

Sunday School Lesson, September 13, 2026

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Lesson—Family Legacies¹

Text: Joshua 4:14-24

I. Aim for Change/Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, we will...

1. Adhere to the instruction to remember God's saving actions.
2. Recognize memorials and rituals established to commemorate God's goodness.
3. Fully understand God's steadfast love for us.

Why This Lesson Matters: We are instructed to remember God's saving actions through memorials and rituals so that we can fully understand his steadfast love for us.

Key Verse: *“When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then you shall let your children know, say, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. (Joshua 4:21b-22, KJV).*

II. Topical Outline of the Lesson

1. Introduction
2. God Confirms Joshua’s leadership (Joshua 4:14-18)
3. Stones That Teach Us to Remember (vv. 19-22)
4. Remembering God for the Generations to Come (vv. 23-24)

III. Prominent Character(s) in the Lesson

Joshua: One of two Israelites allowed to live through the exodus from Egypt and enter the promised land. He modeled faithfulness to the Lord and, as a result, was successful in military conquest.

Ark: In Joshua 4, we see the ark. It is also referred to as “the ark of the covenant” in verse 9, “the ark of the Lord” in verse 11, and “the ark of the testimony” in verse 16. Although it is an object, the ark is, in a sense, a character in the narrative - whose presence symbolizes God.

Priests: Workers who performed sacred obligations, particularly the transport and use of holy objects. In our passage, they were responsible for the ark, which, if not handled correctly, could be deadly (see 2 Samuel 3-11).

¹ Outline Content courtesy of the Sunday School Publishing Board Teacher Manual, which should be purchased at www.sspbnbc.com

Twelve Leaders: God commended Joshua to select 12 men—one from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Their participation as individuals represented that of their entire tribes.

IV. Key Terms in the Lesson (KJV)

*Camped
Waters*

Command

Covenant

Stones

V. Historical/Biblical Background and Lesson Context

Joshua 4 centers on remembrance at a critical moment. Israel has crossed the Jordan on dry ground and stands ready to move forward into the land. Instead of pressing ahead, God commands the people to stop, gather stones, and build a memorial. The memorial at Gilgal represents all 12 tribes, emphasizing communal identity. Faith is not individualistic; It is shared and sustained together. The passage reflects an oral culture where storytelling served as a primary means of teaching and preserving identity.

The central question surrounding this lesson is, “What do these stones mean?” The biblical authors compelled their audience to talk about these stones with stories much more significant than simply answering the question “Who put this here?” In addition to remembering that 12 men and Joshua brought the two sets of 12 Stones to their current places, the broader story gives the community license to reflect on important theological matters like the miraculous power of God, the people's past obedience to the word of the Lord, and the presence of the Lord among “us.”

Food for thought/question for consideration: (What have we learned, Charlie Brown?)

As a community, it is important that we learn from this biblical account the significance of remembering our stories and telling them to succeeding generations. Anytime the history of a people or culture is erased, then the testimonies of those who have gone before will be meaningless to those who come after them. We must know who we are so that our children can know who they are.

Closing Hymn: *Blessed be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.*

Sunday School Slogan: *To Sunday School to Sunday School, we all should go; we have classes for all ages, help us to grow.*