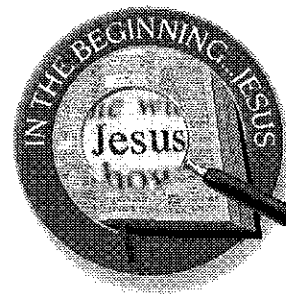


# In the Beginning...Jesus

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## Lesson 23

### God Leads Israel into the Promised Land

#### Themes:

- God is faithful to all His promises.
- God promised to send Israel a new Prophet.
- God chose Joshua to lead His people into the promised land.
- God's people must trust and obey Him in all things.

#### Scripture:

Deuteronomy 18:15; portions of Joshua

#### Memory Verse:

John 1:4 (and review verses 1-3)

#### Visuals for Lesson:

- Bible.
- *In the Beginning...Jesus* poster.
- Resource Packet:
  - The following signs from the previous lesson, taped to the wall in the following order: GOD IS FAITHFUL, GOD IS MERCIFUL, GOD IS GOOD, ISRAEL GRUMBLES, ISRAEL REBELS, GOD'S JUDGMENT, GOD IS FAITHFUL, GOD IS MERCIFUL, GOD IS GOOD.
  - ISRAEL TRUSTS AND OBEYS, ISRAEL INHERITS THE LAND.
  - JESUS IS THE KEY visual (from previous lessons).
  - Bible Clue Card #26.
- Magnifying glass (for use in reading clue card).
- Map of the Middle East.
- Whistle.
- An uncooked egg (unbroken, in its shell) placed on a plate.
- A clear, plastic food storage container (2-quart size) with lid.
- Bag of flavored, miniature marshmallows.
- 2 cloves of garlic peeled and sliced in half—Peel and slice the cloves just before class so they retain as much of their odor as possible.

## Lesson

Point to the visuals taped on the wall from the previous lesson. Recall that in our last lesson we learned about patterns that could be found as God led the people of Israel through the wilderness toward the promised land of Canaan. Because of the repeated pattern of Israel's grumbling and rebellion, God sent judgment on them. For example, instead of the trip taking a few months, it took 40 years. And none of the people who wandered in the wilderness during that time, except for Joshua and Caleb, would enter the promised land. Even Moses would not be allowed to enter the land, but would die within sight of it.

*Do you think Israel's pattern of sin, grumbling, and rebellion was a surprise to God? Why not? Would Israel ever learn to listen to God and trust and obey His commands? And what will happen to Israel after Moses dies? Who would instruct the people of Israel? If they wouldn't listen to the instructions God gave Moses, who will they listen to?*

**Display Bible Clue Card #26** and choose a child to insert the card behind the red paper in the **JESUS IS THE KEY** visual to reveal:

*Scripture: Deuteronomy 18:15  
Clue under Window # 15*

Have the children turn to **Deuteronomy 18:15**:

***The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to Him you shall listen.***

Explain that these words were spoken by Moses and told of a time coming in Israel's future, when God would give His people a new Prophet from among the men of Israel—someone like Moses—and the people must listen to this new Prophet. This new Prophet will speak God's words and commands to Israel. Open Window #15 to reveal: **GOD'S PROPHET**.

*This new Prophet was a Man who would come to Israel many, many years after the death of Moses. What was Israel to do while they waited for this new Prophet?*

Have the children turn to the book of Joshua in their Bibles. Point out that this book continues the story of the Israelites' journey to the land God promised to them. **Display** the map and show the journey from Mt. Sinai to the western shore of the Jordan river (by Jericho).

Read **Joshua 1:1-3, 5**:

***After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses...No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you."***

*After Moses died, who did God choose to lead His people? [Joshua.] Although the land of Canaan was filled with strong and mighty people, what is God promising Joshua? Will Joshua have to depend on his own strength and the strength of the armies of Israel in order to take this land? [Allow the children to respond.] Because of these promises, what should Joshua do in response?*

Choose children to read **Joshua 1:6-7**:

***Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses My servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.***

Explain that God wanted Joshua to respond to His promises with strength and courage while at the same time walk in obedience to His commands. God wanted Joshua to understand that God is greater than any strong city and mighty army. Joshua can be strong and courageous because the almighty and faithful God can be depended upon to keep His promise to give Israel the land. But Israel must be careful to trust and obey God.

*So God led Joshua and the people of Israel to the shores of the Jordan River and there they camped outside the mighty city of Jericho. (Point to this area on the map.)*

*Pretend for a minute that you are part of an army that will be going into battle against a huge, strong, fierce enemy army. What might you be doing in order to prepare for the battle? (Allow the children to give a few responses.) Here is what God told Israel to do in order to prepare for their battle against Jericho:*

Quickly read **Joshua 6:1-5**:

***Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in. And the LORD said to***

***Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him."***

*What seems wrong with this plan? Can walking around a city and then shouting really cause it to fall flat? If you were a commander of an army, would this be the way you would plan to defeat a strong and mighty city? Why not? If you were a soldier, would you wonder about the wisdom of this plan? Why was God giving His people these instructions? What's the point?*

**Illustration:** Choose a child to come up and hand him the whistle. Next show him the egg on the table. Tell him that if he walks around the egg two times and then blows the whistle two times while facing the egg, the egg will break. What does he think of this idea? [Allow the child to respond and then the other children.] Would he seem silly if he follows these instructions? Can an egg really break from the sound of a whistle? Point out that the child will either trust you and do what you have said, or he will think you're being silly and that you are trying to trick him. Is he willing to trust you and do this? If he is unwilling to do this, choose a child who is willing. After he has followed your exact instructions, take the egg and hold it above the plate and drop it.

*Did my promise come true? Yes. Was it the whistle that broke the egg? No, but I broke the egg in response to [child's name] trusting me and obeying my instructions even when they seemed silly.*

Emphasize that the people of Israel understood that huge, strong, stone walls do not fall down by shouting voices. But this was exactly what God was commanding them to do. God wanted them to understand that the way to defeat the city of Jericho was through trusting God and obeying His commands, even when those commands seemed silly. God will bring down the walls of Jericho in response to His people's trust and obedience.

*Will Israel trust God this time? Will they do things God's way even if that way doesn't make sense to them?*

Quickly read **Joshua 6:15-16, 20:**

***On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on***

*that day that they marched around the city seven times. And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city.*

*So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city.*

Point to the **GOD IS FAITHFUL, GOD IS GOOD** signs on the wall. God had proved to His people over and over that He is faithful, merciful, and good, and this time Israel responded to God by trusting and obeying Him. **Display ISRAEL TRUSTS AND OBEYS GOD** and tape it to the right of **GOD IS GOOD**. And in response to their trust and obedience, what did God do? **Display ISRAEL INHERITS THE LAND** and tape it to the right of **ISRAEL TRUSTS AND OBEYS**.

Emphasize that God had kept His promise from long ago to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Through God's almighty power, He brought down the walls of Jericho, and God's chosen nation, Israel, went in and took the land God had promised to them.

*After Israel captured the city of Jericho, was it finally time for Israel to settle in, relax, and enjoy their new land? Was God's promise now complete?*

Explain that Jericho was just one nation living in the land of Canaan. There were many other enemy nations living throughout the land. Should Israel be content with this one victory? What did God want them to do next?

Read **Joshua 8:1-2a**:

*And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear and do not be dismayed. Take all the fighting men with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his land. And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king."*

*Was Israel supposed to just sit back and relax? No! They still had a job to do. God commanded them to continue to go throughout the land of Canaan and drive out the other nations and take possession of all the land that God had promised to them.*

Point out that the rest of the book of Joshua describes how the tribes of Israel, under Joshua's command, went throughout Canaan and drove out their enemies and settled in the land. This took many years, but God was with Joshua and the armies of Israel and brought them victory after victory when they walked in obedience to Him. By the time Joshua was an old man about to die Israel occupied most of the land God had

promised them. However, there were still a few nations left for Israel to defeat.

*Comment: Maybe the Israelites would be tired of war by this time. They had MOST of the land that God had promised to them. Why not be satisfied with that and settle down and enjoy some peace and quiet? Would it be okay to stop now?*

Explain that Joshua was concerned that after he died, Israel wouldn't finish God's command to possess ALL of the land that God had promised them. Joshua knew this would be wrong—he knew what would happen to the Israelites. So, before Joshua died he called together all the leaders of Israel and told them this:

Choose children to read **Joshua 23:11-13**:

***Be very careful, therefore, to love the LORD your God. For if you turn back and cling to the remnant of these nations remaining among you and make marriages with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations before you, but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good ground that the LORD your God has given you.***

*What would happen if Israel did not drive out the other nations? What's wrong with living among these other nations? How could they become a "snare and a trap" for Israel?*

**Illustration:** Display the bag of marshmallows and the clear, plastic container. Explain that the marshmallows are a treat for next week's class time. Open the bag and pour the marshmallows into the container. Next, show the children the garlic cloves. Point out that even though the garlic is not for a treat next week, you need a place to store it until next week. Hold up the container of marshmallows and comment:

*I still have plenty of room in this container. Since marshmallows and garlic are both food, there is no problem with storing them together, right?*

Place the garlic in with the marshmallows and seal the container. Tell the children to remind you to pass out the marshmallows for a treat next week. Do the children see any problem with this? They will have to wait until next week to find the answer!

### **Application**

- Choose children to read the following verses: **Joshua 1:6, 7, 9, 18**. What key theme is repeated in these verses? Why are the people reminded of this over and over? Why should they be strong and courageous? Should

they be strong and courageous because they are a great people and can “beat up anybody”? Read and discuss verse **5**. What warning is given in verse **7**? Why is this important? Point out that these words were written for the people of Israel long ago as they faced a terrible enemy. Are these words still true today? Can you think of situations in which verse 9 would be important for your own life?

- Pretend that you are a strong soldier of Jericho peering down over the tall, strong walls of the city on the Israelites. Would their plan of “attack”—walking around the city with their Ark and priests—appear stupid to you? Would you even wonder if they were some kind of crazy people? The Bible says that the people were in fear of these Israelites. Why? Read **Joshua 2:10-11**. What kind of reputation had God gotten throughout the land?
- If you have one available, show the children a scrapbook or family photo album. Point out that the photos show real events and are reminders of vacations, birthdays, weddings, etc. Why is it important to remember these big events? What does it help us understand? Read **Joshua 23:14**. Pretend you were an Israelite living back in the times of Moses and Joshua. What would you have taken pictures of? What would these pictures remind you of? How would these pictures prove God’s faithfulness? Mercy? And goodness? How has God shown this verse to still be true today? Read verses **15-16**. What do these verses warn Israel about? Do some people assume they can receive all the good things God has promised without trusting and obeying Him? What might this look like?
- **WORKBOOK**—Have the children turn to Lesson 23 in their workbooks. Have them write today’s clue in the notebook. Recall what a prophet of God is. [Someone God chooses as His special messenger or spokesman to communicate His words to people.] How could this clue possibly point to Jesus and His death on the cross?
- **WORKBOOK**—Have the children complete their workbook page by matching each term or name on the left side of the page with its corresponding explanation on the right side of the page. These terms were found in today’s lesson or previous lessons. New or unfamiliar terms and their explanations can be found in the following texts: **Numbers 20:11-12; Joshua 3:13; Joshua 7:20-21**.
- Review **Joshua 1:7** and then recount the story of Israel’s defeat at Ai in **Joshua 7**. Should Israel think they could be victorious apart from trust in God and obedience to His commands? Have you ever had that kind of attitude toward God? (Believing He is some kind of “magic genie” who should grant your wishes despite your disobedience toward Him?) How would this kind of attitude be demonstrated in how you speak and act?

What did God do to show Israel that His word and commands must not be treated as just suggestions?

- Briefly review the account of Rahab and the spies from **Joshua 2**. Then read **Joshua 6:25**. What is so amazing about this story? [Rahab was born a Canaanite—an enemy of Israel.] Could she have changed the fact that she was born outside the nation of Israel? Could she have changed the fact that she was born into a nation that was Israel's enemy? Did God make a way for her to become a part of His special people? Read **Hebrews 11:31**. Can you think of why the example of Rahab being included in God's chosen people would be important for you? Read and discuss **Galatians 3:7**.
- Choose children to read **Joshua 23:6-13**. What problem is Joshua concerned about in these verses? How can the illustration of the marshmallows help us to understand this warning from Joshua? Can you imagine what will happen, if anything, to the marshmallows by next week? Can you imagine how the other nations could become a snare and a trap for Israel? Can you think of how these verses might apply to a Christian living here and now? Are there "snares and traps" Christians must be aware of? How can Christians guard themselves against these? (An example of this can be found in **Ephesians 6:18**. If you use an illustration like this, be sure to make it practical. For example; watching too much television can become a type of snare as Satan uses the images, stories, and commercials to try to tug our hearts and minds away from the holiness and goodness of God.)

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