



UNIT 8 | SESSION 3

JOSHUA CHALLENGED THE PEOPLE

JOSHUA 23-24

KEY PASSAGE:

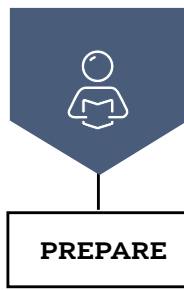
Psalm 77:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

As Joshua prepared for his own death, he left behind a legacy of obedience to God. After Jesus' death and resurrection, He appeared to the disciples and left them with a legacy: to obey Him by making disciples of all nations.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Joshua was getting along in years, so he gathered the people at the place where God had made a promise to Abraham. (See Gen. 12:6-7.) Joshua wanted the people to remember and to live based on what they knew to be true about God: God can be trusted. He is good, and He is faithful.

Joshua issued a challenge: “Be very strong and continue obeying all that is written in the book of the law of Moses.” Reading, studying, and obeying God’s Word is a mark of belief in God. Joshua reminded the people that they were successful over their enemies because of their obedience to God. Joshua also gave the Israelites a warning. Just as all the good things God promised had been fulfilled, so would all the bad things He promised if the Israelites disobeyed Him.

Further, Joshua reminded the leaders of their nations’ history—from the birth of Isaac to Israel’s escape from Egypt. Over and over, God had demonstrated His power and goodness to the Israelites. Their ancestors had repeatedly turned from God to worship the false gods of other nations. Joshua said, “Choose for yourselves today: Which will you worship ... As for me and my family, we will worship the LORD” (Josh. 24:15).

The Israelites had a choice: Continue to worship God or choose to serve other

gods. In response to God’s faithfulness to His promises, the Israelites renewed their covenant to be faithful to the Lord.

As you share the story of Joshua’s legacy with kids, point them to a greater legacy found in Jesus Christ. Jesus gave a similar type of farewell speech at the Last Supper, exhorting His disciples to not only love God but love one another. After His resurrection, Jesus sent His disciples out to tell the nations about Him. Jesus calls all people who trust in Him to tell others about Him.

BOOK OF JOSHUA

Joshua 1:1–5:12:
Preparing the people

Joshua 5:13–12:24:
Conquest of the land

Joshua 13:1–24:33:
Allotment of the land and worshipping God



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ Did you face any challenges this week? Did anything get in the way of what you wanted to do? What happened? When we face challenges, we might work through them or run the other way! In today’s story, we’ll see what the Israelites did when Joshua gave them a challenge. ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “A Different Kind of Challenge” on the activity page.

SAY “ The challenge in that activity was to find all the differences between the pictures. Today, we will learn about a different kind of challenge Joshua set before the Israelites. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: THE BLINDFOLD CHALLENGE

Invite a kid to draw an animal of her choosing on a dry erase board. First, blindfold the volunteer. As she draws, the rest of the group will have one minute to guess the animal. Whoever guesses the animal first will take the next turn drawing an animal while blindfolded.

SAY “ Drawing an animal while blindfolded was challenging! But that didn’t stop you from trying to get the group to guess correctly. Today we will learn about the time Joshua challenged the Israelites to do something incredibly difficult. What do you think he challenged them to do? ”

OPTION 2: FOLLOW THE RULES



Invite the kids to work together to create a set of rules the kids will be expected to obey this week. Encourage the kids to be creative yet practical. Direct them to think about ways God has invited us to honor Him in the way we treat others. Ask the kids to decorate posters to display these rules on a focal wall. Then review the rules all together. If the rules are very good, consider keeping them longer than just this week.

SAY “ Those rules are a good reminder for how we should treat one other. They show us how God wants us to act toward one another. Before Joshua died, he reminded the people of God’s kindness toward them. Joshua challenged them to not forget what God had done. Do you think the Israelites accepted the challenge? Let’s find out! ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Joshua 23–24. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Joshua Challenged the People.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JOSHUA CHALLENGED THE PEOPLE

“Many years had passed since Joshua and the Israelites had defeated Jericho, Ai (AY igh), and the kings of the land. God had allowed the Israelites to rest from battles against their enemies. **Now Joshua was getting old. He gathered all the people of Israel because he had some important things to say to them.**

Joshua said, “**You have seen everything the LORD your God has done.** He has fought your battles for you. The rest of the land will be yours too, just as the LORD your God promised.

“**Therefore,**” Joshua continued, “**Be careful to obey everything that is in the book of the law of Moses. Do not turn aside from it; do not mix with the nations in this land or worship their gods. Keep clinging to God. He fights for you! Love the LORD your God. If you disobey God, He will no longer help you win these battles.** In fact, you will die here if you disobey Him.”

Joshua reminded the people about the things God had done in the past: God had called Abraham and had given him a son, Isaac. He had given Isaac two sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob’s children had become slaves in Egypt, where God had sent Moses and Aaron. **God had rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians, bringing them safely across the Red Sea.** They had fought and won many battles because God was fighting for them. God had done so many great things for His people!

Joshua commanded the people, “**Fear the LORD and worship Him.** Or will you worship false gods? As for me and my family, we will worship the LORD.”

The people replied, “**We will not abandon the LORD!** We know how much God has done for us, and we love Him!”

Joshua warned the people, “**If you do abandon God to worship other gods, God will turn against you.** He will destroy you.”

“No!” the people replied. “**We will worship the LORD!**”

On that day, **Joshua made a covenant with the people.** He wrote it down and also set up a large stone under an oak tree.

Joshua said, “This stone will be a reminder of your duty to serve the LORD, who kept every promise in bringing you into this land.” Then Joshua sent the people back to their homes.

After that, Joshua died. He was 110 years old.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Take notes: Write key words from today’s Bible story on a dry erase board while telling the story. Emphasize how taking notes and writing things down can help us remember. Invite any kids who would like to do so, to also take notes while they listen to the Bible story.

Call and response: Invite the kids to participate in call and response. Explain that as Joshua challenged the people, they responded by agreeing to the covenant they were making. Direct the kids to respond, “I agree,” at the correct time during today’s Bible story.

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Joshua and the people faced many challenges throughout their journey to the promised land. Whenever they trusted and obeyed God, He gave them miraculous victory. At the end of Joshua’s life, he challenged the people once again. This time, he told the people to remember God’s promise to Abraham. God’s great acts to deliver His people were miracles! **What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.**

Joshua challenged the people to obey God. Joshua wrote down God’s law as a reminder. Joshua told the people to read and follow it so they would know how to obey God. The people responded by promising to obey God.

We can find God’s laws and instructions in the Bible. The Bible tells us God’s plan to rescue sinners. It records God’s miraculous works. People who follow Jesus can read the Bible to know how to obey God. Believers worship God as the one true and living God. Joshua’s covenant was for the people when they entered the promised land. Jesus’ death on the cross, resurrection from the dead, and coming return is the greater promise. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ As Joshua prepared for his own death, he left behind a legacy of obedience to God. A legacy is something passed on from someone who has died. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, He appeared to the disciples and left them with a legacy: to obey Him by making disciples of all nations. This legacy continues today as believers continue to tell others about Jesus and new believers trust Christ for salvation. If you are a follower of Jesus, you can obey God by telling people who don’t know God that Jesus died on the cross for their sins. If you have not trusted in Jesus as Lord and Savior, you can make the decision to trust in Him for forgiveness and life with God forever. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 8, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can you do the right thing if no one around you is?
2. What will you say or do the next time you face a situation where those around you are choosing sin?