

JOSHUA'S FAREWELL

JOSHUA 23-24



CHRIST CONNECTION: Joshua reminded God's people to worship and obey God. After Jesus' death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and left them with a task: obey Him by telling others about Him.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why can we trust God? We can trust God because He does what He says He will do.

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 24:8

STORY POINT: Joshua reminded the people to worship and obey God.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The book of Joshua ends with a farewell address to God's people about 20 years after they first found rest in the Promised Land. Joshua took one last opportunity to challenge the people to continue following the Lord and remind them how they were called to live in view of what God had already accomplished on their behalf.

What did Joshua commission the Israelites to do in his farewell address? How does this parallel with how Christ followers should live today?

Joshua spent his last moments on earth reminding the Israelites of the grace God had shown them by giving them the land He promised to Abraham long ago. Joshua led them through the history of their people, through the patriarchs and battles that brought them to the land. He also impressed upon them the truth that God's promise to bless them had been fulfilled, but the rest they were experiencing in the land was contingent upon their covenant loyalty to worship God alone.

The Israelites were commissioned to get rid of the foreign gods that were among them and turn their hearts to the Lord (Joshua 24:23). We, like the Israelites, are called to lead lives of obedient worship, turning away from idols in our midst. By the grace of God, we can have hearts that desire to follow His commands through faith-filled obedience as we live through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lead boys and girls to see the awe-inspiring deliverance God extends to the people He has sworn to provide for—those who place their faith in His Son. Help preschoolers see that God's greatest act of love is found in Jesus, whose sacrifice atoned for the sins of His people long ago and for us today. Ask the Lord to instill upon the children in your class a deep desire to know and worship Him in light of the promise of eternal life in Christ's presence.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, Allergy Alert, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, tape, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map, snacks, paper cups, napkins.



WELCOME

Welcome

- "Strong and Mighty (Psalm 24:8)" song

Activity Page

- "Find the Differences" Activity Page, 1 per child

Create with play dough

- waxed paper sheets (optional)
- permanent marker (optional)
- Unit 7 Bible Story Picture Posters

Transition

- countdown video (optional)



LOVE

Snack and talk

- hand sanitizer (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster

Decorate a stone

- tablecloth
- smocks
- smooth river stones or rocks, 1 per child
- washable paint
- paintbrushes
- paper plates
- paint pens (optional)
- stickers (optional)



LEARN

Learn about the Bible

- bookmark
- Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline

Tell the Bible story

- Bible Story Picture Poster
- "Joshua's Farewell" video (optional)
- storytelling tips props (optional)

Practice the key passage

- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- "Strong and Mighty (Psalm 24:8)" song

Learn the Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Missions moment

- "South Asian Peoples" missions video



LIVE

Worship the Lord

- rhythm instruments
- streamers or scarves

Make a banner

- butcher paper
- washable ink pads
- wet wipes

Assemble puzzles

- "Bible Story Snapshots" printable, 1 copy on cardstock
- manila envelopes, 5

Transition

- coloring page, 1 per child
- "Strong and Mighty (Psalm 24:8)" song
- Big Picture Cards for Families



WELCOME Preschoolers

Post an Allergy Alert, if needed. Set out supplies to engage preschoolers as they arrive. Play music as you welcome preschoolers. Greet children by name at eye level. Follow your church's security procedures.

1 ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete "Find the Differences" on the Activity Page.

SAY “ Today we will continue learning about a man named Joshua. Joshua led God’s people, the Israelites, into the Promised Land. Joshua gathered the people together when he was old to tell them some important things before he died. He reminded them to keep worshiping the one true God and not to worship different, false gods. ”

2 SESSION STARTER

Use one or both of the following options to engage curiosity about today’s Bible story.

DRAW YOUR FAMILY



Distribute copy paper and crayons to preschoolers. Invite them to draw a picture of their family on the paper. Lead boys and girls to share their drawings with each other, highlighting some of the people who are in their families. Be sensitive to preschoolers’ family situations.

SAY “ Joshua gathered the Israelites to tell them important things before he died. **JOSHUA REMINDED THE PEOPLE TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** He told the people that he and his family would worship God only. He encouraged them to do the same thing. ”

CREATE WITH PLAY DOUGH

Prior to the session, write God in large letters on six pieces of paper or waxed paper sheets. Invite boys and girls to use play dough to form the name God using the prepared papers as a guide. As preschoolers create with play dough, engage them in conversations about things they know about God. Point to the Bible Story Picture Posters from this unit and encourage them to recall some of the things God did for the Israelites as they entered the Promised Land.

SAY “ Joshua talked with the Israelites to remind them of all God had done for them. God had brought His people out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and into the Promised Land. God had kept His promise to His people. Joshua told them to worship only the one true God. ”

3 TRANSITION TO LEARN

Gain preschoolers’ attention by showing the countdown video, turning the lights off and on, or clapping a simple rhythm for children to copy. Invite preschoolers to wave good-bye as they transition to Learn.

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





LEARN the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Lead preschoolers to say “goodbye” in several languages. Use some of the following examples: Spanish—Adiós (aa-dee-ows); French—Au revoir (oh-ruh-vwahr); Swahili—Kwaheri (kwa-HE-ree); Japanese—Sayōnara (sai-uh-naa-ruh), and German—Auf Wiedersehen (ouf-vē'dər-zā'ən).

SAY “There are many times we have to say goodbye. Sometimes we say goodbye knowing we will see the other person very soon. Other times we say goodbye when we will be gone for a long time. It was time for Joshua to say goodbye to the Israelites as he grew older. He wanted to tell them some important things to remember.”

2 LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE

Place a bookmark at Joshua 23 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY “Today’s Bible story comes from the Old Testament book of Joshua. The book of Joshua tells the story of God’s people, the Israelites, entering the Promised Land. The Bible is God’s Word, and it is completely true. The stories really happened; the people really lived.”

Point to the Bible story picture on the Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

3 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Tell the following Bible story using the provided storytelling tips or show the video. Use the bold version of the Bible story for younger preschoolers.

JOSHUA’S FAREWELL

“Joshua was getting old. One day, Joshua gathered all of the Israelites. He had some important things to tell them. Joshua said, “Remember what God has done for you. When you were in battle, God fought for you! Do everything God told you to do. Do not disobey God, and do not turn away from God. Love the LORD your God.”

Joshua said, “God has never broken a promise to you.” Then Joshua reminded the people of everything God had done for them in the past: God had called Abraham and given him a son, Isaac. God had given Isaac two sons, Jacob and Esau. God had rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians. God had done so many great things for His people!

Joshua said to the people, “Will you worship the one true God or false gods? As for me and my family, we will worship the LORD.”

The people replied, “We will not worship false gods! We know how much God has done for us, and we love Him!” The people remembered that God had helped them win battles against their enemies. They remembered how He protected them as they traveled.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Joshua gave the people a warning, “If you do worship other gods, God will turn against you. He will destroy you!”

The people said again, “We will worship the LORD and obey Him!”

On that day, **Joshua set up a large stone under an oak tree and said, “When you see this stone, remember that you promised to worship the LORD. God always keeps His promises.” Then Joshua sent the people back to their homes.** ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Tell the story as Joshua: Invite a male adult to dress-up in Bible times clothing and tell the Bible story as he pretends to be Joshua.

Use active listening: Invite preschoolers to gently tap their heads when they hear the word “remember.”

4 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Joshua reminded God’s people to worship and obey God. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and left them with a task: obey Him by telling others about Him. ”

5 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Joshua told the Israelites to remember all the great things God had done for them. Who did Joshua tell the Israelites to worship? (the one true God) The people promised to worship God and obey Him. What did Joshua set up to help the people remember to worship God? (a large stone) Before he died, **JOSHUA REMINDED THE PEOPLE TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** How can we worship and obey God? [Allow responses.] ”

6 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Place the Key Passage Marker at Psalm 24:8. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Guide preschoolers to say the key passage from memory using the motions created in the first session (if available). Assist as needed. Offer shorter phrases for preschoolers to repeat if necessary.

SAY “ Joshua reminded the Israelites of how great and powerful God is. As Joshua led the people into the Promised Land, God showed that He is strong and mighty by doing many miracles. Joshua wanted the people to remember God and worship Him only. ”

Sing the key passage song, “Strong and Mighty (Psalm 24:8).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

7 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

SAY “ Our big picture question asks, **Why can we trust God? We can trust God because He does what He says He will do.** Joshua trusted God throughout His life. God kept His promises to Joshua and to the Israelites. The people agreed to worship God alone because they remembered all of the ways God had helped them. God did what He said He would do, and the Israelites trusted Him. We can trust God too. He keeps His promises and does what He says He will do. ”

8 MISSIONS MOMENT

Show the “South Asian Peoples” missions video.

SAY “ Aadya is a woman from South Asia who tells people in her country about Jesus. Missionaries Clark and Elizabeth Atwood are training Aadya and other church leaders to help them know how to tell people about Jesus. ”

Pray South Asian church leaders will remain brave and strong so more people can hear about Jesus.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 PRAY

Invite preschoolers to close their eyes and think about God as they talk with Him.

SAY “ God, thank You for the ways You take care of us. You do great things, and we want to worship and obey You. Help us follow You in all we do. Amen. ”

2 SNACK AND TALK



Post an Allergy Alert. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Serve a snack. Show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

SAY “ What was your favorite part of today’s Bible story? ”

SAY “ What did you learn about God in today’s Bible story? ”

SAY “ Who did the Israelites promise to worship? ”

SAY “ **Why can we trust God? We can trust God because He does what He says He will do.** ”

3 DECORATE A STONE

Cover a table with a tablecloth and assist preschoolers with placing a smock over their clothing. Distribute a stone to each preschooler. Invite boys and girls to use washable paint and paintbrushes or paint pens to decorate the stones. (Note: If your preschoolers are younger, you can choose to use stickers instead.)

SAY “ **JOSHUA REMINDED THE PEOPLE TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** Joshua knew he would soon die, and he wanted to make sure the Israelites knew what to do and who to worship. God’s people promised to worship the one true God. As a way to remember their promise, Joshua set up a large stone. Just like this stone reminded the Israelites to worship and obey God, these stones we decorated can be our reminders to worship and obey God too. Where will you place your stone? [Allow responses.] ”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

- 1 Choose the activities that best fit your group, space, available resources, and time constraints. Set up activities in one of these ways: as a group, all at the same time; in small groups that rotate through each activity; or set up as centers, allowing preschoolers to browse and choose.

TRUE AND FALSE



Ask preschoolers to tell what it means if something is true and if something is false. Mention that if something is true, it happened. If something is false, it did not happen. Guide preschoolers to listen carefully as you say different statements from the story. If the statement is true, instruct preschoolers to give two thumbs-up. If it is false, lead them to give two thumbs-down. Use some of the following statements or create your own:

True: Joshua was old when he spoke to the Israelites. Joshua told the people to remember all God had done for them. Joshua told the people to worship the one true God. Joshua set up a stone for the people to remember to worship only God.

False: Joshua only told a few people to remember what God had done for them. The people said they would only worship false gods. Joshua told the people to do whatever they wanted. Joshua took a picture of the people to remind them to worship only God.

SAY “ Joshua gathered the Israelites to remind them of some very important things before he died. He wanted them to remember to worship God alone and not false gods. The people said they would worship the one true God. Joshua set up a large stone to help them remember that they promised to worship and obey God. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples. He reminded them to obey Him by telling others about Him. ”

WORSHIP THE LORD

Lead preschoolers to worship God as you play familiar worship songs. Provide instruments for preschoolers to play and streamers or scarves for them to wave. Play several songs so preschoolers have the opportunity to sing, play instruments, and wave streamers.

SAY “ **JOSHUA REMINDED THE PEOPLE TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** One of the ways we can worship God is by singing. After Joshua gave his farewell speech to the Israelites, he set up a large stone to help them remember the promise they had made to worship and obey God. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and left them with a task: obey Him by telling others about Him. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

MAKE A BANNER

Write *We will worship the Lord!* in large letters on a sheet of butcher paper. Invite preschoolers to press their hands in washable ink pads and make their handprints on the banner. Under their handprints, assist them in writing their names as best as they can. Keep wet wipes nearby to clean messy hands. Display the banner for grown-ups to see at pickup. (Note: If a child does not want to put their hands on the ink pad, trace their hands on the banner instead.)

SAY “ Joshua told the Israelites, ‘As for me and my family, we will worship the Lord.’ **JOSHUA REMINDED THE PEOPLE TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** God wants us to worship and obey Him too. We can trust that what God says for us to do in His Word is good and right. God is worthy of our worship because He is trustworthy. He does what He says He will do. This handprint banner can remind us to worship and obey the one true God. ”

ASSEMBLE PUZZLES

Before the session, print a copy of the “Bible Story Snapshots” printable on cardstock. Cut apart the squares at the bottom of each page. Place each picture and its matching squares in a manila envelope, five total. Invite boys and girls to assemble the puzzles by matching the square snapshots to the picture. As the pictures are complete, review the Bible story the picture represents. Talk about how God did what He said He would do in each of the pictures.

SAY “ Throughout this unit we have learned that God is powerful and trustworthy. He does what He says He will do. God helped the Israelites as they entered the Promised Land. They crossed the Jordan River on dry ground. They marched around the city of Jericho, and the walls came down. God made the sun and moon stand still so they could win a battle. God was with His people. He took care of them and gave them the land He had promised. ”

2 TRANSITION

Invite preschoolers to complete their coloring pages. Consider leading preschoolers to sing the key passage song or involving them in a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Give parents the completed Activity Page. Distribute the Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to review the Bible story and engage with the family discussion starters during the week.