**CROSSING THE JORDAN**

Sunday School Lesson 23

*Wandering in the Wilderness*

Joshua 3-4

6/15/2025

**Lesson Review:** In our previous lesson, we looked at the two \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who went into the city of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and met a harlot named \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The first thing we noted in this lesson was that Joshua showed his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in God by sending only two spies to Jericho. He sent the spies with a clear sense of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It’s likely that the use of two spies was an intentional \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the two spies who had given a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ report of the land of Canaan. By sending two spies, Joshua sent a clear message to the Israelites that there was only one acceptable report. Secondly, the Lord led the spies to an unlikely place of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Jericho. We noticed that the Lord \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the spies to the house of a harlot named Rahab. We also noticed that although God could have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the spies by various means, He allowed the opportunity for Rahab to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ her faith. Thirdly, the Lord led the spies to an unlikely place of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Jericho. When the spies went to Jericho, they really had no need for any \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ information about the city. The Lord would make it easy for the Israelites by bringing down the walls miraculously. This means that the purpose of the spies going to Jericho was to give them confirmation from the Lord. Rahab was the first person from an enemy nation to genuinely seek to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Israel. She provided the spies with the confirmation that the Lord had \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the city into the hands of the Israelites. Lastly, we noted that the Lord led the spies to an unlikely person in need of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Jericho. For today’s lesson, we will be looking at the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River.

1. **CROSSING THE JORDAN WAS THE OFFICIAL ENTRANCE INTO THE PROMISED LAND.**
2. **Notice that the Lord had promised everything on the other side of the Jordan River.** *Joshua 1:2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Numbers 34:12 And the border shall go down to Jordan, and the goings out of it shall be at the salt sea: this shall be your land with the coasts thereof round about.* God had clearly stated ahead of time that the land across the Jordan was theirs for the taking. He declared not only where they would go but what they would receive when they arrived. The Jordan was not a wall—it was a doorway into fulfillment. For Israel, the crossing was not just about geography but about obedience and faith in God's already-spoken Word. In the same way today, Christians must learn to walk forward when God says move, even if the journey seems uncertain. When God makes a promise, our job is not to question it. Just step forward.
3. **Notice that Joshua expected to see immediate wonders upon crossing the Jordan River*.*** *Joshua 3:5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.* Joshua spoke with great confidence about what God was going to do. He didn’t ask the people to get ready in case God moved; he asked them to prepare because God certainly would. His leadership inspired faith by looking forward with expectation, not hesitation. Joshua believed God was not only able but ready to work on their behalf. He assured the people that God would do wonders on that very next day. As far as we can tell, he had not yet been given any specific vision from the Lord. How could he be so confident that the Lord was going to do something? It was based solely on his faith in the Lord! Likewise, believers today must stop limiting God in what He can do. God still does wonders, but He often waits until we prepare our hearts for them.
4. **Notice that Joshua expected the people to be sanctified before they crossed the Jordan River.** *Joshua 3:5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.* Before God performed the miracle, He required the people to separate themselves from uncleanness and distraction. This act of sanctification showed that they took the Lord seriously and valued His presence and His righteousness. God’s wonders are not reserved for the careless or spiritually lazy. He chooses to work mightily among those who are consecrated and ready. Most Christians are eager and ready to see the Lord do a miracle like the crossing of the Jordan, but few Christians are willing to sanctify themselves for the Lord. If we want to see God move in our churches and families today, we must purify our hearts and renew our focus on Him. Spiritual preparation always precedes spiritual breakthrough.
5. **CROSSING THE JORDAN WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAGNIFY AND PRAISE THE LORD.**
6. **Notice that Joshua commanded for the ark of the covenant to go before the people to lead them into the Promised Land.** *Joshua 3:3 And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.* The ark was the visual reminder of God’s presence, and it went ahead of the people so they could clearly follow. They weren’t trusting in chariots or numbers. They were trusting in the Lord’s leadership. This moment declared to all of Israel that their victory depended solely on God's guidance. Joshua wanted to ensure that the Lord was glorified for what was about to be done as well as what had already been done. A Godly leader will always point the praise to the Lord above. Mankind’s purpose in this world is to glorify and praise the Lord.
7. **Notice that the Lord caused for the ark of the covenant to stay in the midst of the Jordan River until all had passed through.** *Joshua 3:16 That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. 17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.* God didn’t simply clear the path and move on. He remained in the middle of it until the work was complete. The priests bearing the ark stood as visible assurance that God would not leave anyone behind. This was a powerful display of God's faithfulness and enduring presence. From the first to the last, God ensured that all of His people crossed safely. We serve a God who doesn’t just open doors, but He also walks with us through them. In every trial and transition, His presence stays with us until we are fully on the other side.
8. **Notice that because of Joshua’s desire to magnify the Lord God of Israel, God promised that He would begin to magnify Joshua among the people.** *Joshua 3:7 And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.* Joshua never sought personal fame or glory; he simply wanted to obey and exalt the Lord. As a result, God chose to elevate him in the eyes of the people so they would know he was the chosen leader. The miracle that followed validated both God’s power and Joshua’s position. Just as the Lord had exalted Moses, He was going to exalt Joshua. True spiritual influence is given by God, not claimed by man. Christians today must remember that God honors those who honor Him. Promotion in God’s eyes always follows humility and obedience.
9. **CROSSING THE JORDAN WAS AN ONGOING TRIBUTE TO WHAT THE LORD HAD DONE.**
10. **Notice that the Lord commanded the people to build a sign as a memorial to their children of what God had done for them.** *Joshua 4:6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? 7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.* God instructed the people to gather stones from the Jordan and stack them as a lasting reminder. These stones were not just for decoration; they were conversation starters for future generations. They would prompt questions that allowed parents to pass down stories of God’s faithfulness. God’s works should never be forgotten. They should be celebrated and shared. Today, we must build spiritual memorials in our families through testimony, prayer, and consistent teaching. If we don’t tell the next generation what God has done, the memory of His power may fade.
11. **Notice that the tribute was to be recognized by every tribe of Israel.** *Joshua 4:2 Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, 3 And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night.* Each tribe had a representative in the memorial, emphasizing that this miracle was not isolated to a few. It belonged to the whole nation. Every person, from every family, had crossed the river and needed to remember it. God didn’t show Himself strong for just one group. He acted on behalf of all His people. This ensured that no tribe would be left out of the testimony or the responsibility of remembrance. In our churches today, every believer has a part in celebrating and remembering what God has done. We each carry a stone of testimony of God’s goodness and grace.