city. They rose up and entered the city, which was now unprotected, and burned it.

The king of Ai and his men turned and saw the smoke from their city burning—but it was too late. They were now trapped! Joshua and his army were in front, and the ambush from behind left them no escape!

God gave the Israelites a great victory, and they destroyed the king of Ai and all his people as God commanded them to.

Slides #15–16

- ? Let's start the Class Notes. Who will read #1 about what happened at Ai? Did they win or lose the first battle? *Assign a reader. Lost. Have students complete #1.*
- ? Who will read #2 and tell us what Achan took from Jericho? *Assign a reader. Cloak, gold. Have students complete #2.*
- ? And #3? Where did Achan hide his stolen items? *Assign a reader. Tent. Have students complete #3.*
- ? What happened to Achan and his family? Who will read #4? *Assign a reader. Destroyed. Have students complete #4.*
- ? And who will read #5? *Assign a reader. Victory. Have students complete #5.*

The Victory During the Long Day

News of the Israelites' victory at Ai spread through the land of Canaan. The people living in Gibeon, a city close to Ai, were afraid and sought to trick Israel. They pretended that they had been on a long journey—they packed dry, crumbly bread and dressed in worn-out sandals and clothes. Then they came to Joshua and the Israelites at their camp in Gilgal.

They said, "We're from a distant country. Please make a covenant of peace with us."

Joshua and the leaders said, "We can't make a covenant with you because you may be from nearby."

The Gibeonites showed the Israelites their old bread and worn-out clothes to make them think they had traveled a long way. Joshua and the leaders forgot to pray and ask God what they should do. They fell for the Gibeonites' trick and made a promise of peace with them, to let them live. Then the Gibeonites returned to their city.

- ?** What do you think would have happened if the Israelites had remembered to pray? *Allow answers. God would have told them that the Gibeonites were lying about where they were from.*

Soon, the Israelites realized that they had made a covenant with people who lived in the Promised Land, not far away like they'd said. They were people that God wanted them to destroy! But it was too late. They had made a promise that could not be broken. Joshua let the Gibeonites live, but he punished them for lying by making them serve the Israelites. They had to cut wood and draw water as servants.

Other kings in the land didn't want to make peace with Israel. They were angry that the Gibeonites joined with Israel. The king of Jerusalem gathered four other Amorite kings, and together they attacked Gibeon.

The Gibeonites sent messengers to Joshua saying, "We are your servants now. Please come quickly to save us! The kings of the Amorites are gathered against us!" So, Joshua gathered all the fighting men of Israel and hurried to Gibeon.

Joshua 10:9–14

Listen to what happened in this battle with Israel against five Amorite kings! *Read the passage.*

 Slides #17–20

Find Joshua 10:9 in your Bibles so you can look for answers to questions about this amazing victory!

God told Joshua not to be afraid of these kings and their armies. God would give the victory so that no one could stand before the Israelites.

Joshua had left his camp at Gilgal and marched all night, and he surprised the kings by how quickly he arrived.

- ? How did God help the Israelites in the battle? What did he do in verses 10 and 11? *He made their enemies panic. He threw large hailstones from heaven.*

Verse 11 says that more men died from the hailstones than from the swords of the Israelites! The Amorites were terrified and began to run away from the battle. But Joshua didn't want night to come because then the enemy would escape to nearby cities or hiding places.

- ? What did Joshua pray and ask God to do in verse 12? *Make the sun and moon stand still.*

- ? And what happened? *The sun stood still and the moon stopped so that Israel could defeat their enemies.*

- ? God performed yet another amazing miracle for Israel! How long does it say the sun delayed to set at the end of verse 13? *About a whole day.*

Slide #21

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Instead of the sun setting at its usual time in the evening, the sun stayed in the sky overhead about a day longer until Joshua and his men could chase down their enemies.

Think about all the questions I asked you in our quiz. The sun, moon, and the earth are all rotating and orbiting—but God altered these to give an extra day to Joshua—because he prayed!

This miracle is sometimes called “Joshua’s long day” because God kept daylight for him to win the battle. Some people doubt this miracle could happen, but we know God is the omnipotent Creator. He controls everything in the universe, including the sun, the moon, and the earth. Verse 14 says that no day was like this before or since because the Lord heard Joshua’s prayer and fought for Israel. God is powerful!

This victory over five Amorite kings helped Israel conquer and take over a big section of the Promised Land. They killed the kings, and then they defeated the cities one by one. Joshua and the people were careful to destroy everything God commanded them to. They had learned the lesson from Achan’s disobedience at Jericho. They knew that as long as they obeyed, God would fight for them. They didn’t have to be afraid!

Slides #22–23

- ? Let’s complete the Class Notes. Who will read #6 about the Gibeonites? *Assign a reader. Peace. Have students complete #6.*

- ? And #7, who attacked Gibeon? *Assign a reader. Kings. Have students complete #7.*

- ? What did God hurl on the Amorites? Who will read #8? *Assign a reader. Hailstones. Have students complete #8.*

- ? And #9, what great miracle did God do when Joshua prayed? *Assign a reader. Sun. Have students complete #9.*

- ? What did the Israelites learn from these battles? Who will read #10? *Assign a reader. Obeyed. Have students complete #10.*

Application

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. The Israelites lost the first battle at Ai because of one man's sin and disobedience at the battle of Jericho. Achan thought he could sin and get away with it, but God knew. God exposed Achan's sin in front of Joshua and all Israel. The sin of Achan had some terrible consequences, didn't it?

 Slide #24

- ?** Who was affected by Achan's sin? Was it just him? *No. His sin affected the whole nation of Israel. It caused them to lose the first battle of Ai, and over 30 men died in that battle. It also cost him and his family their lives.*

Did you know that your sins hurt more than just you, too? When we sin, it can hurt those around us. The longer we try to hide it and pretend it isn't there, the worse things get. Achan should have thought about the consequences of disobeying the Lord.

Achan's sin, the commandments he broke, started with him seeing the items in Jericho. At that point, he had a choice to do the right thing or the wrong thing. His heart attitude was one of greed, and he gave in to his desire for material things.

When we sin, it usually follows the same pattern as Achan's sin. We see something, think the wrong thing, then act on our sinful thought. Finally, we try to hide what we've done from God and others.

Instead of doing what Achan did, we can pray and ask God for help right away when we're tempted with a bad thought or idea. We can also avoid places or activities where we may see things that lead to bad thoughts. God promises to help his children when we ask!

When we do sin, we shouldn't wait for others to find out before we confess. We must repent and confess our sin quickly, and God will forgive us! When we are walking in obedience to God and confessing our sins, God is able to give us victories just like he gave Joshua and the Israelites.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Ask God for help to confess sin and remain obedient.
- Thank God for his power to give us victory.

- Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



Israel Receives a Land

God was faithful to his promise to give Abraham's descendants a land.

Lesson Focus

God fulfilled his promises to Abraham to make his descendants into a great nation and to give them the land of Canaan. Joshua led the Israelites in key victories to conquer the land and gave each tribe its inheritance to possess. Caleb and Joshua remained faithful to God, and God rewarded their trust in him by giving them a special inheritance.

Key Passages

Joshua 11:4–5, 11:23; Genesis 17:6–8; Joshua 14:11–13, 24:14–15

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how God fulfilled his promise to give Abraham's descendants a land.
- Describe how Joshua and Caleb remained faithful to God.

Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Note: There are no Class Notes for this lesson.

Prepare the following:

- One copy of Label the Land Game instructions and materials (labels and poster)
- Container for the labels
- Tape or poster putty
- Marker for white board

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for your faithfulness. You kept your promises to Abraham to make his descendants a great nation, to give them a land, and to send a Savior. Thank you for the examples of men like Joshua and Caleb, who trusted in your power to conquer their enemies. May my students learn to trust in your faithfulness and act upon it.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 68*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Studying God's Word
- Optional Video Clip
- Group Prayer

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Optional Activity
- Lesson Review
- Take Home Sheet

Optional Supplements

Hands-On Activities

Do these activities when you think best—before, during, or after the lesson.

- Battling the Giants
Students will toss beanbags for a “giant” score.
- Coloring Sheet
Students will color as you review today’s lesson with them.
- Word Scramble
Students will unscramble words from today’s lesson. Make it a challenge: have students race against each other or the clock.

Video Clips

Preview the recommended video(s) before class. If appropriate, show to your class and discuss before, during, or after the lesson.

- The Problem with the Timeline (10:32)

PowerPoint

You may want to use the PowerPoint presentation provided to enhance your teaching.

Notes

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

After the amazing victories God gave Joshua at Jericho and at Gibeon, another group of kings, this time from the north, came together against Israel. The army they gathered was a huge horde with horses and chariots (Joshua 11:1-5). But God assured Joshua of the victory (Joshua 11:6), and Joshua attacked. The defeat of this army opened the door for the conquest of the north, but it took about seven years for Israel to capture the major cities (Joshua 11:18-19). Although pockets of Canaanites remained in the land, the major battles were won, and the kings were defeated. Joshua divided up the land by lot to the tribes of Israel (Joshua 11:23). Nine and a half tribes received land west of the Jordan River, while the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh had received land from Moses east of the Jordan (Joshua 13:7-8). The only tribe that did not receive an inheritance of land was the Levites. But they received cities and pastureland throughout the country (Joshua 21:1-3). They also received the Lord's offerings from the people as their inheritance (Joshua 13:14).

Joshua released the fighting men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. They had fought faithfully beside the other tribes and were given permission to return home (Joshua 22:1-6). A brief misunderstanding regarding an altar they built led to the other tribes marching against them and accusing them of rebellion against the Lord (Joshua 22:10-20). But when the eastern tribes explained the purpose of their altar to be a reminder that they, too, followed the Lord, the conflict was resolved and everyone returned to their homes (Joshua 22:21-34). This incident shows that the Israelites took the command of God seriously to destroy any brother or tribe who rebelled or turned to idolatry.

Historical/Apologetics Background

A key verse in the book of Joshua is Joshua 11:23: "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses. And Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war."

Joshua and Caleb were the oldest surviving Israelite men because God rewarded their faithfulness to him when they spied out the land 45 years previously. And the years did not diminish their heart for the Lord. At age 85, Caleb came to Joshua and asked to take on the hill country belonging to the giant descendants of Anak (Joshua 14:10-12). This land had fortified cities that the other Israelites feared—but not Caleb! Just as he had said 45 years earlier, Caleb believed God would give the victory. Caleb and his relatives fought the giants, and God granted them victory. The land of Hebron belonged to Caleb as his inheritance and as a testament of his faith (Joshua 14:13-15). The Israelites gave the city of Timnath-serah to Joshua within the land of his tribe, Ephraim. God saw that his faithful servants received a special inheritance for their service.

Before his death, Joshua called the Israelites to him and charged them to remain faithful (Joshua 23:1-13). He wanted them to remember all the great miracles God had done for them. He knew the punishment that would occur if they turned from God and disobeyed his commands. Joshua challenged Israel to put away false gods and choose to follow the Lord. He confirmed that he and his house would serve the Lord (Joshua 24:14-15). The Israelites promised to serve the Lord as well (Joshua 24:21), and they did during the days of the generation that saw God's miracles (Joshua 24:31).

The book of Joshua gives the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham to make him a nation of people and to give them all the land of Canaan (Genesis 17:3-8). One remaining promise would be fulfilled about 1,500 years later when Jesus would come to earth. Jesus was the fulfillment of the promised Savior who would bless all families of the earth (Genesis 12:3).

This verse summarizes the main conquest of the southern and northern kings and their cities, but it may, at first glance, seem to contradict God's words in Joshua 13:1 where he tells Joshua there is still land to possess. The major battles appear to be completed

in the seven years of fighting described in chapter 11 (see Joshua 11:18); however, there remained land that wasn't yet occupied by the Israelites. In these areas untouched by the general occupation, the Israelites held the responsibility to drive out the inhabitants. God promised to drive out these people if the Israelites were obedient to him (Deuteronomy 11:22–23). God commanded that the Israelites completely destroy the Canaanites and Amorites. God's people were his instrument of judgment on the wicked people living in the land of Canaan. The people in Canaan had rejected the Lord and were worshipping false gods and even sacrificing their children to idols.

God told Abraham that his descendants would return to the land of Canaan when the sin of the Amorites (another term for Canaanites) was

complete (Genesis 15:16). The Amorites had years to repent and turn to God, but they did not. God's punishment was just. However, as the book of Judges records, the Israelites were not obedient to drive out all the Canaanites (Judges 1:27–36). These people became a snare to them, leading them into idolatry many times. God told the Israelites he would no longer give them victory over the remaining people in the land. They would test the Israelites' devotion to the Lord (Judges 2:2–3). God's promise to give victory was removed due to their disobedience and delay to act on his promise. May we avoid this trap of inaction and complacency and instead obey the Lord immediately. The consequences of disobedience lead to a cycle of sin, repentance, and the need for God's deliverance—a cycle we see repeated in the book of Judges.

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

Slide #2

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

God has been faithful to the Israelites, hasn't he? He delivered them from slavery in Egypt with many miracles, provided food and water for them in the wilderness, and brought them to the land he promised them.

- ? Who remembers what happened the first time Moses sent 12 spies into the land? Did the Israelites obey God and take possession of the land? *No. They listened to the 10 spies who gave a bad report and refused to enter the land.*
- ? Refer to Lesson 61 Theme Poster. Which two spies gave a good report of the land and believed God would give them victory to conquer it? *Joshua and Caleb.*

That's right. Because of their faith, God promised that they would be the only two from their generation who would enter the Promised Land. Because of the people's disobedience, God told the rest of the people over 20 years old that they would not see the Promised Land but would die in the wilderness. Their children, however, would be the ones God would lead into the Promised Land.

Everything happened the way God said it would. After 40 years in the wilderness, the older generation was gone. Moses led them to the boundary of the Promised Land, but both he and Aaron died.

- ? Who became the new leader of the Israelites? *Joshua.*

God promised to be with Joshua as he led the Israelites in battles to conquer the Promised Land. He told Joshua to be strong and courageous.

Refer to Lesson 65 Theme Poster. Then God miraculously stopped the overflowing Jordan River so the Israelites could cross into the land.

Refer to Lesson 66 Theme Poster. The first city they had to conquer was Jericho, and it was a walled city on a hill. But God brought down the walls so Israel could take the city. Only Rahab and her family were spared.

Slides #3–6

- ? What happened at the Israelites' next battle against the city of Ai? *They lost.*
- ? Why did they lose that battle against such a small city? *Achan sinned by taking items from Jericho that he shouldn't have.*

Refer to Lesson 67 Theme Poster. God was teaching the Israelites to obey him completely. One man's sin, which he thought he could hide, led to a defeat on the battlefield. But, once the Israelites punished Achan for his sin, God gave them victory over Ai and then victory over five Amorite kings who attacked Gibeon. God threw hailstones from the sky and made the sun stand still to help Joshua chase the fleeing enemy.

After Joshua defeated the kings and their armies, he still had to conquer their cities and take over the land, which took time. But he and the Israelites did it. Joshua and Caleb were now the oldest men in the Israelites' camp. In today's lesson, we'll see how God continued to use these faithful men to lead the people.

The Tribes Receive Land

Other kings in the land heard about Israel's victories. They gathered together against Israel. Turn in your Bibles to Joshua 11.

Joshua 11:4–5

- ? Who will read about this large army in Joshua 11:4–5? *Assign a reader.*
- ? How is the army described in verse 4? *A great horde, like sand on the seashore.*
- ? And what did the army have “very many” of? *Horses and chariots.*

 Slide #7

This was a huge, powerful force coming to fight the Israelites. But God promised to be with Joshua and give him victory over this great army. The next day, Joshua and his men attacked, and they destroyed them all! In this battle, God enabled the Israelites to kill many enemies at the same time. Then they could take over their cities and the land. That took many years—about seven years of fighting!

Joshua 11:23

- ? Let's read what Joshua did next. Who will read Joshua 11:23? *Assign a reader.*
 - ? What did Joshua take? *The whole land.*
- Joshua and the fighting men finished the major battles. The Canaanite and Amorite kings were destroyed and their cities were taken.
- ? What did Joshua do with the land? *Give the land as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments.*

 Slide #8

This means that it was time to divide up the land! We're going to play a map game to learn where the tribes received their territory within the

► Have materials ready for the Label the Land Game.

Promised Land of Israel. *Follow instructions and read clues from Label the Land Game to have students learn where each tribe received land. When finished, continue with the lesson below.*

- ? Did anyone notice that one tribe is missing from the names on the board? Does anyone know which one? (Hint: it was Moses' and Aaron's tribe.) *Allow guesses. Levi.*

God chose the tribe of Levi as his special inheritance. Instead of receiving a portion of land like the other tribes, the tribe of Levi was given the responsibility of serving the Lord as leaders, judges, teachers of God's law, and workers in the tabernacle. They received cities and pastureland, but they didn't all live in one area together like the other tribes. Instead, they were spread out in cities throughout the land. Aaron's sons from the tribe of Levi were appointed to serve God as priests.

We took the time to learn about the land given to the tribes because this is the fulfillment of an important promise God made all the way back in Genesis.

- ? Whose descendants did God promise to make into a nation and give a land? *Abraham.*

Yes! Back in Genesis, we learned about three promises God gave Abraham. Let's review those.

Genesis 17:6–8

☐ Slides #9–10

- ? Who will turn back to Genesis 17 and read what God said in verses 6–8? *Assign a reader.*

- ? What two things did God promise Abraham in these verses? *Make him into a nation and give to his offspring the land of Canaan.*

Do you see how God fulfilled these two promises here in the book of Joshua? The Israelites, Abraham's descendants, are now a numerous people—a great nation! They had over 600,000 fighting men. That means that with their families and servants, the whole group probably numbered close to two million people! God gave them great victories to possess the land of Canaan, which would now become known as the land of Israel.

- ? Because of God's blessing and protection, the Israelites were now a nation with a land. In another passage, God gave Abraham another promise of a special descendant who would bless all families of the earth. Who was this promise referring to? *Jesus.*

That special descendant would be Jesus, born from the tribe of Judah. Jesus would bless all people by dying to take the punishment for sin. He is our Savior!

- ? Do we learn about Jesus coming to earth to save us in the Old Testament or the New Testament? *The New Testament.*

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John give the account of Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection. That's where we see the fulfillment of the third promise to Abraham. It's wonderful that we have all of God's Word to see how and when God fulfilled his promises.

The Faith of Caleb

Joshua commanded the tribes to go take possession of the lands they were given. But there were still some places where the Canaanites remained, which means there were still some battles to be fought!

- ? Do you think all the tribes obeyed and drove out all the people remaining in the land? *Yes/no.*

Joshua was getting old, and God told him that some of the tribes still hadn't taken possession of their land, even though God promised to give them victory! God wanted them to trust him and believe that he would help them.

Although some of the tribes had a difficult time driving out the Canaanite people, one man showed great faith. That was Caleb! Caleb and Joshua were the oldest Israelites alive at this time. It might have been tempting to rest and let the younger men fight the remaining battles to take possession of the land. But not Caleb! He was ready for more battles!

Joshua 14:11–13

- ? Let's see what Caleb, who was 85 years old, said to Joshua. Who will read Joshua 14:11–13? *Assign a reader.*  Slides #11–12

- ? How did Caleb describe himself in verse 11? *He was as strong as he was when Moses sent him as a spy into Canaan. He was ready for war.*

Caleb said he felt as strong as he did when Moses sent him and Joshua to spy out the land of Canaan. God kept him strong, and he was ready for battle!

- ? What did Caleb ask Joshua to give him? Look in verse 12. *The hill country.*

This hill country was an area the 10 spies back in Moses' time were afraid of! This land had Anakim.

- ? Does anyone remember who the Anakim were? *Giants.*

The Anakim were a giant people! When the 10 spies saw them years ago, they were afraid and said they felt like grasshoppers next to them. These tall, strong people lived in fortified cities in the hill country within Judah's territory.

- ? What did Caleb say at the end of verse 12 about how he would drive them out of the land? *The Lord would be with him.*

Caleb believed that he could take on the scariest people still in the land—giants! He knew that with God on his side, he could be victorious over any people.

Slide #13

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Joshua blessed Caleb and gave that hill country, called Hebron, to Caleb as his possession. Caleb and his relatives showed their faith by going to Hebron and attacking the fortified cities where these giant people lived.

- ? Can you guess how God rewarded Caleb's faith? Do you think he won or lost against the giants? *He won!*

God rewarded the faith of Caleb by giving him victory in his battles. Caleb drove out the Anakim, and he and his family settled in that good land. Caleb showed great faith at age 85! He wanted to obey God's command to drive out the Canaanites and take possession of the land.

The Death of Joshua

Joshua also remained faithful to God for his whole life. God gave Joshua a city in the land of Ephraim, his tribe.

Refer to the 12 Tribes Poster. Joshua called the men from the three tribes on the east side of the Jordan River. These tribes were Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. He blessed them and thanked them for being obedient. They had fought along with the other tribes to win battles in the Promised Land. Joshua reminded them to always love the Lord and to obey his commandments. Then he sent them back to their lands.

Joshua was almost at the end of his life. He called all the leaders of the tribes to gather. He reminded them of all the great miracles God had done for them.

Joshua 24:14–15

Slide #14

- ? Let's read what else Joshua said to the people. Who will read Joshua 24:14–15? *Assign a reader.*
- ? What did Joshua tell the people to choose between? *False gods and the Lord.*

Joshua wanted the people to choose who they believed was the true God. He knew they would be tempted to worship the false gods of Egypt or the Amorites.

- ? Who did Joshua say he and his house were going to serve? *The Lord.*

Joshua urged the people to commit to following the Lord. The people said they would serve the Lord and get rid of foreign gods. Then they returned to their lands. Joshua died at the age of 110. The people followed the Lord all the years of Joshua and the leaders who had seen God's miracles with Joshua.

- ? What do you think will happen to the next generation of Israelites that comes after Joshua and Caleb? Will they continue to love and obey the Lord? *Allow guesses.*

We'll find out next lesson when we start the book of Judges!

Application

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Caleb was one of the original 12 spies Moses sent into the land. At age 85, Caleb still had faith that God would give him victory against giants, called Anakim, in the hill country. Caleb and his relatives attacked the giants and their cities. God gave them victory, and Caleb and his family settled in that land.

This lesson is a good reminder that God can accomplish great things through people of any age. Caleb was 85 years old when he fought giants! And God gave him victory because he trusted in the Lord. God can use each of you, too! Whether we're young or old or in between doesn't matter; what matters is our faith in God. When we put our trust in his strength instead of our own, God can do great things.

- ? Do any of you know someone who is faithfully serving God? What are they doing? *Allow discussion or share an example of someone (e.g., elderly person or young person) who serves in your church or has a ministry to others.*

Joshua and Caleb served God until the end of their lives, and they encouraged others to follow their example. You can make the decision, even today, to serve God. The world offers things that seem more fun sometimes, like having expensive things or being popular, but those things don't last. Let's decide now to put God first because our relationship with him will last forever!

 Slide #15



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Praise God for fulfilling his promises to Abraham and his descendants.
- Ask God to help us trust and serve him faithfully throughout our entire lives, like Joshua and Caleb.

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



Israel Turns to Idols

*Israel began a cycle of disobedience,
punishment, and repentance.*

Lesson Focus

During the 300-year period of judges, Israel repeated a cycle of idolatry and disobedience to God. God punished Israel, and they cried out to him. Each time they repented, God delivered Israel with judges, proving his faithfulness.

Key Passages

Joshua 21:43–45; Judges 2:11–16, 3:7–12; Luke 18:18–23

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe Israel's cycle of disobedience leading to punishment.
- Explain how God delivered Israel when they repented.

Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Card Keep
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Down the Line
- Egg Hunt
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Popcorn
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Play the Memory Verse Song (audio or video) to help your students learn the memory verse.

Find extra verses to practice in the Additional Memory Verses list.

Studying God's Word

Print the following:

- One Class Notes for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- One copy of the Idol Strips, cut out and folded in half.

Bring the following:

- Container for the Idol Strips
- Optional: timer

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game and gather necessary items.

- Bible Baseball
- Box Toss
- Draw Dice
- Four in a Row
- Goofy Golf
- Pick a Point
- Racetrack
- Toss for It

Go to Prayer

Dear God, thank you for your mercy and faithfulness to the Israelites and to us today. Please help me as I teach the cycle presented in Judges. May my students understand that idolatry is still a danger today if we make anything in this world more important than you. Protect them from the things in this life that can distract them from serving and obeying you fully. Continue to open their eyes as we study your Word.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 69*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Studying God's Word
- Optional Video Clip
- Real World Skit
- Group Prayer

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Optional Activity
- Lesson Review
- Take Home Sheet

Optional Supplements

Hands-On Activities

Do these activities when you think best—before, during, or after the lesson.

- Cycle Race
Teams will race to form circles in the correct order of the cycle found in Judges.
- Match the Step
Students will look up verses in Judges and match them to the correct step in the Judges cycle.
- Real World Skit
Students will read a short skit about putting God first.
- Coloring Sheet
Students will color as you review today's lesson with them.
- Word Search
Students will search for words from today's lesson. Make it a challenge: have students race against each other or the clock to find all the words.

Video Clips

Preview the recommended video(s) before class. If appropriate, show to your class and discuss before, during, or after the lesson.

- Idol Worship Today (12:10)

PowerPoint

You may want to use the PowerPoint presentation provided to enhance your teaching.

Notes

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

Joshua's conquest of the land of Canaan was complete, although pockets of Canaanite people remained within certain areas of the land. God had fulfilled all his promises to give Israel victory and their inheritance of land. The people enjoyed peace and rest (Joshua 21:43–44). But the people still had a responsibility to God, who had rescued them from Egypt and given them the land of Canaan. They were commanded to love and obey God and serve him only.

Judges chapter 1 gives a summary of the last part of the land's conquest and the failure of Israel to completely cast out the idolatrous inhabitants. Judges 2:1–3 records the angel of the Lord warning Israel that this failure would have bitter consequences. He would no longer drive out the people of the land, and their gods would become a snare to the Israelites. Joshua's generation seemed to take the warning to heart. Judges 2:7 says that the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and the elders of that generation who outlived him. However, after that generation's death, the people became idolatrous and did not know the Lord or the miracles he had done for Israel (Judges 2:10). Their idolatry took the form of worshipping the gods of the Canaanites, the conquered people that were not completely destroyed by the previous generation. These gods were the Baals, gods associated with fertility and prosperity (Judges 2:11).

The rest of Judges 2 describes the anger of the Lord against Israel's idolatry and disobedience as

Historical/Apologetics Background

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones defined an idol this way: "An idol is anything in my life that occupies a place that should be occupied by God alone. Anything that holds my life and my devotion, anything that is central in my life, anything that seems to be vital, anything that is essential to me; an idol is anything by which I live and on which I depend. Anything that moves and rouses and attracts and stimulates me is an idol. An idol is anything that I worship, anything to which I give much of my time and attention, my energy and my money; anything that holds

he delivered them into the hands of the surrounding nations (Judges 2:14). But we also see the undeserved compassion that God exercised again and again (Judges 2:16). Judges 2:11–23 gives a general description of the cycle of Israel during the era of the judges. The recurring pattern included the Israelites turning to idolatry, angering the true God; God bringing punishment in the form of oppression by idolatrous nations; the Israelites crying out to God for deliverance; God showing mercy on them and providing a deliverer by raising up a judge; and after deliverance, the Israelites turning again to idolatry and beginning the cycle again. Clearly, this period was not a highlight of Israel's history.

Israel's quick fall into idolatry may seem far removed from us. In our culture, there is little temptation to actually worship a Baal or to make an idol and bow down to it. The root of the Israelites' idolatry, however, was that instead of trusting and serving the true God, they chose to worship gods whose claim to deity lay in their willingness to serve the desires of the people. In this, we are much like the Israelites, and we are warned by Paul in the book of Colossians to "put to death" selfish and impure desires, including "covetousness, which is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). In this exhortation, we see the common ground of our own sin with the idolatry of Israel—covetousness: a selfish, sinful desire for what God has not given. The Apostle Paul warns that no person who is immoral, impure, or covetous (an idolater) will inherit the kingdom of God (Ephesians 5:5). If we aren't fighting this sin of covetousness, it is evidence that we may not be a true believer.

a controlling position in my life is an idol."¹ Anything can become an idol—money, sex, power, control, comfort, pleasure, entertainment, and the list goes on and on. And it's not just "bad" things that can turn into idols, but "good" things like family and ministry and work can become so central to our lives that they take the place of God.

The root of the Israelites' disobedience was always their failure to trust that the true God was caring for

¹ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Life in Christ: Studies in 1 John* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), 196.

their best interests. Idolatry is never a matter of obedience alone; it reveals a heart that does not have faith and trust in God and all his purposes. Idolatry puts our selfish desires above the one true God. As we read Israel's history and see blessings for obedience and consequences for disobedience, the root issue is always faith. Would Israel trust that God is faithful to his promises and that his promises are the true prosperity of his people? Will we trust that God is faithful to his promises and that his promises are the true prosperity of his people? Whenever disobedience occurs, the answer to this question is no, whether we are talking of Israel or ourselves.

Luke 18:18–24, the account of the rich young ruler and Jesus, gives a New Testament illustration of the struggle we often encounter between loyalty toward God and love for the world. Like the rich young ruler,

we want eternal life and all the blessings that God provides through Christ's sacrifice, and yet we often have conflicting desires to hold onto the immediate blessings we can obtain in this life. God does not demand of his followers that they avoid all worldly blessings, but he clearly commands us to value Christ to the extent that worldly blessings have no hold on our hearts. Our failure to let go of worldly desires may keep us from him (Mark 8:34–38; Luke 16:13). What our hearts trust and value will ultimately lead us to obey or disobey the Lord.

The Apostle John closes his first letter with a warning against idolatry: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." It was a temptation then, and it is still a temptation today. May we not be like the rich young ruler and walk away from Jesus because we refuse to let go and follow him wholeheartedly.

Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.

Slide #1

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song.

Slide #2

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Studying God's Word

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 68 Theme Poster. In this lesson, we saw how God fulfilled his promise to give the Israelites the land of Canaan. God was with Joshua, Caleb, and the Israelites as they fought the people in the land and conquered their cities. Then Joshua divided the land for each of the tribes.

- ? What tribe didn't receive a portion of land? *Levi.*

The Levites received cities and pastureland but not a large territory like the other tribes. That's because they were chosen to be God's servants in the tabernacle and to live throughout the land as teachers of the law.

The tribes went to the lands they were given. They enjoyed cities that they didn't have to build and fruit from trees they didn't have to plant! God gave them a fruitful land with everything they needed. They could live in comfortable homes and cities instead of tents like they had in the wilderness. But Joshua warned them to serve God alone and to obey his commands now that they were living in their new land. Would the Israelites continue to obey God or would they disobey? We'll find out in our lesson today!

Israel's Disobedience

- ▶ Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

Let's look at a passage that sums up the book of Joshua before we move into Judges.

Joshua 21:43–45

Slides #4–5

- ? Who will read Joshua 21:43–45? *Assign a reader.*
- ? What had the Lord given to Israel in verse 43? *All the land that he swore to give to their fathers.*

God fulfilled his promises to the “fathers” of Israel. The fathers of Israel included Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or Israel. They all received the promise from God that their descendants would become a great nation and inherit a land, the land of Canaan.

? What did God give Israel in verse 44? *Rest on every side; victory over their enemies.*

? What does verse 45 say about the promises God made to Israel? *They all came to pass; none of them failed.*

God gave the Israelites victory and peace. They were living in the Promised Land.

? So, could the Israelites just relax now that the promise had been fulfilled, or did God still require something of them? *Allow answers.*

God still required obedience to his commandments. He had chosen the Israelites as his people and saved them from slavery in Egypt. He wanted his people to worship him alone, to love him and serve him faithfully. He wanted them to obey the Ten Commandments and treat each other with kindness and respect.

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let’s turn to the book of Judges chapter 2 verse 11 and see if the Israelites were faithful and obedient after Joshua’s death. Joshua died at age 110, and all his generation that fought to conquer the land also passed away. The new generation of Israelites were not taught about all the miracles God had done for their people. They did not know or trust the Lord.

Judges 2:11–15

? Who will read Judges 2:11–15? *Assign readers.*

? What did the people do in verse 11 that was evil? *They served the Baals.*

? What were the Baals? Does anyone know? *Allow discussion.*

“Baals” refers to false gods. Although the Israelites conquered many people in the land of Canaan, some remained in certain areas of the land. The Israelites didn’t completely destroy the Canaanites like God wanted them to. These Canaanites worshipped many false gods like the Baals and invited the Israelites to worship their gods, too.

? What else does it say the Israelites did in verses 12 and 13? *Abandoned the Lord, went after other gods and bowed down to them, provoked the Lord to anger, served the Baals and Ashtaroth.*

? So, did the Israelites obey or disobey God’s commands once Joshua was gone? *They disobeyed.*

Refer to the Ten Commandments Poster. The Israelites were guilty of breaking the Ten Commandments. They served the false gods and goddesses of the Canaanites, the Baals and Ashtaroth. They put other gods before the Lord and bowed down to idols. They disobeyed the first two commandments!

 Slides #6–8

- ? What was God’s response to Israel’s worship of these false gods? Look in verse 14. *He was angry.*
- ? How did God punish the Israelites for their disobedience? *He gave them over to their enemies.*

God no longer gave Israel victory over their enemies. Instead, God brought enemy nations against Israel to attack them and plunder them. Plunder means that their enemies stole their food and other possessions. Whenever Israel tried to march against their enemies, God was against them and caused them to lose the battle. They were in terrible distress!

Judges 2:16

Slide #9

- ? Who will read what God would do when the Israelites repented of their disobedience and cried out to him for deliverance? It’s in Judges 2:16. *Assign a reader.*

- ? Who would God raise up to save the people? *Judges.*

These judges weren’t like those we have in our courtrooms who decide if people are guilty or innocent. They were military leaders God raised up to deliver the Israelites by fighting against their enemies. The judges in the Bible were chosen by God to lead the Israelites to victory. God would be with the judge and help him save the people because God was merciful.

- ? *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Who will read the definition of merciful from the Attributes of God Poster? Choose a reader. Merciful: kind to those in misery; withholds deserved punishment.*

In the book of Judges, God didn’t withhold punishment, but he delivered his people from punishment when they cried out to him in their misery and distress.

Israel’s Cycle in Judges

Slide #10

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. What we just read in Judges became a cycle that Israel repeated for about 300 years! This is what happened over and over: 1) The Israelites worshipped false gods; 2) God sent enemies to punish them; 3) The Israelites cried out to God to forgive them; 4) God raised up a judge to deliver them from their enemies; 5) The Israelites thanked God for saving them and giving them peace. Once they had peace and rest, the Israelites would forget what God had done for them and turn back to idols. This started the whole cycle again!

Judges 3:7–11

Slides #11–13

Turn to Judges 3 and follow along as I read verses 7–11. This is an example of the cycle we just discussed. *Read the passage.*

- ? What evil did the Israelites do in verse 7? *Served the Baals and the Asheroth.*

Yes. Remember that the Baals and Asheroth were false gods and goddesses the Canaanite people worshipped. And now the Israelites were worshipping them, too. *Note: The different spelling of Asheroth from Ashtaroth indicates the idols/images of the goddesses.*

- ? What was God's response to their sin? *He was angry.*
- ? Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. What attribute of God means he cannot sin and hates all sin? *Holy.*

Because God is holy, he can be angry at sin and not sin! Because God is just, he must then punish sin. He loved Israel and wanted them to obey. When they disobeyed, he punished them—not to be mean but to help them learn that they'd sinned so they would turn to him and repent.

- ? In this account in Judges, God punished Israel by sending the king of Mesopotamia against them. How long did this king rule over Israel and make them serve him? Look at the end of verse 8. *Eight years.*
- ? What did the people finally do in verse 9? *Cried out to the Lord.*

When Israel cried out to the Lord, that means they prayed and asked for forgiveness and help. That was what God was waiting for.

- ? What did God do next? It's step four in the cycle. *He raised up a judge, or deliverer.*

The judge God raised up here was Othniel, who was Caleb's nephew, the son of Caleb's brother Kenaz. Remember Caleb, who spied out the land with Joshua? Caleb remained faithful to God for his whole life, even fighting giants when he was 85 years old!

- ? What did Othniel do in verse 10? *He went out to war against the king of Mesopotamia.*

Othniel led the Israelites in battle against this king who had been oppressing the people. And God gave him victory! He defeated the king and led Israel for 40 years of peace and rest before he died.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Do you see how this account shows the cycle on our poster? They did each of these things: worshipped false gods, received punishment in the form of enemies, and cried out to God. Then God sent Othniel, a judge, to deliver them, and they had peace and rest.

 Slide #14

Judges 3:12

Someone read Judges 3:12. This happened after Othniel died. *Assign a reader.*

 Slide #15

- ? What did the Israelites do again? *Evil. Worship idols.*

There they go, back to the first step in the cycle. Notice that even though Israel was unfaithful to God, God remained faithful to them. He didn't abandon them, but he came to their aid when they cried out to him. He sent another judge to help them.

Slides #16–18

- ? Let's begin the Class Notes. You will write answers in the crossword puzzle. What is the answer for #1? Who will read that? *Choose a reader. Joshua. Have students complete #1.*
- ? What did the Israelites do shortly after Joshua died in #2? *Choose a reader. False gods. Have students complete #2.*
- ? And #3, how did God punish them? *Choose a reader. Enemies. Have students complete #3.*
- ? Who will read #4 about God's attributes? *Choose a reader. Faithful. Have students complete #4.*
- ? Who did God raise up when the Israelites cried out for help? This is #5. *Choose a reader. Judges. Have students complete #5.*
- ? And #6? This is the fifth step in the cycle. *Choose a reader. Peace. Have students complete #6.*
- ? What did the Israelites repeat for about 300 years? Who will read #7? *Choose a reader. Cycle. Have students complete #7.*
- ? Look at #8. What did Caleb's nephew do? Who will read that for us? *Choose a reader. Othniel. Have students complete #8.*

Idolatry Today

When we read about the cycle the Israelites repeated for so long, we may be tempted to judge them and think that they are terrible sinners. But, we have the same sin problem and can be just as stubborn to sin and slow to repent. We may not worship Baals or statues, or bow down to idols like the Israelites did, but we can be guilty of idolatry, too. Idolatry is putting anything in our lives above God. Whenever we make anything more important than God, it's idolatry, which is disobedience to the first commandment.

Luke 18:18–23

Slides #19–20

- ? *Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster.* Let's go to the New Testament book of Luke, the third Gospel, and see what Jesus said about idolatry. Who will read Luke 18:18–23? *Assign readers.*
- ? What did the rich young ruler ask Jesus in verse 18? *What must I do to inherit eternal life?*
- ? Jesus quoted five of the Ten Commandments to the young man. What did the ruler think about himself? Look in verse 21. *He thought he was a good person. He believed he had kept God's commandments.*

A lot of people are like this young man. He thought he was a good person doing a good job obeying God's commands. But no one can keep God's commands perfectly. We are all sinners.

? What did Jesus tell him he still needed to do? *Sell all that he had and give it to the poor then follow Jesus.*

? How did the ruler feel when he heard this? *Luke 18:23. Sad.*

He felt sad because he was very wealthy. Giving all his things to the poor and following Jesus was not something he wanted to do.

The rich young ruler had put his money and possessions before God. His possessions were his idol because he was not willing to give them up to follow Jesus. Jesus may ask us to give up the very thing that is most important to us—the thing we love the most. Jesus wants to know that he is truly our Lord and that we love him more than anything else.

? If we are fully devoted to Christ, should we be willing to give up anything he asks us to? *Yes.*

In this case, the rich young ruler was guilty of idolatry just like the Israelites were, but riches were his idol instead of a false god like Baal.

Show the container with the Idol Strips inside. We're going to play a game like charades to get us thinking about what can be idols today. Things that are possible idols are written on the papers in this container. I'll choose students to come up and draw a paper strip. You will act out what is on the paper without speaking while the rest of the class will try to guess what you're acting out. Remember that these things can all become an idol in our lives. They can be anything we may love more than God. Who would like to start? Choose a volunteer to begin the game. Have students act and guess the idols.

► Print and cut out the Idol Strips before class. Fold them and put them in a container for students to draw from.

? Great job acting and guessing, everyone! Let's finish the crossword puzzle in the Class Notes. Who will read #9? *Choose a reader. Anything. Have students complete #9.*

🖨️ Slide #21

? And #10, what was the idol in the young ruler's life? *Choose a reader. Riches. Have students complete #10.*

Application

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Today, we saw the cycle of disobedience that Israel repeated for hundreds of years. The Israelites turned away from God. Then God would punish them by sending enemies to conquer them and make their lives difficult. The people would cry out to God, and God would show his mercy and love by sending a judge to deliver them from their enemies. The Israelites would have peace, usually as long as the judge lived, and then they would disobey again.

🖨️ Slide #22

What can we learn from the cycle in the book of Judges? We learn attributes of God, including his holiness and justice to punish sin, but also his mercy and faithfulness to deliver his people. We learn that idolatry is anything in our lives that we put before God.

Idols can be different things. It can be our friends, if the friends are more important to us than God. It can be schoolwork or getting good grades, if that is more important to us than God. It can be sports, if that sport is more important to us than God. It can be money or possessions as was the case of the rich young ruler we read about. Idolatry can be sleep, if we are too tired to get out of bed to go worship God at church or to read our Bible and pray. It can be clothes, toys, video games, or the latest technology. These things are not bad. In fact, they are blessings from God. But we must be careful not to turn “good” things into “god” things—things that we worship more than God.

If one of these areas is a problem for you, you can pray and ask God to help you put him first. God may want you to give up that thing, or you may need to change your priorities to make sure that thing you really like doesn't take up all your thoughts and time. When you ask God for forgiveness, he'll forgive you and help you change.

- Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows.

- Thank God for his mercy and faithfulness when we fail.
- Ask God to show us any idols we have in our lives so we can repent.



Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



Unit Review

A review of Lessons 61–69.

Come On In

Students will review the material they have been learning with a Come On In Game.

Memory Verse

Students will take turns quoting the memory verses. You may want to offer prizes or treats to students who can recite them without help. You will start a new verse next week.

Lesson Theme Poster Review

You will give a quick overview of Lessons 61–69 using the Lesson Theme Posters.

Review Game

Bible Baseball: Students will roll the die to determine their hit and then answer review questions to move around the bases and score points for their team.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Choose a Come On In Game and print/gather necessary items.

- Board Game
- Crazy Dice Board Game
- Card Keep
- Oh No

Memory Verse

Bring prizes or treats for students who can recite the verses.

Play the Memory Verse Songs (audio or video) to review the verses with your students.

Lesson Theme Poster Review

Gather the Lesson Theme Posters from Lessons 61–69.

Review Game—Bible Baseball

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Bring the following:

- Die
- Masking tape or chairs for bases
- Optional: small rewards

Go to Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for your Word. Thank you for men of faith like Moses, Joshua, and Caleb. Help my students learn the importance of obedience and the consequences of disobedience. May they continue to grow in faith and obedience to you and your Word.

Optional Supplements

Hands-On Activities

Choose a favorite or skipped activity from any of the previous nine lessons.

PowerPoint

You may want to use the PowerPoint presentation provided to enhance your teaching.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under *Lesson 70*. Game instructions are also included in the *Appendix* in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Lesson Theme Poster Review
- Review Game
- Group Prayer

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Optional Activity



Come On In

As students arrive, direct them to the activity you chose for today.



Slide #1



Memory Verse

We'll review the memory verses and then see who can recite them.

Review verses using the Memory Verse Posters and the songs.

- ? Who would like to try saying the verses without any help? Allow students to recite the verses individually. Award prizes or treats to students who can say them by memory.



Slides #2–3

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.



Lesson Theme Poster Review

Let's begin our review of the last nine lessons! We have seen that God is faithful to keep his promises. God promised Abraham a land for his descendants. That promise was passed on to Isaac, to Jacob, and then to Moses and the Israelites. It was over 400 years before God brought the Israelites to the Promised Land, but he was faithful to do it.



Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline as you review.

Lesson 61

Show Lesson 61 Theme Poster. When the Israelites finally got to the border of the land of Canaan, Moses sent 12 men to spy out the land, bring back some fruit, and find out about the people and cities.



Slide #4

After 40 days, the spies brought back large clusters of grapes as well as figs and pomegranates from the land. They found plentiful water and trees. It was a good land! But the spies also saw giants living in the land and cities that were fortified with walls.

- ? How many of the spies were frightened by these things and said they shouldn't try to take the land? *10 of the spies.*
- ? Which spies disagreed and trusted God's promises to give them victory? *Joshua and Caleb.*

Yes. Only Joshua and Caleb encouraged the people to trust God and not to fear. But the people didn't listen to them. They wanted to return to

Egypt, and they refused to enter the good land God promised them. For their rebellion, God said they would all wander in the wilderness for 40 years until those people who didn't believe and obey him died. But Joshua, Caleb, and the young people under age 20 would get to enter the land.

Lesson 62

 Slide #5

Show Lesson 62 Theme Poster. During the years in the wilderness, some people became impatient and unhappy following God and Moses. Three men rebelled against God. Their names were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. These men gathered other leaders to go with them and challenge Moses and Aaron. Two hundred and fifty leaders wanted to be priests, which was the job God gave only to Aaron and his sons.

- ?** How did God judge Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? What happened to them? *An earthquake split the ground, and they and their families and belongings fell into the earth.*

Before the earthquake, God was merciful and told Moses to warn the Israelites to move away from the three rebels. The people did move back, even some of Korah's sons who didn't join his rebellion, and they were spared. Then God sent fire to destroy the 250 men who were offering incense even though they weren't priests. God wanted his people to learn that rebellion is a serious sin.

Even after seeing the earthquake and fire from the Lord, the Israelites continued to complain against God and Moses. One time when they grumbled about food and water, God sent poisonous snakes into the camp.

- ?** What did the people have to do to be saved from the snakebites? *Look to the bronze serpent so they would not die.*

The bronze serpent was a picture of Jesus, who would come to die on the cross and take the punishment for sin so we can have eternal life.

Lesson 63

The wilderness wanderings were almost over, and God led Moses and the Israelites around several countries to where they would enter the Promised Land. Two powerful Amorite kings attacked the Israelites.

- ?** What were the names of those two kings? One was a giant! *Sihon and Og.*

Sihon and Og were powerful kings and had many cities, but they were defeated by the Israelites because God gave them victory. Moses gave their land to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

- ?** Balak, the king of Moab, was afraid that the Israelites would attack him next. Who did he hire to curse the Israelites for him? *Balaam.*

 Slide #6

Show the Lesson 63 Theme Poster. Balaam was a false prophet. When he rode his donkey to visit the king, the angel of the Lord blocked his way.

- ? How did Balaam's donkey save his life? *She avoided the angel of the Lord three times on the road.*

But Balaam didn't know what his donkey was doing, going off the road and then lying down, so he got angry and struck her. Then God caused the donkey to speak! Balaam still didn't understand what was happening until God opened his eyes to see the angel. Then he realized that God wasn't happy with him. Balaam offered to return home, but God told him to go to Balak. When Balak brought Balaam to curse the Israelites, Balaam blessed them three times instead of cursing them! God protected his people from Balak and made sure they received a blessing.

Lesson 64

Next, we learned that God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites after Moses' death. God let Moses see the Promised Land from a mountaintop before he died. The adults that rebelled and refused to enter the Promised Land had also died, except for Joshua and Caleb. Joshua was preparing to lead the new generation of Israelites into the land of Canaan. He sent two spies who went into the city of Jericho and stayed at a woman's house.

- ? What was the name of the woman? *Rahab.*

Show the Lesson 64 Theme Poster. Rahab led a sinful life, but when she heard about the miracles God had done for the Israelites, she believed their God was the one true God. She chose to hide the spies on her roof when the king's men were searching for them. She asked the spies to spare her and her family when God gave them the city. They said they would if she didn't tell her people what they were planning.

 Slide #7

- ? What else did the spies tell her she had to do to protect her home and her family? *Tie a scarlet cord in her window and bring her family into her house when the Israelites attacked.*

Rahab agreed and let the spies climb out her window and down the city wall to escape. The spies reported to Joshua that all the people of the land were terrified of them. Joshua was ready to attack Jericho. There was only one problem—the flooded Jordan River was in between the Israelites' camp and the city!

Lesson 65

- ? What did God do to get his people across the river into the Promised Land? *God stopped up the waters so they could cross.*

- ? *Show the Lesson 65 Theme Poster.* That's right! God blocked the river at another place north of the crossing. But what did the priests have to do before the waters parted? *Step into the water.*

 Slide #8

When the priests stepped into the water, God stopped the waters. The priests carried the ark of the covenant into the middle of the river and stood there while all the people hurried over to the other side.

Remember that the ark of the covenant represented God's presence with the people. God was showing his people that he was with them and would help them. He also showed that he was with Joshua the same way he had been with Moses.

- ? What did Joshua set up where the priests were standing? *12 stones as a memorial.*

Joshua set up stones in the river, and he also had leaders from the 12 tribes of Israel collect a stone and bring it to their camp on the other side. Once everyone was safely across and the priests reached the shore, God caused the waters to return. Joshua set up the 12 memorial stones the leaders brought as a reminder of God's miracle. The people were commanded to teach what these stones meant to their children. They needed to know that it was God who brought them safely into the land.

Lesson 66

 Slide #9

Show the Lesson 66 Theme Poster. The first city that needed to be conquered was Jericho, which was protected by tall and sturdy walls. God gave the Israelites unusual directions for how to defeat this city. He told them to march around the city once every morning for six days.

- ? What did God tell them to do on the seventh day? *March seven times around the city and shout. Then God would topple the walls.*

That's right. On the seventh day, the priests carried the ark of the covenant and blew trumpets as they marched with the fighting men around the city. They shouted, and God made the walls crumble so the men could run straight into the city and destroy it.

- ? But who did they remember to save in the city? *Rahab and her family.*

God was faithful to his promise to save Rahab and to give Joshua and the Israelites victory.

Lesson 67

 Slide #10

Show the Lesson 67 Theme Poster. After Jericho, the Israelites attacked the city of Ai with a smaller force, but they were defeated! Some of their fighting men were even killed! The Israelites were terrified that God wasn't with them anymore. But God told Joshua that they'd lost because of one man's sin at Jericho. That man's name was Achan.

- ? What was Achan's sin? *He took a cloak, silver, and gold from Jericho that he was commanded not to.*

God had commanded his people to completely destroy everything in the city. Only the precious metals were saved and brought to the priests as items devoted to God. Achan thought he could steal and hide the items in his tent, but God exposed Achan's sin in front of Joshua and all Israel. Achan and his family had to be punished before God could again bless Israel and fight for them.

God told Joshua to attack Ai again. This time they brought all the fighting men and set an ambush, and they were victorious.

The Israelites' next battle was against five Amorite kings. God cast hailstones down on the enemy, and they tried to flee.

- ? What great miracle did Joshua ask God to do so the enemy couldn't escape? *Make the sun stand still.*

God answered Joshua's prayer and kept the sun up for about an extra day so that Joshua and his men could pursue the enemy. God fought for Israel and brought another great victory!

Lesson 68

Show the Lesson 68 Theme Poster. In this lesson, we saw how God fulfilled his promise to give the Israelites the land of Canaan. God was with Joshua and the Israelites as they fought the people in the land and conquered more cities. Then Joshua divided the land for each of the tribes. Two and a half tribes received land on the east side of the Jordan River. The other nine and a half tribes received their inheritance on the west side of the Jordan.

 Slide #11

- ? Who remembers what large tribe divided in half and received land on the east and the west side of the Jordan? (Hint: it was one of Joseph's sons.) *Manasseh.*

Manasseh was such a large tribe that they split up and received land on both sides of the river. The tribe of Levi was the only one that didn't receive a portion of land because they were chosen to be God's ministers and priests.

Joshua told the tribes to go and take possession of their lands. They would need to drive out any remaining Canaanite or Amorite people living in their territory, but some tribes failed to do this.

Caleb, even when he was 85 years old, wasn't afraid to fight for his inheritance. He asked Joshua if he could have the land where giants were living. He believed that God would give him victory—and God did! God rewarded the faith of Caleb.

Lesson 69

When Joshua was old and the Israelites were enjoying their new land, he warned the people to continue to obey God and follow his commandments. He was worried that they would turn to the false gods of the people still living in the land, and that's exactly what happened. After Joshua and the leaders died, the Israelites worshipped the Baals and bowed down to them. The Baals were the false gods of the Canaanites and Amorites they failed to destroy from the land.

- ? *Show the Lesson 69 Theme Poster.* Their sin began a cycle that they repeated for about 300 years. Who will read the steps in this cycle? *Choose students to read the steps from the poster.*

 Slide #12

Refer to the Time of the Judges on the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. The first judge was Othniel, Caleb’s nephew. He saved the Israelites from the king of Mesopotamia after the Israelites cried out to God for help. The book of Judges gives the account of Othniel and other judges God raised up when the people repented and cried out to him for deliverance. God continued to be merciful and to forgive his people when they repented, but they continued to forsake him and worship false gods.

Today, we may not bow down to idols like they did back in the time of the judges, but we can still be guilty of idolatry, which is putting anything above our love for God. When we love the things in this world more than the Lord, we are disobeying God.

- ? What are some examples of idolatry today? Allow discussion. Answers may include friends, good grades, sports, popularity, money, possessions, video games, etc.

These things are not bad. But we must be careful not to turn “good” things into “god” things—things that we worship more than God.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for his faithfulness to keep his promises to the Israelites and to us.
- Pray that we will have faith like Joshua and Caleb and remain obedient to God.

🖥 Slides #13–36



Review Game—Bible Baseball

We encourage you to play the following review game.

Materials

Review Questions

Die

Masking tape or chairs for bases

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions. Set up three bases, home plate, and the pitcher’s mound using masking tape or chairs arranged in a diamond with the pitcher’s mound in the middle.

Divide the class into two teams. Have the first team line up at home plate. The other team may wait in their seats or stand along the “sideline.”

The student at bat will roll the die to determine the “hit” based on the list below (which you may want to write on the board for easy reference). A walk means he can go to first base without answering a question. A foul ball means to roll again. Three foul balls in a row is a strike!

1=single, 2=double, 3=triple, 4=home run, 5=walk, 6=foul ball

Once the hit is determined (#1–4), ask a review question from the pitcher’s mound. If the student answers correctly, he can advance around the bases according to his roll. If he answers incorrectly, it is a strike for his team, and he goes to the back of the line. Three strikes and that team is out. Unless they strike out, allow all team members to come to bat once and then switch teams at bat.

Remember that the hits will move any team members who are already on base. For example, if a student is on second base and the next teammate rolls a double and answers a question correctly, the student on second goes to home plate and scores a run for the team while the batter goes to second base.

Keep the game moving by having students roll quickly when they come to bat and “run” the bases for each correct answer. Keep track of strikes and runs for each team. Play for a set number of innings or as time allows, repeating questions as necessary.



Appendix

Come On In Games

Choose one of these games for students to play at the beginning of class.

Memory Verse Games

Choose one of these games to practice the memory verse with your class.

Lesson Review Games

Choose one of these games to review with your class at the end of each lesson.

All game instructions and materials can also be accessed from the Teacher Digital Resources within each Lesson: *Come On In*, *Memory Verse*, and *Lesson Review*.

Come On In Games

These games are intended for students to play with minimal teacher supervision as they arrive.

All games use the Question Cards in the Teacher Digital Resources to help your students learn or review the

Attributes of God, the Ten Commandments, or the books of the Old or New Testament. We recommend focusing on one set of cards then gradually adding more as students master them.

Board Game

Students answer questions and make their way to the finish on the Game Board.

Materials

- Question Cards
- Game Board (provided in the Teacher Kit)
- Dice or spinner
- Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team

Instructions

Print and cut out one or more sets of Question Cards. Shuffle the cards and place them facedown by the Game Board.

Divide students into teams or allow them to play individually. Select game pieces and place at Start. Highest number rolled or spun goes first.

Students will be read a question card by the team/student on their right. If they answer correctly, they will roll or spin and move that number of spaces on the Game Board. If they do not know or do not answer correctly, they do not roll or spin to move ahead. Alternate between teams/students as long as time permits, repeating questions if necessary. Follow the directions on the spaces to move ahead, fall back, or switch places with another team/student. The first team/student to make it all the way to the Finish wins.

Card Keep

Students answer questions and keep the cards they answer correctly.

Materials

- Question Cards

Instructions

Print and cut out one or more sets of Question Cards. Shuffle the cards and place them facedown in a pile.

Students will be read a question card by the team/student on their right. If they answer correctly, they keep the card. If they answer incorrectly, give the answer and return the card to the bottom of the pile. Continue asking and answering questions until all the cards are collected. Count up cards at the end. The student with the most cards wins.

Reshuffle the cards and play again as time allows.

Crazy Dice Board Game

Watch out for those crazy dice as students make their way along the Game Board!

Materials

- Question Cards
- Game Board (provided in the Teacher Kit)
- Two dice
- Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team

Instructions

Print and cut out one or more sets of Question Cards. Shuffle the cards and place them facedown by the Game Board.

Divide students into teams, or allow them to play individually. Select game pieces and place at Start. Have teams/students roll the dice. Highest number goes first.

Students will be read a question card by the team/student on their right. If they do not know or do not answer correctly, they do not roll. If they answer correctly, they will roll the dice and follow the instructions below according to their roll.

If students roll:

- 2 jump one space ahead of the nearest game piece
- 3 move back 3 spaces
- 4 move to the nearest space with the #4 in it (14, 34, 64)
- 5 move to share the same space as the nearest game piece
- 6 move to the closest “switch places” space and trade places with another team/student
- 7 move ahead 7
- 8 move back 4 spaces
- 9 move ahead 9
- 10 move ahead to the next multiple of 10 space (10, 20, 30, 70, etc.)
- 11 move back 1 space
- 12 move ahead 12 spaces

Follow the directions on the board to move ahead, fall back, or switch places with another team. Alternate between teams/students as long as time permits, repeating questions if necessary. The first team/student to make it all the way to the Finish wins.

Oh No

Not every roll of the dice is good! Answer the question, roll the dice, and be prepared to say, “Oh no!”

Materials

- Question Cards
- Two dice
- Paper or board for keeping score

Instructions

Print and cut out one or more sets of Question Cards. Shuffle the cards and place them facedown in a pile.

Divide the students into teams or let them play individually. Students will be read a question card by the team/student

on their right. If they answer correctly, they will roll the dice to determine their points. If they do not answer correctly, play moves to the next player or other team. Keep track of scores. (Note: no student/team can have less than 0 points.)

Numbers aren’t always a winner! If students roll:

- 2 or 3 give 5 points to the student/team on your left
- 4 take 5 points from the student/team on your right
- 5–10 add the total number on the dice to your score
- 11 subtract 10 points from your score
- 12 double your score

Memory Verse Games

Allow students to refer to the Memory Verse Poster during the games. You may want to cover it up after a few weeks for more of a challenge.

Down the Line

Say your part of the verse while passing the spoon—under your left leg with your right hand, that is!

Materials

- Passing Cards
- Cotton ball
- Plastic spoon
- Container

Instructions

Print and cut out one set of the Passing Cards and put them into a container. Have the students line up facing you. Put a cotton ball into the plastic spoon and give it to the student on one end of the line.

Draw a card from the container. The students must pass the spoon from one end of the line and back again according to what the card says, keeping the cotton ball on the spoon (without touching it). For example, they may have to pass the spoon with their left hand or under their right leg! As they pass the spoon, they each must say the next word in the memory verse. If the cotton ball falls or someone says the wrong word, you may have the students start the verse over. Repeat with a new card until the verse has been recited several times.

Try using a larger spoon and balancing a small orange or boiled egg on it!

Egg Hunt

Hunt for all the parts of the memory verse hidden in the eggs! This game can be played all year round. The plastic eggs just happen to be great little containers that can be hidden easily.

Materials

- Strips of paper
- Plastic Easter eggs

Instructions

Write the memory verse on strips of paper with one or two words on each strip. Put one strip inside of each plastic egg. Hide all the eggs around the room.

Have the students search for the eggs and bring them back to their table. They will open the eggs and work together to put the verse in the proper order.

For a larger class, prepare more than one set of eggs (sorted by colors for different teams). Students can work in teams to collect and construct the verse.

Look Behind You

“What does mine say?” “Turn around!” “You go here.” Students help each other get in the right order according to the cards on their backs in this crazy group game.

Materials

- Index cards
- Masking tape

Instructions

Write one or two words from the memory verse on each index card. Tape cards onto students’ backs. Students will work together to put themselves in order according to the memory verse. Once they think they are standing in order, check the verse by reading the words out loud according to how they are standing.

If you have more cards than students, tape more than one card in the proper order on some students. Repeat the game so all students get to participate.

Now You See It

Start out with all the words, erase them one by one. Can you still say the verse?

Materials

- White board
- Marker and eraser for white board

Instructions

Write the memory verse on the board. Recite the verse together. Choose a student to come up to the board and erase one or two words at a time. Have the class recite the entire verse each time another word is erased. Continue erasing words and reciting until all of the words are gone. Then ask students to try reciting the whole verse without any words left on the board.

Popcorn

Students “pop” up as they say their part of the memory verse. Start out slowly and see how fast you can go!

Materials

None

Instructions

Have students squat down in a circle. Begin by saying the first word in the memory verse. As you go around the circle,

have each student take turns “popping” up as they say the next word then squat back down. Repeat.

You may want to divide the class into two groups. Have the first group pop up and say the first word then squat back down. Then the second group pops up saying the next word and squats back down and so on until the verse is completed. Repeat—going faster and faster!

Review Card Relay

“On your mark, get set, go!” Teams will race to put the memory verse cards in order.

Materials

- Index cards
- Tape or poster putty

Instructions

Write one or two words from the memory verse on each index card. Make one set for each team. Divide the class

into teams. Randomly lay out each set of cards facedown on the floor—one set for each team. Put a piece of poster putty or tape on each one.

Have teams line up away from the cards. When the relay begins, the first student in each line will race to the cards, pick one up, and put it on the wall or board. As the relay continues, students will put each card on the board in the proper order. They may need to rearrange the cards to fit others.

When finished, have the class read the verse aloud together.

Stack Em Up

Teams of two will stack the cups in the right order. Add a timer or make it a race!

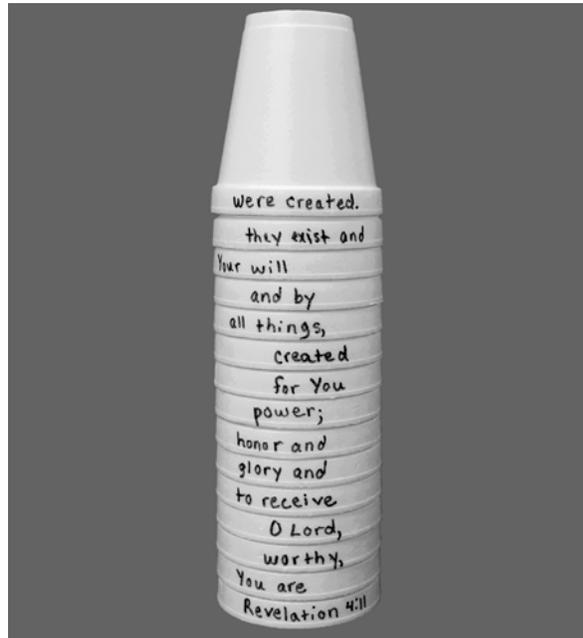
Materials

- Colored markers
- Foam or plastic cups with the memory verse written on them for each team
- Optional: timer

Instructions

Turn each cup upside down so the stack will have a wide base. On the rim of each cup, write one or two words from the memory verse, including the reference. Make sure the words show when the next cup is stacked on top of it. (See picture at right.)

Mix up the cups and have teams stack them up in the correct order. Have teams race against each other or time them as they stack the cups in the correct order.



Your Turn

Students recite the verse taking turns back and forth. Will they remember their parts?

Materials

- Optional: timer

Instructions

Pair the students together. Have each pair stand back to back. Allow pairs to take turns reciting the verse. One

student begins with the first word of the memory verse. Then the other student must say the next word. Keep going back and forth until the verse is completed. If a student makes a mistake or can't remember the right word, allow another pair to try.

After everyone has had a turn, mix up the pairs and repeat. Have students race against a timer for an extra challenge.

Lesson Review Games

These games are written for team play; however, they can easily be adapted for smaller classes.

Allow students to refer to the Lesson Theme Poster during the games.

Bible Baseball

Ready to run the bases? Students answer questions, roll the die, and make their way around the bases to earn points for their team.

Materials

- Review Questions
- Masking tape or chairs for bases
- One die

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions. Set up three bases, home plate, and the pitcher's mound using masking tape or chairs arranged in a diamond with the pitcher's mound in the middle.

Divide the class into two teams. Have the first team line up at home plate. The other team may wait in their seats or stand along the "sideline."

The student at bat will roll the die to determine the "hit" based on the list below (which you may want to write on the board for easy reference). A walk means he can go to first base without answering a question. A foul ball means to roll again. Three foul balls in a row is a strike!

- 1=single
- 2=double
- 3=triple
- 4=home run
- 5=walk
- 6=foul ball

Once the hit is determined (#1–4), ask a review question from the pitcher's mound. If the student answers correctly, he can advance around the bases according to his roll. If he answers incorrectly, it is a strike for his team, and he goes to the back of the line. After three strikes, a team is out. Unless they strike out, allow all team members to come to bat once and then switch teams at bat.

Remember that the hits will move any team members who are already on base. For example, if a student is on second base and the next teammate rolls a double and answers a question correctly, the student on second goes to home plate and scores a run for the team while the batter goes to second base.

Keep the game moving by having students roll quickly when they come to bat and "run" the bases for each correct answer. Keep track of strikes and runs for each team. Play for a set number of innings or as time allows, repeating questions as necessary.

Box Toss

Students will answer review questions then toss the beanbag at the holes in the box to gain points for their team.

Materials

- Review Questions
- Scissors or knife
- Medium-sized cardboard box
- Four beanbags
- Masking tape

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use scissors or a knife to cut two or three holes in the bottom of the box. Make sure they are large enough for a beanbag to easily pass through. Label each circle with a point

number: 5, 10, and 15. Use masking tape to make a tossing line several feet away from the box.

Divide the class into teams. Have the teams line up behind the line across from the box. Give each team two beanbags. Alternate asking each team a review question. Students who answer correctly will toss the beanbags at the target holes in the box to earn points for their team. If they answer incorrectly, they may toss the beanbags for fun without the points counting. Students will go to the end of the line after tossing the beanbags. Keep score for both teams. Continue play until all questions have been answered correctly and students have all had a chance to toss the beanbags.

Draw Dice

Teams will answer questions and roll the dice to complete a simple drawing to win. Who will finish their drawing first?

Materials

- Review Questions
- One drawing area for each team (paper, white board, etc.)
- Pencils or white board markers
- Two dice

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team one die and a sheet of paper and a pencil, or divide the white board in half. Draw a mouse on the board as an example.

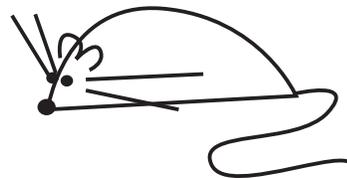
Ask the first team a question from the lesson. If they answer correctly, have them roll the die.

To begin drawing their mouse, each team must wait until they roll a six. They will then draw the mouse's body on

their paper or the board. After they have drawn the body, as they give correct answers to the questions, they can continue to draw the other parts of the mouse according to the numbers they roll.

They can draw according to the numbers below:

- 6 = body
- 5 = nose
- 4 = whiskers
- 3 = eyes
- 2 = ears
- 1 = tail



Continue giving each team a turn to answer a question and roll the die. Repeat the questions as necessary. The first team to finish their mouse wins.

You may choose to draw a simple object from the lesson, such as a crown, an open Bible, a fish, etc. Be sure to assign numbers (as above) to each part of the object to be drawn before the game begins.

Four in a Row

Students will answer questions and add a marker for their team onto the grid. Which team will be the first to get four in a row?

Materials

- Review Questions
- Masking tape
- Red and black paper circles or other markers for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use masking tape to make a 16-section grid on the floor. The grid should be four sections wide by four sections long. Each section should be equal in size. Use eight red circles and eight black circles cut from construction paper or other markers for the two teams.

Divide the students into two teams. Give each team eight markers. They will take turns answering the questions. If they answer correctly, they can put a marker in a square on the grid. The first team to get four markers in a row wins the game.

Goofy Golf

Hit the sock with the noodle? Teams must work together to answer the questions and putt to get a hole-in-one in this crazy golf game!

Materials

- Review Questions
- Swimming noodles or rolled up newspapers
- Rolled up socks
- Masking tape
- Ten sheets of paper
- Markers

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use the markers to number sheets of paper 1–10 (use more or less

depending on class size and time). Tape down the sheets of paper around the room in a random pattern to form a golf course. You may want to add chairs as obstacles in the path.

Divide the class into teams. Give each team a rolled up sock and a swimming noodle. Ask the first student a review question from the lesson. If he answers correctly, allow him to use the noodle to drive the rolled up sock toward the first sheet of paper labeled #1. Continue with the next team. Take turns allowing team members to answer questions and continue putting the socks along the course to each hole, continuing from where the last teammate left off. The sock must touch or roll over the sheet of paper to consider it in the hole. The first team to reach the tenth hole wins.

Pick a Point

Answer the questions correctly to earn the right to pick a point.

Materials

- Review Questions
- Cup or basket
- Small paper strips

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Write various numbers in increments of 5 or 10 on strips of paper

to use as point cards. Put the point cards into the cup or basket. Divide students into teams of 4–5 students each. Have each team take turns answering a review question. After each correct answer, let a member of the team draw a point card from the cup.

The number of points on the cards will vary, so the score will have nothing to do with how skilled one team might be. Total points at the end and declare a winner.

Racetrack

Who will reach the checkered flag first? Teams will race to the finish by answering review questions.

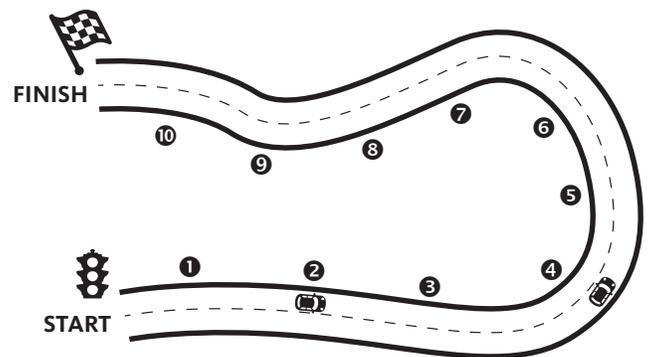
Materials

- Review Questions
- Optional: paper cutouts for each team (cars, animals, circles, etc.), tape/poster putty
- White board or chalk-board
- Markers/chalk

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Draw a racetrack on the board. It may be as simple as a straight horizontal path or a curvy circle. Label “Start” and “Finish” (with a checkered flag) at either end of the track. Add numbers along the track (e.g., 1–10) at equal intervals between Start and Finish. The numbers will be used as placement points for the racers as they progress along the track.

Divide the class into teams. You may draw a different symbol (e.g., stick figure, circle, X or O) to represent each



team at the Start, or use paper cutouts as team markers and stick them to the board with tape/poster putty.

Ask the first team a review question. If they answer correctly, move their marker or redraw their symbol along the track at #1. If they answer incorrectly, give the next team a chance to answer and move to the first number. If they do not know, give the answer and ask that question again later. Continue to alternate asking review questions and moving teams' markers along the racetrack according to the numbers along the track. The first team to reach the Finish wins!

Toss for It

How many points? Toss for it! Students answer the questions and toss the beanbag to earn points for their team.

Materials

- Review Questions
- One beanbag
- A deck of numbered cards, or numbers and “wild” written on index cards
- Masking tape
- Two baskets or containers for cards

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Place several rows of numbered cards facedown with a few inches between them to form a grid pattern (make sure to put several wild cards or Jokers down, too). Use the masking tape to make a tossing line several feet from the cards.

Divide students into teams and have them line up behind the tossing line. Ask the first student a review question. If he gives the correct answer, have him toss the beanbag onto a card. Turn the card over to reveal the points he receives for his team. Face cards or word cards are 10 points each. Wild or Jokers are also 10—plus another turn. All other cards are face value.

Have the student pick up his card and put it in the team's basket to be counted at the end of the game. Add more cards to the grid as necessary. Next team's turn. If a student gives an incorrect answer, he should go to the end of the line. Give the answer and repeat that question later. Continue taking turns until all the questions have been answered. Total each team's points to declare a winner.

