

YOUTH



LEVEL 4

BIBLE

LESSONS



LESSON 8



Israel Enters the Land of Canaan

ISRAEL ENTERS THE LAND OF CANAAN

The Israelites continued their journey toward the land of Canaan, traveling north to the area of Moab. They pitched camp in the plains of Moab, on the east side of the Jordan River, near Jericho.

Balak, the Moabite king, heard of Israel's military conquests, and how they had conquered the Amorites. He was worried that he and his people would suffer the same fate.

BALAK SENDS FOR BALAAM

Balak thought that if a curse were put on the Israelites, he might be able to defeat them. So he sent messengers to the pagan prophet Balaam. Balaam knew about God, but took part in the pagan religion of Babylon.

When the messengers arrived, they told Balaam that the king wanted him to return with them and to curse Israel. Knowing that he could curse Israel only if God allowed it, Balaam said to the men: "Stay here overnight. I will talk to

God and let you know in the morning what I will do." The messengers did as Balaam asked.

God spoke to Balaam that night. Read what God said to him in Numbers 22:12 and fill in the blanks. "Thou _____ go with _____; thou shalt _____ the people: for _____ are _____."

The next morning, Balaam told the messengers that God refused to give him permission to go with them and curse Israel.

When Balak heard this report, he again sent messengers to Balaam. This time he sent men of higher rank, who tempted him by offering as a reward whatever he wanted, including great wealth.

Again Balaam asked the men to stay overnight and he would speak with God. The thought of having a rich reward led him to once again ask God for permission.

That night, God spoke to Balaam. "If the men come to you

again in the morning, go with them. But you are to say only what I tell you to say.”

The next morning, Balaam arose, saddled his donkey, and went with the men from Moab.

A TALKING DONKEY!

While Balaam rode his donkey toward Moab, the animal suddenly ran off the trail into a nearby field. In anger Balaam struck the donkey with his staff.

Balaam had not seen what his donkey had seen. An angel of God had been standing in the path, holding a shining sword!

The path Balaam was on soon led him through a vineyard. Again the angel stood before the donkey. The donkey was now trapped between two vineyard walls. It made a desperate attempt to pass by. As it lunged to one side, the donkey ran into the wall, pinning Balaam’s foot against it. Balaam angrily struck the donkey again.

Further down the trail, the angel again blocked a narrow place in the path. The donkey had no place to turn. It became so frightened that it collapsed. Balaam was furious and struck the donkey with his staff a third time.



Then God performed a miracle. The donkey spoke to Balaam! “What have I done to you to cause you to hit me with your staff these three times?” Can you imagine a talking donkey?

Balaam was astonished! “Because you have made me look ridiculous before the other men,” he replied. “I wish I had a sword in my hand, for I would kill you with it!”

“But am I not your favorite donkey—the one you have ridden ever since I became yours?” asked the donkey. “I have served you faithfully. Have I ever treated you as harshly as you have just treated me?” Balaam admitted that the donkey was right.

At that moment, God caused Balaam to see the angel holding the sword. Balaam fell to the ground before the powerful being.

“Why have you struck your donkey these three times?” the angel asked. “I was standing in the path and your donkey tried to dodge me. If it had not, I would have slain you with my sword.”

“I have sinned,” Balaam admitted. “If you are displeased, I will return home at once.”

“You are not to return home,” replied the angel. “You are to continue with the men and tell

King Balak only the things I tell you to speak.”

When Balaam arrived, he told Balak that he could only speak the words that God allowed him to speak. Balaam would like to have cursed Israel, but God did not allow it. Rather, on four different occasions, God used him to pronounce blessings upon the children of Israel! Balak was very displeased. He had much to think about as he and Balaam went their separate ways.

ISRAEL LED INTO SIN

Balaam could not forget about the great wealth that was offered to him by King Balak if he would curse Israel. Soon, his overpowering desire for riches led him to think of an evil scheme he was sure would bring down God’s curse on all Israel.

Balaam knew that the children of Israel were blessed as long as they continued to obey God. He also knew that if they sinned, they would bring curses upon themselves. So Balaam’s plan was to promote sin between Israelite men and the pagan women of Midian and Moab.

Soon, Israelite men were committing fornication with and marrying these women. This

resulted in Israel's following the evil practices and customs of these people, which included idol worship. God was very displeased and sent a plague which took the lives of the Israelites who were guilty of these terrible sins.

The wrong desires of one man, and the rebellious attitude of the Israelites, led to sins that resulted in the deaths of 24,000 people!

DEFEATING THE MIDIANITES

Soon thereafter, God instructed Moses to punish the Midianites for their part in leading the Israelites into sin. He chose a thousand men from each tribe to fight against the Midianites.

Even though far outnumbered, the Israelites quickly defeated the Midianites. Balaam was among the many who were killed in battle. God proved to Israel once again that numbers are not important when He is fighting their battles for them. This is a great lesson for us today.

Another important lesson we can learn is from what God says is the result of lusting after money and material possessions, as did Balaam. Turn to I Timothy 6:10 and fill in the blanks.

“For the _____ of _____ is the [a] _____ of

DECODE THE VERSE

Why did God have so many of the stories of the Israelites' sins recorded in the Bible for us today? To find the answer, decode the following verse. Above each letter, place the letter that comes before it in the alphabet. Then find this verse in I Corinthians 10 and fill in the verse number.

“ _____
 Opx uiftf uijohf xfsf pvs

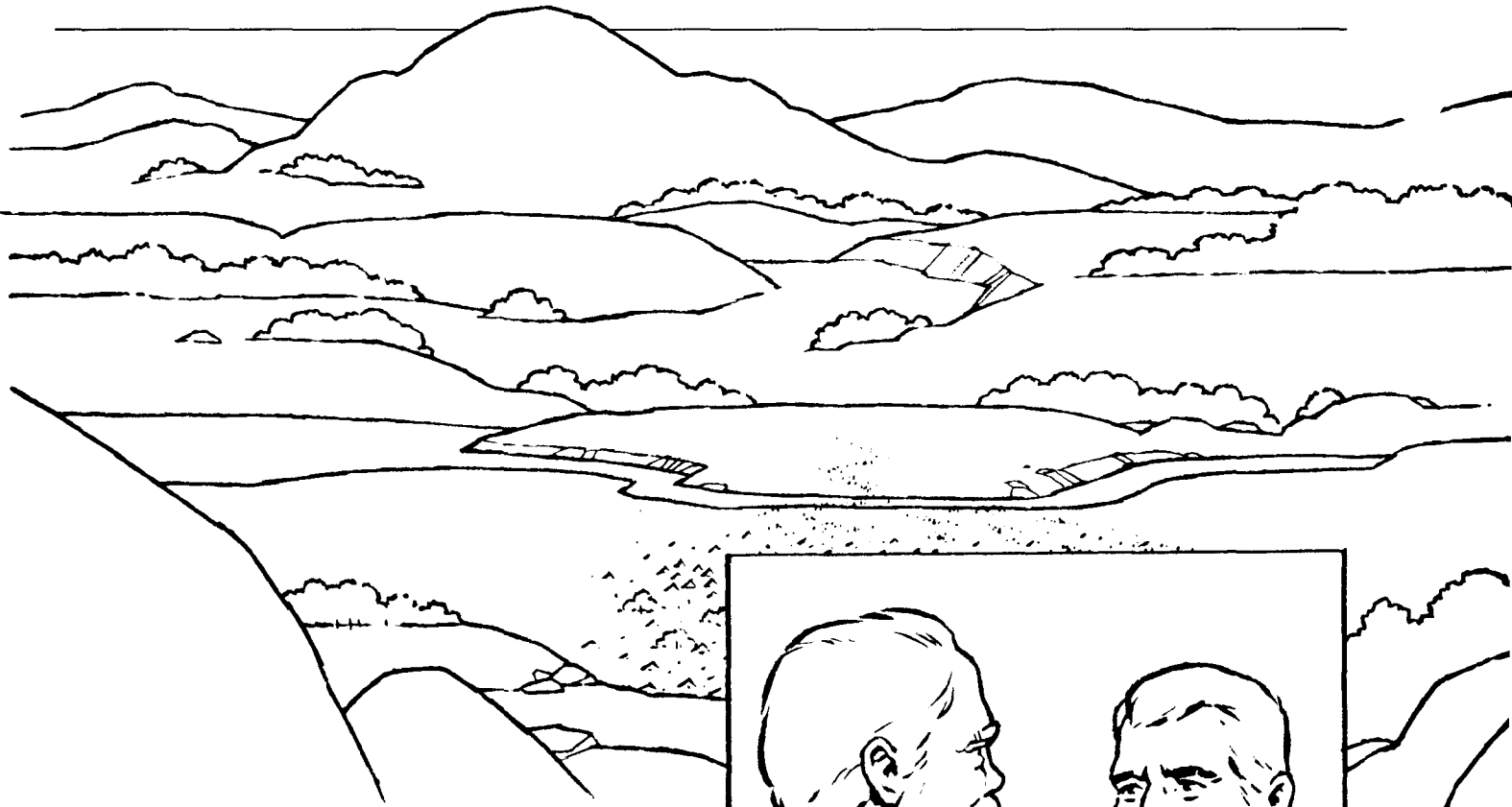
 fybnqmf' up uif jofou xf

 tipvme opu mvtu bgufs fwjm
 _____”
 uijohf' bt uifz bmtf mvtufe
 (I Corinthians 10: _____).

all _____: which while some _____ after, they have _____ from the _____, and pierced themselves through with _____.”

Do You Remember?

1. Balak, the king of Moab, wanted _____ to _____ Israel.
2. Balaam struck his _____ three times, not realizing there was an _____ blocking its path.
3. The donkey _____ to Balaam.

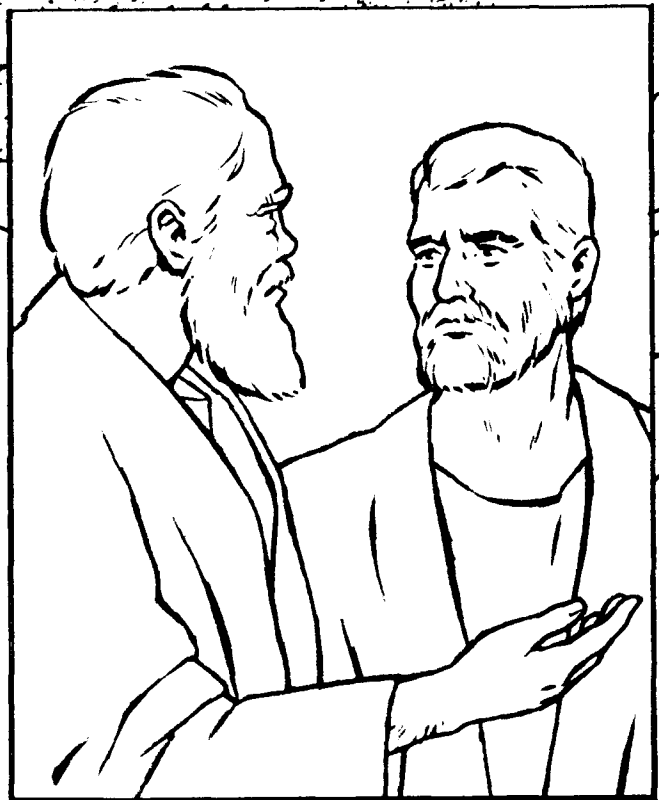


4. What lesson can we learn from the story of Balaam? _____

DIVIDING THE LAND

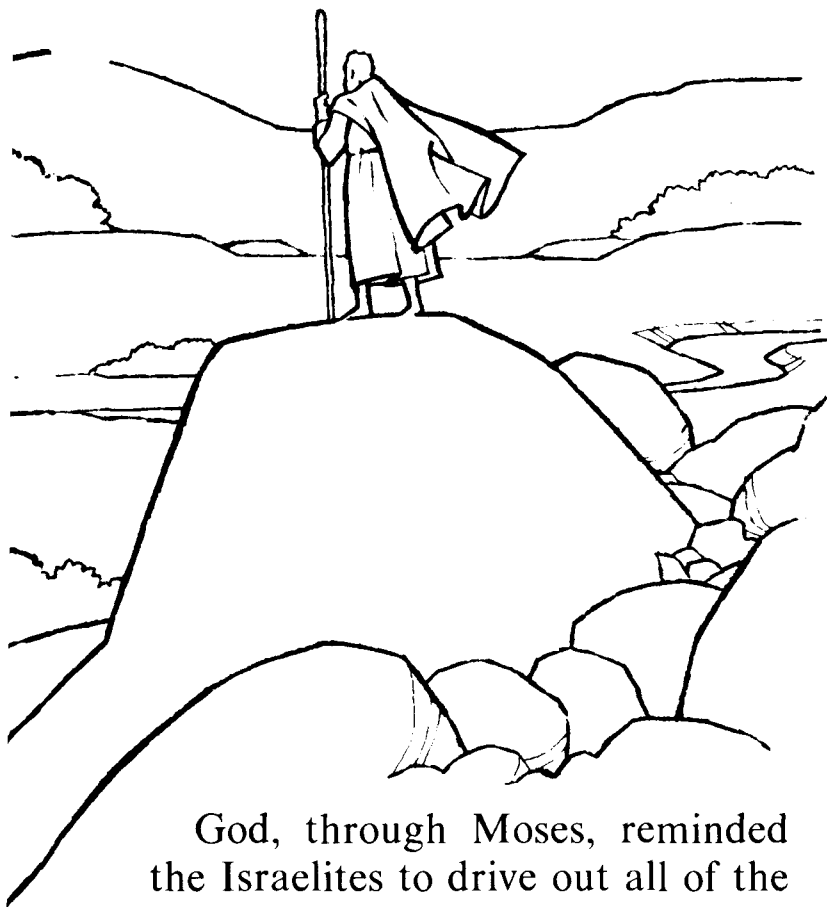
Before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, God instructed Moses to take another census of the people. Over 38 years had passed since the first count was taken. The census would help in fairly dividing the land among the twelve tribes according to numbers.

God also defined the boundaries of the Promised Land. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and one-half of Manasseh would remain on the



eastern side of the Jordan River. The other tribes would settle on the western side.

Certain cities were to be set aside for the Levites, who were not to inherit land since their inheritance was the priesthood (Joshua 18:7).



God, through Moses, reminded the Israelites to drive out all of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. The Israelites were to destroy their idols, altars and areas of pagan worship (Numbers 33:52-53). God commanded the Israelites to do this so they would not be led into idolatry by the Canaanites.

The Israelites were also reminded to always observe the weekly and annual Sabbaths, as an everlasting sign between them and God. God also gave them instructions concerning tithing and civil government.

Results of obedience and disobedience were also clearly outlined by God. As an assignment, on a

separate sheet of paper make two columns and entitle them **Blessings for Obedience** and **Curses for Disobedience**. Read through Deuteronomy 28 and write the blessings in one column, then the curses in the other. (Ask your parents for any help you may need.)

Moses encouraged the Israelites to always observe God's laws and teach their children to do the same (Deuteronomy 6:7). He also reminded the people of God's mercy and justice.

JOSHUA BECOMES ISRAEL'S LEADER

"Joshua shall become Israel's leader after your death," God told Moses. So Moses called for Joshua to stand before him and the people of Israel. Moses told them that God had appointed Joshua as their next leader.

God reminded Moses, who was now 120 years old, that he would only view the land of Canaan from afar before his death, because of his disobedience at Kadesh.

So Moses climbed to the top of Mt. Nebo where he saw the magnificent Promised Land. After seeing the beautiful green valleys and rolling hills, he died.

After Moses' death, Joshua officially became Israel's leader. "Be

strong and of good courage,” God told Joshua. “Meditate on My laws and obey Me and I will be with you wherever you go.” This was very encouraging to Joshua.

SPIES SENT TO JERICHO

The people of Israel were now ready to cross the Jordan River at a place not far from the city of Jericho. This news soon reached the people of Jericho, who were very fearful of the Israelites. Jericho was a walled city along the route that Israel was taking and would have to be destroyed as God had commanded.

Joshua sent two spies to the city of Jericho. When they arrived, they walked through the gates and into the city. While in the city, night came and the gates of the city were shut. The Israelite spies hid in an inn that was owned by a woman named Rahab. Rahab understood that God

had given the land to the Israelites. She helped the two men escape by lowering them down the city wall by a rope from her upper window.

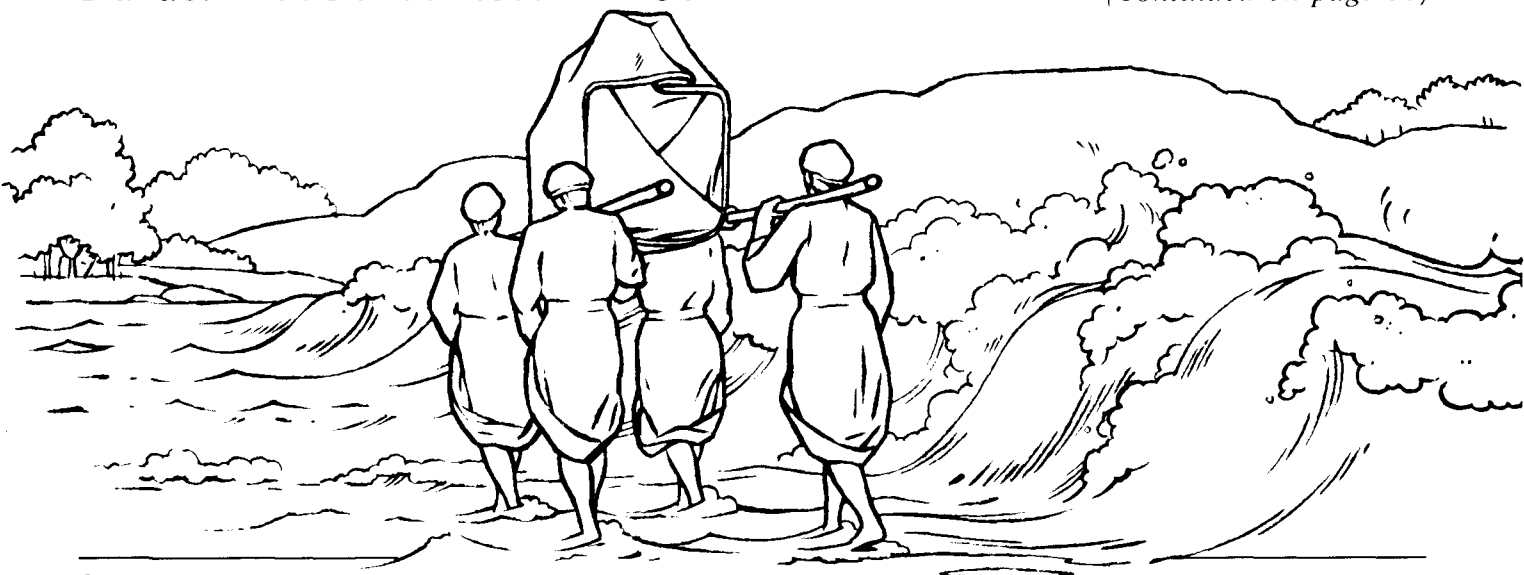
Because of her kindness toward them, the spies promised Rahab and her family protection when Israel attacked the city. The two men then returned to camp and reported to Joshua. Three days later, Joshua told the Israelites they would cross the Jordan River the next morning.

When morning came, Joshua told the priests to carry the ark of the covenant, as God had commanded, and wade into the water’s edge.

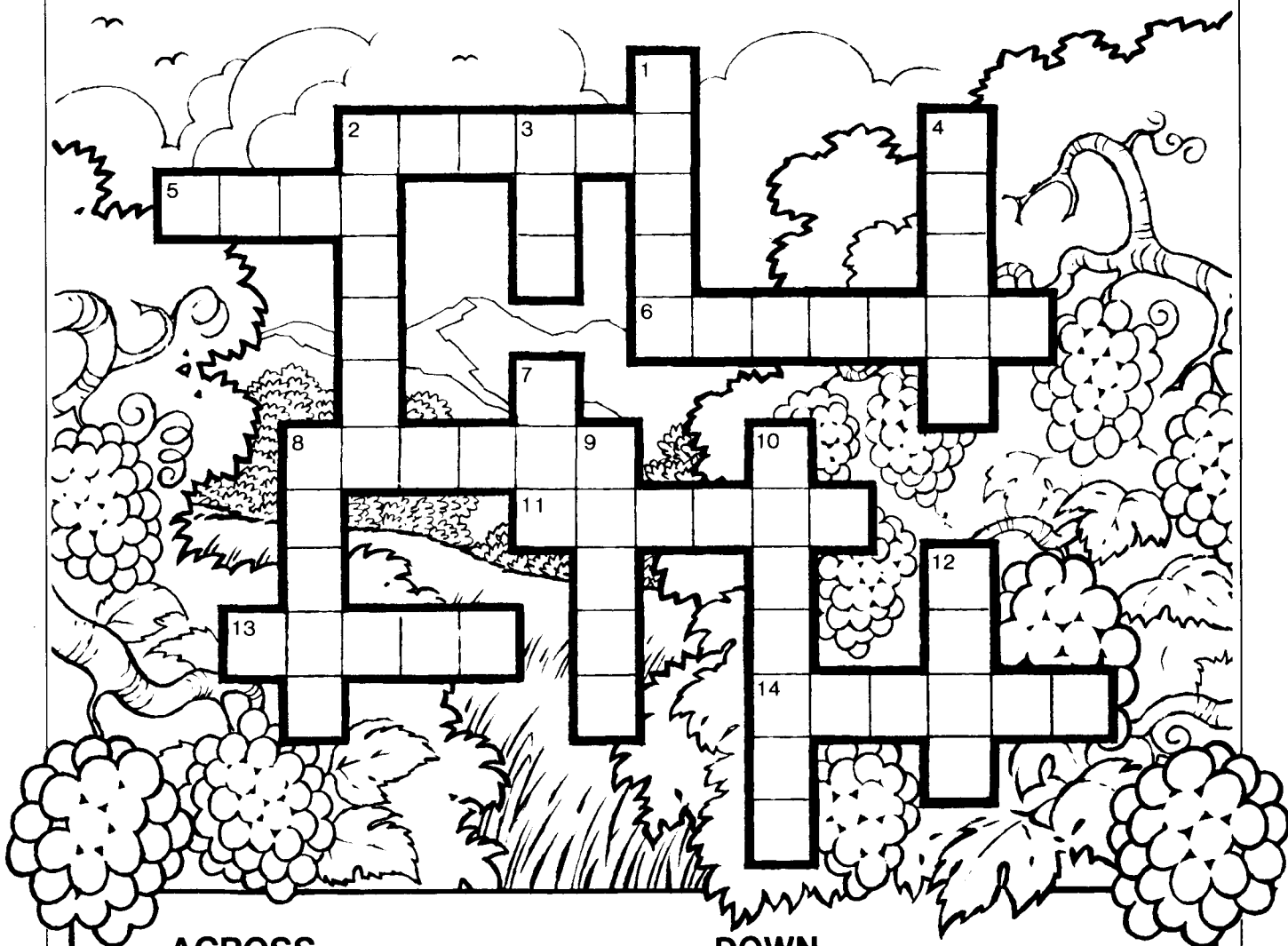
When they did, the water drained away to their left. At the same time the water to their right stopped flowing.

The priests holding the ark remained standing at the river’s edge until all the Israelites had

(Continued on page 10)



LAND OF CANAAN CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

2. God caused the waters of this river to stop flowing.
5. The mountain Moses climbed to view the Promised Land.
6. People of the tribe of Levi.
8. Prophet who was asked to curse Israel.
11. An animal that talked.
13. The woman who helped two Israelite spies escape from Jericho.
14. The Promised Land.

DOWN

1. A being that blocked the path of Balaam's donkey.
2. Israel's leader after the death of Moses.
3. One of the twelve tribes of Israel.
4. Israelites who hid in Rahab's inn.
7. One of the twelve tribes of Israel.
8. Moabite king.
9. He led the Israelites out of Egypt.
10. The walls of this city fell down.
12. A place where the Israelites camped.

crossed. Then they crossed the dry river bed. After they reached the opposite shore, a loud rush of water was heard as the river once again began to flow.

Imagine how inspiring this miracle must have been for Israel that day!

THE FALL OF JERICHO

While Joshua viewed the city of Jericho from a distance, God appeared to him in the form of a man with a gleaming sword. This Being, the One who later became Jesus Christ, explained to Joshua exactly how Jericho was to be destroyed.

The next day, the army of Israel assembled together. Immediately behind the army, as God instructed, were seven priests. Each of the priests had a trumpet made from a ram's horn. Behind the priests were the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant.

The king of Jericho must have been quite nervous as he saw thousands of Israelites silently march around the city followed by the priests blowing trumpets.

When the Israelites finished marching once around the city, they returned to their camp. This they repeated each day for the next six days. The Canaanites were puzzled, not knowing what to expect.

On the seventh day, the Israelites marched around the city as they had during the first six days. However, when they finished the circle, they did not return to camp. They circled again and again—seven times!

After the seventh time, the Israelites came to a halt. Trumpets blasted forth loud and long, followed by thunderous shouts from the soldiers. Read Joshua 6:20 and write down what happened. _____

_____.

Imagine the awesome sight as the wall around Jericho suddenly came crashing down! The only part of the wall that remained standing was where Rahab's house was located. The Israelite army rushed into the city and killed all the people and their livestock as they were commanded, with the exception of Rahab and her family.

Joshua continued to lead Israel as they proceeded to conquer the land of Canaan. Gradually the Israelites settled in their new land.

JOSHUA'S PARTING MESSAGE

Before his death at the age of 110, Joshua called together the leaders of each tribe and reminded them of all the wonderful things



God had done for them. “God will fight your battles for you as long as you continue to obey Him,” Joshua reminded them. “Do not befriend the Canaanites. If you do, they will lead you into idolatry and disobedience against God.”

Turn to Joshua 23:13 and fill in the blanks below to see what would happen to the Israelites if they disobeyed God: “Know for a certainty that the _____ your _____ will _____ _____ any of these _____ from before you; but they shall be _____ and _____ unto you, and _____ in your sides, and _____ in your eyes, until ye perish from off this _____ which the Lord your God hath _____ you.”

During the time of the elders who lived after Joshua, the Israelites continued to obey God. But after the death of the elders, every man began to live the way he thought was best. The people no longer obeyed God. They failed to drive out the remaining Canaanites and began to worship idols.

As a result of their disobedience, God punished the nation of Israel. Many problems began to plague the nation just as Joshua had warned. Enemies attacked and oppressed the people. When the people cried out to God for help, He would raise up a leader, known as a “judge,” to deliver them from their enemies during his rule.

In our next lesson, we will learn what happened to Israel during the time of the Judges.

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BIBLE MEMORY Psalm 23:1-6

ISRAEL IN THE PROMISED LAND

Unscramble the names of the tribes of Israel and write their names on the lines provided. Then transfer the names to the proper tents on the map, showing where each tribe was to settle. See a Bible atlas or map in the back of your Bible for the location of each tribe. (Remember that Levi did not inherit land as a tribe.)

1. _____
AND
2. _____
AANMSHES
3. _____
UEREBN
4. _____
HESRA
5. _____
AHUJD
6. _____
SMNOIE
7. _____
DGA
8. _____
PAHAINTL
9. _____
PAIEHRM
10. _____
BLUZENU
11. _____
SACRSIHA
12. _____
IAJNBEMN

