

The Israelites Cross the Jordan River

Joshua 3:1–4:24

Preschoolers are just learning about manners. They often need to be reminded to say “please” and “thank you.” Use this lesson to remind children to thank God for all he gives them, too, even though they can’t see him.



► Bible Point

Remember to thank God.

Key Verse

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:6-7).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will remember to thank God for everything he gives them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 5 min.</i>	Welcome and Celebrate Welcome each other, and praise God through music.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Hands Up Play a game, and talk about how God protects us.	Bible, beach ball	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i>	Puppy Pointers Hear how Theo remembered to thank God.	CD player, Theo puppet, string Teacher Pack: CD	Tie some string around Theo’s paw.
	Bible Time: Joshua Remembers the Jordan Act out the parting of the Jordan, and give thanks to God.	Bible, 12 paper plates, 2 large sheets of blue bulletin paper	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i></p>	<p>Center 1: Pebble Altar Create an altar like the Israelites did.</p>	My Bible Hugs, gray construction paper, glue	Remove the Lesson 12 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.
	<p>Center 2: Rocky-River Snack Create a rocky river.</p>	paper plates, graham crackers, craft sticks, jelly, banana slices, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	<p>Center 3: Thankful Toss Children will toss a ball among themselves while singing a song.</p>	lightweight ball	
	<p>Center 4: "Thank You" Altar Use the paper plate "rocks" to build an altar.</p>	paper plates, crayons, tape	
<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p>Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	My Bible Hugs	
	<p>Action Prayer Take turns thanking God.</p>	Teacher Pack: bendable man	
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



Welcome and Celebrate Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Worship Our God" (track 19), "Praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6) (track 10)

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcome and Celebrate

Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do

As the children arrive, greet each one with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to gather the children together in a circle on the floor.

Lead children in singing "Worship Our God" (track 19 on the CD) to the tune of "I've Got the Joy." Encourage children to say "What?" as indicated in the lyrics below. Encourage the children to raise their hands, skip in place, or do some other action to worship God when their names are sung.

♪ We're here at church to learn and play and worship our God. (What?)

Worship our God. (What?)

Worship our God.

We're here at church to learn and play and worship our God,

Worship our God today!

We'll [After the first time, replace "We'll" with the names of children here.] worship our God. (What?)

Worship our God. (What?)

Worship our God.

We'll worship our God. Worship our God today!

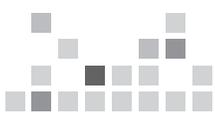
(Repeat.)

Say: **It's great to worship God together. Today we'll learn to ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD, as we did just now in our song. Let's thank God through one more song.**

Lead children in singing "Praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6) (track 10 on the CD). Lead kids in singing and clapping their hands or stomping their feet.

**♪ Let everything that moves,
And everything that breathes,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.**

**From the rising of the sun
'Til the time that it goes down,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.**



Everybody, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord!
Come on, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord.
Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

Everybody, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord!
Come on, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord.
Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

Let everything that walks,
And everything that runs,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.

Everybody, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord!
Come on, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord.
Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

No matter where you are,
No matter where you've been,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.

Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

"Praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **We ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD** because he's the one who made us and he loves us and takes care of us every day. Today we'll hear how God took care of some people and how they learned to ► **REMEMBER TO THANK GOD**, too.

2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Hands Up

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to 1 Peter 5:6-7, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:6-7). This means that we trust God to take care of us, and we go to him for everything. Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the simplified Key Verse with you: **God's mighty hand cares for you (1 Peter 5:6-7).**

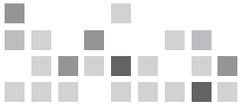
Say: **Let's play a game to help us ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD** that his mighty hand cares for us. Have the children stand in a circle. Then say: **I'll toss a beach ball up into the air, and your job is to work together to keep the ball from falling to the ground so it doesn't get hurt.**



Hands Up Supplies

Bible
beach ball





Toss up the beach ball. Let the children bat the ball up in the air. If the ball does fall, toss it back into play. After a few minutes, collect the ball and have the children sit in a circle.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What things did you do to keep the ball up?
- What are some ways God takes care of you?

Say: **God protects us just as we protected this ball. Because God protects us, we do our best to ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD. Let's hear how God protected a group of people in the Bible and how they thanked him.**

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3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Puppy Pointers

Puppy Pointers Supplies

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CD player
Theo puppet
string
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Puppy Pointers Easy Prep

.....

Tie some string around
Theo's paw.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Listen, everyone, Theo's coming! He has something to show us. Let's find out what it is.** Play "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD), and bring out Theophilus the FaithRetriever.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! It's so good to see you at church with us today. What's that around your paw?

Theo: It's string. I tied it to my paw to help me remember something.

Teacher: What are you trying to remember, Theo?

Theo: I can't remember.

Teacher: Oh, you've forgotten. That's too bad. Well, today our Bible Point is about remembering. Friends, can you tell Theo our Bible Point for today? (*Lead children in saying the Bible Point for Theo: ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD.*)

Teacher: And today we'll hear in the Bible about some people who wanted to remember to thank God for taking care of them.

Theo: That's it! Now I remember what I was trying to remember.

Teacher: What were you trying to remember, Theo?

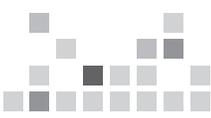
Theo: I wanted to make up a song for you all to thank God!

Teacher: That's nice, Theo. God loves to be thanked!

Theo: I'm going to go make up my song now.

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.



Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about a time you wanted to remember something, like Theo did.
- Why would you want to ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD?

Say: **Theo was going to write a song for us so we can thank God. There are lots of ways to thank God. In fact, in the Bible today, we'll learn how Joshua and the Israelites remembered to thank God. Let's hear it so we can ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD, too.**

Bible Time: Joshua Remembers the Jordan

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Joshua 3, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Today we'll hear how God cared for his people, the Israelites, and we'll hear how they thanked him.**

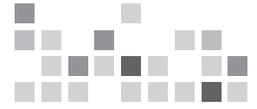
The Bible says there was a river called the Jordan River. It was a river with a lot of rocks along the bottom. Let's make a river. Invite the children to lay down the 12 plates to represent rocks. Then have them place the two sheets of paper side by side over the rocks to make the river.

Say: **The Israelites had been living in the desert for a long, long time. But they were getting closer and closer to their new home, the land God promised them. One day Joshua, the Israelites' leader, told the people to follow him. I'll pretend to be Joshua, and you can be the Israelites. Follow me, please.** Lead children around the room and then stop on one side of the Jordan River you made, where the two papers meet.

Say: **Joshua led the people right to the Jordan River. It was a big river.** Have the children stretch their arms to their sides as far as they can to show they know it was very big.

Say: **They needed to cross the Jordan River to get to the Promised Land, but there was no way to get across. They couldn't jump over it.** Lead children in jumping in place. **They couldn't go under it.** Lead kids in stomping on the floor. **And they sure couldn't go around it!** Lead kids in looking from side to side.

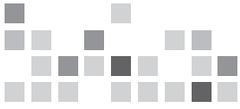
Say: **God did an amazing thing for his people. He stopped the flow of the water so the Israelites could walk right through the Jordan River on dry ground.** Fold back the blue paper to create a path between the two halves and to reveal the rocky bottom. Then lead children across the "river."



Bible Time: Joshua Remembers the Jordan Supplies

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- Bible
 - 12 paper plates
 - 2 large sheets of blue bulletin paper





Say: **Joshua wanted the Israelites to remember for a long time what God did to help them. So this is what they did. They carried 12 rocks from the river and piled them together.** Invite children to take turns retrieving paper plate “rocks” and bringing them to the edge of the river, leaving them in a pile.

Say: **Joshua said, “Every time you see these rocks and every time someone asks you about these rocks, remember that God helped us. ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD.”** Have the children stand around the “rock” pile and each say something he or she is thankful for.

Say: **The Israelites piled the rocks in a special way to make what’s called an altar. The altar helped them ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What’s neat about what God did for the Israelites?
- What’s something neat God’s done for you?
- In what ways do you like to thank God?

Say: **God’s mighty hand cares for us, just as God cared for the Israelites. So it doesn’t matter how we do it, but it’s important that we ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD for being so good to us.**

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today’s Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you’re ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they’d like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center’s description.

■ CENTER 1:

Pebble Altar

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

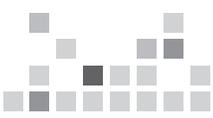
Give each child a Lesson 12 page from My Bible Hugs. Say: **The Israelites built an altar out of 12 stones from the Jordan River. Let’s make a mini altar on our My Bible Hugs pages to thank God, too.**

Center 1: Pebble Altar Supplies

My Bible Hugs
gray construction paper
glue

Center 1: Pebble Altar Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
12 pages from each
My Bible Hugs student
book, and write
children’s names on
them.



Give each child a sheet of gray construction paper. Lead the children in telling 12 things they're thankful to God for, and as each thing is mentioned have each child tear a small piece of paper from the larger sheet and crumple it to make a rock.

Show the children how to glue the rocks to their My Bible Hugs pages, and as they glue each rock, have them say, "Thank you, God."

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What things were you reminded to be thankful for in our activity?
- Why do you want to thank God for all these things?

Say: **We thought of a lot of things to thank God for, and that wasn't even close to everything we can thank God for. God's mighty hand cares for us every day. Let's**

► **REMEMBER TO THANK GOD, like the Israelites did with their rock altar.**

■ CENTER 2:

Rocky-River Snack

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

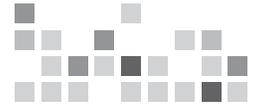
Have children clean their hands and then sit down for the snack. Say: **Today we're learning to ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD. Let's make a snack so we can thank God.**

Give each child a paper plate and a graham cracker. Show children how to use a craft stick to spread jelly on their graham crackers. Explain that the jelly represents the Jordan River. Then show children how to put banana slices on their crackers to represent the rocks the Israelites brought out of the Jordan River.

Lead children in a prayer to thank God, and let them eat.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **The Israelites used the rocks from the river to create an altar. The altar helped them ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD. Each time you eat a banana slice, say "thank you" to God.**



Center 2: Rocky-River Snack Supplies

-
- paper plates
 - graham crackers
 - craft sticks
 - jelly
 - banana slices
 - antibacterial gel
(optional)

! **ALLERGY
ALERT**





**Center 3: Thankful
Toss
Supplies**

lightweight ball

**Center 4: “Thank You”
Altar
Supplies**

paper plates
crayons
tape

CENTER 3:

Thankful Toss

What You’ll Do

Say: **God cares for us and helps us in so many ways, just as he did the Israelites. Let’s play a game that will help us ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD.**

Put children in a circle. Lead them in singing “Remember to Thank God” (not on the CD) while they toss a lightweight ball to each other. Sing to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell.”

 **Remember to thank God.
Remember to thank God.
God’s mighty hand cares for me.
Remember to thank God.**

Ask whoever is holding the ball when the song ends to thank God for something. Continue tossing the ball until all of the children have had a chance to catch the ball and thank God for something.

Talk With Kids

Say: **It’s great to thank God, like we did in our game. Actually, it’s really important to ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD. God cared for the Israelites, and he cares for us today.**

CENTER 4:

“Thank You” Altar

What You’ll Do

Say: **Let’s make a craft to help us ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD.**

Set out paper plates and crayons. Say: **Let’s pretend these are rocks for an altar. We’ll make an altar for our room to help us ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD.**

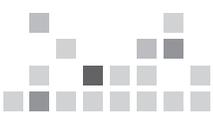
Have the children draw things they’re thankful for on the plates, such as their houses, families, pets, or something God made. When they’ve finished, have children tape their paper plates to a wall. Help children place the plates close together so they’re like an altar.

Talk With Kids

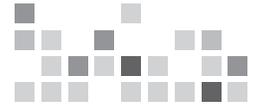
Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you draw on your rock?**
- **What are some ways you’ll thank God this week?**



Say: **You've thought of so many good reasons to thank God. God loves you and cares for you so much. It makes God so happy when you ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD.**



5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up their centers, bring everyone back to a circle area on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they remember about what they learned from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that we ► REMEMBER TO THANK GOD. I would like each of you to choose a way to thank God this week.**

Give kids these two challenges to choose from:

- **Give a piece of candy to a friend. Thank God for giving you wonderful friends.**
- **Help your mom or dad make dinner. Before you eat, remember to thank God for the food he gives you each day.**

Say: **If you want to give candy to a friend, circle the choice with one dot. If you want to help make dinner, circle the choice with two dots.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Hugs page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

Action Prayer

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Form a circle, and have the children sit down.

Say: **When we remember to thank God, it makes him happy. I'll pass the bendable man to one of you, and you will tell God "thank you" for something. Then you'll pass the bendable man to someone who hasn't prayed.**

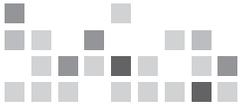
Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Hugs

Action Prayer Supplies

Teacher Pack
bendable man





Begin the prayer yourself, and then gently pass the bendable man to a child. Be sure everyone gets a chance to pray, and then have the group say, “Thank you, God, for everything! In Jesus’ name, amen.”

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Hugs pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage the parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

