

## 45 Crossing the Jordan

MEMORY VERSE: The hand of the Lord is mighty. Joshua 4:24

SCRIPTURES: Joshua 2 - 4

AIM: To remember to always trust God's promises.

After the death of Moses, God said to Joshua, "Now that Moses is dead, you are the new leader of Israel. Be strong and of good courage. I will be with you just as I was with Moses. You shall bring the people into the land that I have promised them."

But before they could enter the land, the Israelites had to conquer the strong walled city of Jericho which stood just inside Canaan's border.

First, Joshua sent out spies as Moses had done so many years before. Joshua chose two men and said to them, "Explore the land on the other side of the river and see how strong the city of Jericho is."

The men pretended to be ordinary travelers. Once inside Jericho they looked for a place to stay. The two spies found their way to the house of a woman named Rahab. She lived in a house that was built right into the wall that surrounded the city. But news of their arrival had reached the king of Jericho. He had been watching the large Israelite encampment moving closer and closer to the city, and he had his own men on the look out for any strangers.

The king's men rushed to him and said. "Some Israelites are here spying in the city. They are in Rahab's house."

The king sent men to arrest the spies. When they reached Rahab's house they banged on the front door shouting, "The king demands that you bring out the two men that are staying here. We know they are spies."

The Israelites thought, "We're trapped." But to their surprise, Rahab hid them on the roof, then hurried downstairs and told the men, "Yes, two men were here but they have just left. If you hurry you should catch them."

The two men asked her why she had risked her life to protect two foreign enemies. "I will tell you why," she said. "I know the Lord has promised you this land and most of my people are afraid of your people. We have heard how God divided the sea for you and brought you through the wilderness. Your God is Lord of the heavens and the earth beneath."

"When you attack this city promise me that you will save my life and the life of my family."

The men agreed. "If you tell no one about our visit we will see that you and your family are not harmed."

Before they left, the spies said, "You must tie a piece of scarlet cord in this window so we will know your house from a distance when we march against the city. Whoever is inside the house will be saved."

When the two spies returned to Joshua they gave their report. "God has given us the city. All the people of Jericho are afraid of us."

Soon, it was time to cross the Jordan River. But how were they to get across with all the children and supplies, as well as their flocks and herds? God told Joshua that He would show Israel that how He was with him just as He was with Moses. God was going to do a big miracle. He told Joshua to have the priests carry the ark of the covenant to the edge of the river, with all of Israel following them then... **WALK RIGHT INTO THE WATER!**

The priests did as Joshua commanded. They marched right up to the river. As soon as their feet touched the water the river stopped flowing and the water began to pile up. Everybody was filled with wonder. It was like the crossing of the Red Sea! All the people crossed the river on dry ground!

Before the priests left the river, Joshua called twelve men. "Bring twelve boulders out of the river and stack them on the shore. When your children ask, 'What are those rocks for?' tell them, 'This is to remind us how God brought us across the river into the Promised Land.'"

So it was done, and as soon as the priests came up out of the river bed with the Ark of God, the water that had piled up flooded back as before.

God had shown the people that He was with Joshua as He had been with Moses.

God wants to be with us in our daily lives as well. All we have to do is invite Him.