

STRONG

Elementary
Week 2

PARENT BIBLE STUDY

Read: Joshua 3-4

As the new leader of the Israelites, Joshua was appointed to bring the people into the Promised Land. But just like 40 years earlier, at the beginning of their journey, water stood in their way again. This time it was the Jordan River. It was actually at flood stage, meaning it was extra full from snow melt and spring rains. Joshua had no idea how he was going to lead the Israelites through this flooding, raging river, but he knew he had firm ground to stand on. He remembered God's encouragement and promise, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go," Joshua 1:9. Little by little, God revealed his plan to bring the Israelites to safety, and Joshua listened and obeyed every step of God's instructions. The Bible says the waters "stood and rose up in a heap very far away," Joshua 3:16, and the people were able to pass through the Jordan on dry ground.

Then God commanded them to build a memorial using 12 stones from the river. God wanted His people to remember that He was always with them, his power and his presence were enough. Just like us, the Israelites had a habit of forgetting God's love and faithfulness. Instead of remembering and trusting God, they had been whining and complaining the past 40 years. Every time they faced a challenge or a problem, they panicked and wondered how God would manage. It didn't occur to them that since God could open the Red Sea, lead them in clouds and pillars of fire, literally rain down food for them, etc., that maybe he could be trusted.

God calls us to remember his faithfulness and the times he does big things in our lives, too. He wants us to know that he is powerful and worthy of our trust. Joshua 4:24 says, "He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God." To fear the Lord means having a deep, heart-changing, and awe-filled respect for who God is. Remembering God's faithfulness in the past gives us courage and confidence to press into the future. We can trust God even more now because of what we have already seen him do.

Are you afraid or discouraged because what's in front of you seems impossible? How does Joshua's example of trusting and obeying God in the face of the impossible encourage you?

It may not be 12 stones, but what are some practical things you can do this week to help you remember God's faithfulness in your own life?