

river. Explain that there was no bridge across the river. If they had tried to build one their enemies in Canaan would have shot arrows at them while they were at work. They had no boats. How could they get across? *God knew.* All they had to do was to trust him and obey him.

He told Joshua just what to do, and Joshua told the people. Tell how the priests took the ark and went down to the water. Show a picture of a priest. Tell that the priests who carried the ark were dressed in white and had bare feet. All the people were ready to follow the priests, though they did not know how they were to cross the river. Tell how the priests stepped into the water before God made it roll back. That was *faith*. The ark was the outward sign of God's presence.



*Our Ark.* Jesus is our Ark. God is with us in Jesus. If we trust him he will make every path for us. Is there some difficulty that is like a deep river to cross? Jesus will lead us safe over if we trust him. But we must really believe and obey him, else he cannot lead us.

#### Lesson Word-Pictures.

"How are we going to get over this river, running like a bar across our path?" ask the people. "Just getting into the promised land and we can get no farther!"

"Wait!" says Joshua. "Wait for some word from the Lord!"

And soon a report sweeps like a wind through the camp that the ark will go ahead and lead in the passage of the river.

"What!" cries Isaac, an old and honored ark-bearer. "Lead? Who will care to follow?"

"Why not?" asks David, a courageous young bearer.

"The river is so full, David!"

"The Lord can make a path clear across."

Isaac shakes his head. It is a very uncertain experiment, very risky.

"Can't we go farther up the stream? Can't we go round it?" queries Isaac.

"I think not. We must go ahead and go across, Isaac."

The tidings of the crossing on the morrow have reached all the encampment. Wonderful is the interest aroused. People in the twilight sit before their tents, look at the rushing, swelling river, and wonder if to-morrow night they will be on the other side.

Morning has come, bright, cheering, golden, but that Jordan, though, how sullen and strong and forbidding!

The people ready for the crossing. The tents

are all struck. The flocks are all called in. In family-clusters, the people wait for the next movement.

"The ark is going forward!" echoes the starting cry. Yes, the ark has started out. Can you not see the bearers striding off, reverently lifting this ancient relic?

"There goes Isaac!" cries some one. "He walks rather timidly."

"But see David walk!" says a second. "He is not afraid."

The bearers are now near the Jordan.

"O if we could halt here and see the river fall away, and not have to go into this rushing current!" thinks Isaac.

"Forward!" is the command. And now they are at the water's edge. "Look across!" says Isaac. "Look up the stream! Look every-where! How deep it looks! We cannot feel the bottom if we get out there!"

"Be of good courage, Brother Isaac!" cried David. "Our feet shall feel the bottom."

"Forward!" comes the word again. Yes, advance, venerable, beloved ark, that has seen such wonders, above which has brooded the strange Shekinah! Forward! The water now flows about the feet of the bearers.

Look, look! That water is flowing away from the feet of Isaac! It falls back before the courageous feet of David! See! It recedes all along the shore! It rushes back toward the center of the current! It retreats up the valley! And now what wonder, as the priests of faith go on, if they lift a jubilant psalm with their rich, strong voices, perhaps the song of Moses by the sea, all the people up and down the banks catching up the notes and rolling them out upon the morning air. Israel's triumphant song, marching over to the promised land!

In the very heart of the Jordan-bed soon stand the exultant priests. Above them the restrained waters accumulate in large masses. Below, the river runs off and leaves one wide, naked bed. And now hark! You hear not the music of voices, but of feet tramping over Jordan's bed! Hear the beating of flocks! Listen to the laugh and chatter of the children! Such a wonderful going over Jordan! As far as we can see, the river-bed swarms with a hurrying, rejoicing host. Isaac is tempted to ask, "What if the water should suddenly come pouring, driving back in one overwhelming flood upon us? Like Pharaoh's host at the Red Sea!"

"This is not Pharaoh's host," replies David. "It is the Lord's people, and they will all get across this day."

Yes, it is the people guided by the great Jehovah, one arm leading them over, while another mighty arm, laid across Jordan's bed, holds all the water back! Halleluiah! Jordan is crossed! Israel is in the promised land!

#### B. C. 1451.]

Josh. 4. 10-24.



[Commit to memory verses 20-22.]

10 For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that the Lord commanded Josh'u-a to speak unto the people, according to all that Mo'ses commanded Josh'u-a; and the people hasted and passed over.

11 And it came to pass when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the Lord passed over,

and the priests, in the presence of the people.

12 And the children of Re'u-ben, and the children of

#### LESSON III. THE STONES OF MEMORIAL.

[Oct. 21.]

Gad, and half the tribe of Ma-na'sseh, passed over armed before the children of Is'ra-el, as Mo'ses spake unto them;

13 About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jer'i-cho.

14 On that day the LORD magnified Josh'u-a in the sight of all Is'ra-el; and they feared him as they feared Mo'ses all the days of his life.

15 And the LORD spake unto Josh'u-a, saying,

16 Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.