Lesson

Engaging Introduction

Hey kids! Today, we're going to step into an exciting story from the Bible. Have you ever seen a river? A big, wide, rushing river? Imagine that you need to cross it, but there's no bridge or boat. Yikes, right? Well, our story is about a time when the people of Israel faced a situation just like that. They needed to get across a huge river called the Jordan. But instead of feeling scared or stuck, they had someone amazing guiding them—God!

Now, to help us understand what happened, let's think about a time you had to do something big or a little scary. Ask yourself: did you have anyone helping you, like a teacher or a parent? That's how the Israelites felt. They trusted that God would help them because He had done amazing things before.

Today, we'll hear how God showed His power and love by making a path through the Jordan River for His people. And not only that, but we'll see how He helped the people remember this special moment forever. Like a birthday that comes every year, God wanted them to have a way to remember His big miracle.

So, get your imagination ready, and prepare to walk with me into this amazing chapter of the Bible: Joshua chapter 4. We're going to learn why this story is important for the Israelites and why it's important for us too. Let's jump into the story and discover the wonder of God's miracles!

Main Teaching Points

Point 1: God's Instructions to Joshua
First, let's look at what God told Joshua, the leader of the Israelites. God instructed Joshua to choose twelve men, one from each tribe, to gather large stones from the riverbed. This was not just any riverbed but the place where the priests stood with the Ark of the Covenant as the river stopped flowing. Imagine a giant invisible hand holding back the water just for you to walk across! God was showing His mighty power.

Joshua followed God's instruction because he trusted God. He knew that God's words are always true. God wanted the Israelites to use the stones to create a memorial. Do you know what a memorial is? It’s something that helps people remember special events or important things. Just like we have holidays or markers to remember, God planned this to keep the memory alive for generations.

Point 2: The Miracle of the Crossing
Now, let's talk about the miracle itself. The priests carried the Ark of the Covenant, which was super important because it represented God's presence among the people. As they stepped into the river, the water stopped flowing, and everyone could cross on dry ground. Imagine walking on a riverbed where water should be rushing over you, but instead, the ground is dry, and you’re safe!

This wasn't just a little stream; it was a big river, so this was a big miracle! God wanted to show His people that He could do anything. He wanted them to trust Him and not be afraid, no matter what challenges they faced. Just like when you trust a grown-up to catch you when you jump into a pool, the Israelites were learning to trust God to catch them through life’s big rivers.

Point 3: Setting Up the Stones
Once everyone was safely across, it was time to set up the stones. Each man from the twelve tribes carried their stone from the river. They placed these stones at their campsite as a sign, a memorial of what God had done. This memorial was like a huge thank-you card to God. Every time the Israelites saw these stones, they would remember how God loved them and helped them cross the river.

The stones also reminded them that God is powerful and can help us overcome any obstacle, no matter how great it seems. Remembering was important because there would be times ahead when the Israelites would face doubt or fear. These stones were a reminder to look back at what God had done and feel brave.

Point 4: Teaching Future Generations
Finally, let's talk about why this story is important for everyone else, even for us today. God told Joshua that when future children asked about the stones, the people should share the story of how God helped them. It's like when you hear family stories that make you proud or thankful. By sharing these stories, everyone would know about God’s power and His love, even those who weren’t there, like all of us now.

God wanted His people to talk about Him and share His stories so everyone would know how awesome He is. By telling others what God did for us, we show them how much He loves everyone. This teaching was not just for the Israelites but for everyone—forever.

Personal Application for Elementary Students

Now you might be thinking, "This is a cool story, but what does this mean for me?" Well, even though we don’t cross rivers like the Jordan every day, we still have times when things are tough. Maybe it’s starting a new school, learning something difficult, or making a new friend. These are our own ‘rivers.’

Just like the Israelites had God with them, we have God with us, too. When we face something challenging, we can remember this story and know that God can help us through anything. He wants us to be brave because He is by our side.

Think about something you’ve been worried about lately. Know that God wants to help you, just like He helped the Israelites. Also, just like the stones, we can have reminders of all the good and brave things God helps us with. Maybe it’s a special drawing on your wall, a bracelet, or even a little rock you find. Whenever you see it, remember how God is with you in all your big and little challenges.

Lastly, remember the stones? They were there so that future kids would know the story. You, too, can share what God does in your life with others. When you tell a friend or family member about how you've felt God helping you, you're being just like those Israelites, sharing His love and strength with the world.

Interactive Discussion Questions

Let’s end today with some questions to make us think and chat. I want all of you to feel free to share your thoughts:

1. Why do you think God used stones for a memorial and not something else?
Encourage the children to think about how stones last a long time and are strong and solid. This is

like God’s power and how His love never fades away.

2. Have you ever had an experience where you needed to remember something important? How did you remember it?
Help the kids relate to the idea of reminders—maybe they use sticky notes or alarms. Discuss how these things help us not forget, just like the stones helped the Israelites remember God’s miracle.

3. What’s one thing in your life you know God has helped you with recently?
Allow the children to share personal stories. This can be a way for them to see how God cares for their everyday needs, just like the Israelites.

4. How can we be like the Israelites and share God’s love with others at our schools or at home?
Lead a discussion on being kind, helpful, and sharing stories of how God has helped us. Encourage acts of kindness and them seeing sharing God’s love as something anyone can do.

Remember, our talk doesn’t end here. We’ve just walked through one amazing story from the Bible, but every time you read or hear a Bible story, there’s something new to learn about God’s love and power. Keep your ears open and your hearts ready for more of God's exciting adventures next time!