

RIVER CROSSING

Joshua 3: 1-17; 4: 1-24

Joshua got up early in the morning, and the people moved their camp from Shittim to the Jordan River. After three days at this new camp, the officers went through the camp and commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests of the Lord carrying it, you must leave where you are camped and follow after it. Keep a space between you and it of three thousand feet, so that everyone can see where to go, for you have not passed this way before."

Joshua told the people, "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." Then he told the priests to lift up the ark and pass with it in front of the people.

The Lord told Joshua, "This day I will begin to honor you in the sight of Israel, so that they will know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. You are to command the priests to bring the ark to the brink of the Jordan River and that then they are to step in."

Joshua commanded the children of Israel to come and listen to the words of the Lord your God. He said, "This is how you will know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites from before you. Look, the ark of the Lord of all the earth passes over before you. Choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from each tribe. It shall be that as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that carry the ark touch the water of the river, that the that waters will be cut off from their source, and they will stand up in a heap."

After Joshua had finished speaking, the people packed up their camp and got ready to cross over the River Jordan. The priests that carried the ark went before the people.

As soon as the feet of the priests carrying the ark touched the brim of the water (for the Jordan River was overflowing its banks at this time of harvest in the land), the waters which came from upriver stood up and piled upon a high heap near the city of Adam beside Zaretan. Those waters that were below the spot where Israel was, which ran toward the salt sea, stopped and were cut off.

The priests that carried the ark of the Lord stood on dry ground in the middle of the river bed while all the Israelites passed over on dry ground to the other side.

After this, when all the people had crossed the River Jordan, the Lord spoke to Joshua saying, "Take the twelve men who were chosen, one from each tribe, and command them to each one take a rock out of the middle of the Jordan where the priest's feet stood. They are to carry the twelve rocks up out of the river bed and place them on the shore near where they will camp tonight."

Joshua commanded the men to gather the rocks as the Lord had said. He told them that this would be a reminder to all the people of what the Lord had done for them at the river. When their children would ask in years to come, "Why are these rocks here?" Then the fathers were to tell the children how the Lord had brought them safely through the middle of the river.

The children of Israel did as Joshua commanded and set up those twelve rocks as a memorial. Joshua also set up twelve rocks in the middle of the river at the spot where the priest's feet had stood with the ark of the Lord.

On that day the Lord honored Joshua in the eyes of the people as he had promised. Then all the people feared Joshua as they had feared Moses.

The Lord commanded Joshua to have the priests come up out of the river. As soon as their feet touched the bank of the river, the waters returned to their original course and overflowed the banks again.

God had the memorial of rocks placed near the banks of the river so that all the future generations of Israel would know how their God had dried up the waters of the river, making it possible for them to pass over on dry land. As the Lord had dried up the waters of the Red Sea, so he had dried up the waters of the Jordan River.

God wanted all the people of the earth to know that the hand of the Lord is mighty: so that you might fear the Lord your God. for ever.

The Lord wants each of us to remember all the wonders he has done for his people throughout the ages. it is important to study his word and think on all the goodness he has shone to his people. He wants us also to remember how he has worked wonders in each of our lives, starting with the most amazing wonder of all, giving us a new heart and a new way of thinking, when we trust in him for salvation from our sin.

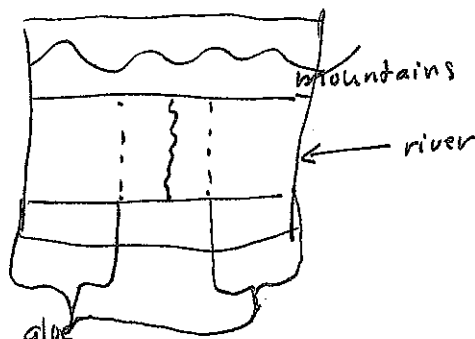
LEARN: Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore.

Remember his marvelous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.

Psalm 105: 4, 5

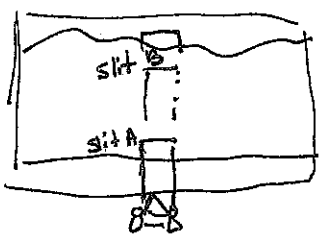
You will need: a sheet of sandy colored construction paper, a sheet of blue construction paper, and a one inch wide 8 inch long strip of sandy construction paper.

1. Draw and color your mountains.
2. Cut out Jordan River as indicated, leaving fold up sides free - glue down the rest of water into river bed.
3. On dotted line fold blue paper back on top of glued blue paper



4. Cut slits as marked in river bed beneath blue paper.

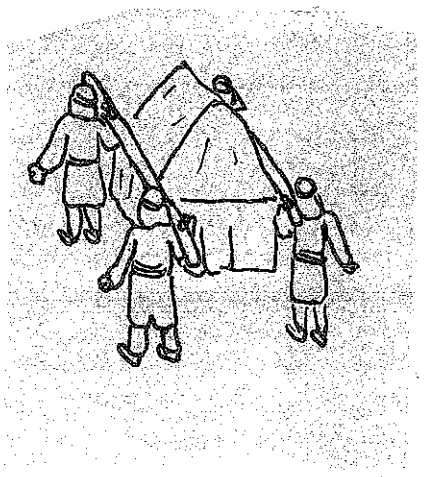
5. Color + Cut out priests - Glue them to sandy colored strip to line marked.
6. Slip the ^{top of} strip through bottom slit A pull up behind paper, then slip top of strip to the front through slit B.



7. Now move priests with ark back + forth to tell story.

8. Use colors to shade and define picture.

9. Draw the 12 rods of Israelites picked up in the river bed.



Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his face evermore.
Remember his marvellous works that he
hath done;
his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.
Psalm 105: 4, 5



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