

**God Provides
Judges and a King**

Old Testament 3

DIRECTOR HANDBOOK



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Welcome to Cross Explorations

Cross Explorations is the Sunday School with the biblical integrity you've come to expect from Concordia Publishing House. The Bible accounts in Cross Explorations follow the same sequence as Concordia's traditional Sunday School curriculum, Growing in Christ.

Cross Explorations combines the best of large-group/small-group instruction and site rotation. Leaders will love the easy-to-use leader guides as well as the options available for each lesson. Above all, Cross Explorations puts Christ at the center of each and every lesson.

Exploring Cross Explorations

Cross Explorations at a Glance

Engage

Cross Explorations starts with Engage. During Engage, all students take part in an opening activity together, singing and preparing for the rest of their exploration.

Explore

The Explore site divides kids by two age levels. Level 1 includes kids in grades 1–3, while Level 2 covers kids in grades 4–6. During Explore, students dig into the day's Bible story, guided by the Explore Teacher Leaflets and their Explore Student Leaflets. We recommend having eight to ten kids in a group with one leader. So, depending on the number of kids you have, you may have multiple Level 1 and Level 2 groups.

Express

During Express, kids apply the Bible learning from the Explore session to their lives as they create, experiment, sing, serve, and more. Options depend on the time you have available and the talents of your volunteers. The Express leader materials provide numerous options for each week:

- **Express Craft Booklet**—thirteen pull-apart cards provide creative projects for each lesson, complete with supply lists, directions, talking points, and pictures of the completed craft.
- **Express Music CD**—includes recorded music, music activities for each lesson, and PowerPoint slides with linked music. Reinforce the lesson with new songs, old favorites, and familiar hymns.
- **Express Skit CD**—brief skits allow students to review each Bible lesson. Ideas for costumes and visual props are included.
- **Express Activities & More CD**—includes creative snack ideas and group activities for each week. Additional activity ideas, including service projects, are suggested for some weeks. Activities include the following:
 - Group activities
 - Science demonstrations
 - Service projects

Leaders have the option to access materials by week, by topic, or by type of activity.

The amount of time available determines if students will rotate through one, two, or more Express options each week. If time is limited, vary Express activities from week to week so students get a chance to experience different types of learning.

The Cross Explorations Schedule

Cross Explorations offers flexibility for a variety of settings. Here is a suggested schedule for a traditional 60-minute Sunday morning setting:

- All students at Engage for 15 minutes.
- Students break into Explore Levels 1 and 2 for 20 minutes.
- Students move through two or more Express rotations for 25 minutes.

If you are using Cross Explorations in a Midweek setting, your schedule probably offers more time. In this setting, the Engage and Explore times remain the same, but extra time may be used to include additional small-group Express options.

Flexibility

The flexible Cross Explorations materials allow you to customize the program to fit your specific needs. Here's how one congregation customized Cross Explorations to meet the specific needs in their Sunday School. They have a lot of students in grades 1–3, with smaller numbers in each of the older grades. Their solution:

- Everyone in grades 1–6 starts together in Engage.
- With a smaller number of students in grades 4–6, they move as one group into Explore. Following Explore, the older students split into two groups and rotate through two Express stations.
- Meanwhile, the younger students in grades 1–3 stay in single-grade groups and rotate through three stations. Explore becomes one of the three rotations, and leaders choose the other two stations from the Express materials.

Cross Explorations in a Self-Contained Classroom

Some congregations, by preference or due to limited space or number of students, use Cross Explorations in self-contained classrooms. The flexible Cross Explorations resources easily allow for use in this setting. If needed, divide students into two groups, lower grades (1–3) and upper grades (4–6), and plan on a leader for each group. If most of your students are younger, you could use just the Level 1 materials; likewise, use the Level 2 materials if most of your students are older.

Introduce the lesson to all students, using the Engage Teacher Leaflets and optional PowerPoint slide shows. (Or provide an Engage CD to each teacher to use in the classroom.)

Then, divide students into two or more groups for the Explore Bible study. Have them meet with their leader in their classroom or an assigned area of a larger space to dig into the Bible account and work through the student leaflets.

Following Explore, have students continue with Express activities in their classroom or rotate through Express activities with other classes. They can stay in the Explore groups, combine with other groups, or form new groups. Select the Express options that work best for your setting. These options can vary from week to week to keep students excited and engaged in what might happen next week.

Assembling Small Groups

Small groups form the core of Cross Explorations. Groups may be assigned by traditional grade levels or by combining students from the three grades comprising each of the two levels for Explore. For instance, you could have two or more groups of students from grades 1–3. Likewise, you could have groups with a mix of students from grades 4–6. Ideally, groups will have eight to ten students in them. If you have more than ten students at either level, plan on two Explore sites for that level. Depending on the age range of your students and their level of maturity, you also might include students in third grade in your Level 2 groups.

What about Other Sunday School Levels?

Preschool

We recommend letting preschoolers learn in their own settings and groups. The Growing in Christ Early Childhood Teacher Guide has age-appropriate material for preschoolers that follows the same lesson sequence as Cross Explorations.

Keeping preschoolers separate from your elementary program is beneficial for several reasons. Sunday School is often a preschooler's first group experience. A young child needs a safe environment with predictable routines and the same caring teacher each week to feel secure. Parents and children may feel anxious, timid, or afraid in the midst of the larger Sunday School setting. If you can, give preschoolers separate learning spaces so that they can do age-appropriate activities in an environment suitable to their needs. Preschoolers can get lost among older kids, but in their own space, they can relax, play, and feel more secure. This kind of atmosphere maximizes their ability to learn and remember.

Middle School and High School

Since Cross Explorations is a complementary program to Growing in Christ, you can use Growing in Christ for middle-school and high-school levels. The two programs share a common Bible story, so the whole family is studying the same story each week.

Adults

The Cross Explorations Explore Adult Bible Study Guide provides weekly lessons for adult learners. Parents and other adults join children for the large-group Engage session, then continue learning in their own Explore group for thirty minutes. Families continue learning at home through the Explore More Cards. These talking points help families take the lesson home each week and engage kids and parents in talking about the faith.

Leading Cross Explorations

Staffing for Cross Explorations lets volunteers work from their strengths. Each Cross Explorations leader works in a role designed to let him or her be most effective. It is beneficial when groups of children have two adults present with them at all times.

Large-Group Leader

The large-group leader begins each week's Cross Explorations adventure during the Engage session. This leader needs the energy and confidence to work with a large group of children. The Engage leader should also have the ability to get kids excited about learning. Since this large-group leader sets the tone for the day, choose this leader—or leadership team—carefully. Because of the variety of ages involved, it is important to select a large-group leader who communicates well with students.

Site Leaders

Your Cross Explorations site leaders do what they do best—crafts, music, science, teaching the lesson, and more. Volunteers who feel comfortable teaching students would be ideal leaders for the Explore Level 1 and Level 2 sites. For the most effective learning environment, Explore leaders should be consistent from week to week. If teaching volunteers like to work in teams, enlist three teachers for each Explore team and encourage at least two of them to be present each week. Volunteers with a love for crafts, music, or other ways to apply the lesson truths would be excellent leaders for the Express sites you choose. Since Express sites may vary each week, volunteers may take turns serving.

Rotation Small-Group Leaders

Cross Explorations small-group leaders serve a very important role. You will need one small-group leader for every eight to ten kids. The small-group leaders may not have to teach; rather, they lead their small group of students from one site to another. Groups may be assigned by age or grade level, or they may be multi-graded. Strive for groups no larger than ten students. Encourage students to select a name for their group in order to develop a sense of group identity. Small-group leaders

- are leaders and encouragers, not bosses;
- develop friendships with every child in their group;

- help and encourage kids to participate, cooperate, and try new things;
- ask questions and lead kids to discover Bible answers;
- keep kids focused on tasks and challenges;
- participate in activities;
- get to know their group members well; and
- are patient and do not yell or express anger.

Older adults and older youth often make ideal small-group leaders. In some situations, you may want to have your small-group leaders actually be the teachers for the Explore or Express sites. For the balance of the time at Cross Explorations, these teachers simply lead their small group. The choice is yours!

Cross Explorations Resources

The Cross Explorations leader materials provide all of the resources your volunteers need to effectively share God’s Word with children.

■ Engage

- **Leader Leaflet** includes opening activities and music suggestions.
- **Engage Music CD** provides selected music for use in Cross Explorations.

■ Explore

- **Level 1 Teacher Leaflets** include resources for teaching the Bible story to children in grades 1–3.
- **Level 1 Student Leaflets** include full-color Bible art and activities for children in grades 1–3.
- **Level 2 Teacher Leaflets** include resources for teaching the Bible story to children in grades 4–6.
- **Level 2 Student Leaflets** include full-color Bible art, activities, and discussion questions for children in grades 4–6.
- **Explore More Cards** provide family-centered questions and activities to extend the lesson to the home each week.
- **Explore Adult Bible Study Guide** allows parents and other adults to explore the same lesson that kids do each week.

■ Express

- **Express Craft Booklet** uses visuals to guide students as they express the lesson creatively. (Craft activity patterns, when required, are found on the Express Activities & More CD.)
- **Express Music CD** allows kids to express the lesson through song.
- **Express Skit CD** lets students express the lesson through drama and role play.
- **Express Activities & More CD** has ideas and activities that vary from week to week. These include science demonstrations, games, snacks, service projects, and more. Each one provides students with unique ways to express their learning. (This CD may also contain craft patterns.)

■ Director CD

- **Director Handbook** contains planning materials for the Sunday School Leader.
- **Preparing the Lesson** leaflets are included for each week. Provide all your volunteer leaders with copies of these devotions as they prepare for each week's lesson.
- **Planning Pages** are designed to help teachers and leaders plan the lessons each week. The planning pages outline the activities available for each section of the lesson.
- **Bulletin Notes** are designed to help connect your congregation and Sunday School by providing a brief lesson highlight and suggested questions for parents and others to discuss with students.
- **Pronunciation Guide** helps teachers and students correctly pronounce more difficult names of people and places in the Bible.
- **Arch Book List** helps teachers reinforce the Bible account by providing another method of sharing the story with students.

The Perfect Setting: Environment Matters

Stress, mess, and chaos hinder learning. Open a door to effective learning by providing a relaxed, comfortable environment.

- Make sure your facility is clean and safe. Eliminate unneeded furniture and supplies.
- Use child-size furniture so kids feel comfortable.
- Decorate to capture curiosity. Nearly 75 percent of people are visual learners who learn best with visual prompts. Thematic decorating helps them understand and remember well.
- Use words and pictures on signs for sites, restrooms, and offices.

Where to Meet

Deciding where to meet for Cross Explorations will depend on the space available in your building.

Engage requires a space large enough for all students to be seated and equipped so the leader can be heard clearly. If you plan to use the recording on the Engage CD, you will need a CD player. If you plan to use the PowerPoint presentation on the Engage CD, you will need a computer and a projector. The church sanctuary, a fellowship hall, or even a gymnasium can work for this session.

Explore requires separate spaces for the two levels. Classrooms equipped with chairs or desks or a section of a larger room that can be screened off will both work for this session. Preschool students, youth, and adults should have their own meeting locations apart from the Explore session.

Express sessions offer the greatest flexibility as far as meeting locations. You could offer multiple Express sites in one large space, provided you can screen off areas to prevent distractions. Rolling dividers, movable walls, or even

fabric panels help block the view from one area to another. In other situations, separate classrooms might offer the best setting for the Express sessions.

Decorating Ideas

Help students experience Cross Explorations by setting the scene for learning. Your decorations may be as simple as Concordia's realistic Bible Story Poster Sets. These sets contain pictures of each Bible story. Use posters to decorate Explore learning areas so teachers can refer to the appropriate picture for that week's lesson. You can view the posters in each set by searching "Bible Story Posters" at www.cph.org/sundayschool.

If you have a dedicated area for Sunday School, consider more extensive decorating to help set the stage for learning. Furnish Explore and Express areas with Bible-times decorations. Piles of brightly striped pillows can double as seating for storytelling time. Use baskets and ceramic vessels to hold craft supplies and student materials for each Express location. You might even set up a Bible-times marketplace to keep students engaged in the learning process.

Endless Song

by Melissa Luepke

Among my favorite childhood memories are my days in church choir and school musicals. Those days spent singing taught me a love for music and a love for God's Word that I didn't fully appreciate until I was much older. Through the use of music during those formative years of my life, I learned Bible passages I still draw on today, I experienced a deeper faith connection, I learned how to creatively express my love for Jesus, and I had the opportunity to declare the praises of Jesus. Today, I find myself teaching my children those same songs that I learned years ago, and now, they share with me in my joy of music and God's Word.

An Early Start

The teaching of God's Word through music began much earlier than church choir and school musicals. It began the day my parents held me and sang "Jesus Loves Me." It continued the day I was taken through the church doors and heard "This Is the Feast." God's Word through the hymns and songs of the Church continues to penetrate my heart, mind, and soul.

It is a fact that music has a tremendous impact on the development of children. When you search "music and children" on the Internet, you discover article after article telling about the many benefits music has on child development. Music boosts brain power, improves memory, builds confidence, teaches patience, and fosters creativity. Music has the ability to penetrate the hearts, minds, and souls of children from a very early age. We see this in infants as they naturally bounce and sway when music plays. As they grow, children burst into song as part of their play, as a way to express themselves, as they process their world and interactions, and as they celebrate. What we often overlook is the impact music can have on faith development of children and adults.

Music in the Word

Throughout Scripture, we read about the importance of music in worship of God for all God's people: "Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!" (Psalm 95:1). In the Psalms, we learn about the various types of instruments used in praise and worship: "Praise the LORD! . . . Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with lute and harp! Praise Him with tambourine and dance; praise Him with strings and pipe! Praise Him with sounding cymbals; praise Him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!" (Psalm 150:1, 3–6). Paul helps us understand the impact music can have in teaching God's Word and in telling His story to other people: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).

The hymns and songs of the Church follow what Scripture teaches us about the importance of music in the worship of God, in teaching God's Word, and in proclaiming His message. They have a longevity we do not often see in pop music. These hymns and songs are passed down from generation to generation and have the ability to connect those generations in meaningful faith relationships. During worship, you can look around and see people of all ages join in the chorus of "Earth and All Stars" (*LSB* 817). At Easter, children join in singing "Alleluia" with adults as they celebrate Christ's resurrection in "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" (*LSB* 457). Christmas brings the sweet sounds of children learning about Jesus' birth as they sing "Away in a Manger" (*LSB* 364/365) and "Silent Night, Holy Night" (*LSB* 363). The hymns and songs of the Church teach the message of Jesus Christ; allow us to proclaim, together, the message of Him; and bring us together in worship of the true God.

Sharing in Song

There is great power in joining young and old in song. The options reach far and wide, from "Jesus Loves Me" to "This Is the Feast." As we join together in song, we create a connection in a powerful way that flows through us and out to those we meet. As we sing in the traditional hymn "My Life Flows on in Endless Song,"

My life flows on in endless song;
Above earth's lamentation,
I hear the sweet, tho' far-off hymn
That hails a new creation;
Thro' all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul—
How can I keep from singing?

As I experienced from infancy, the hymns and songs of the Church have a way of infiltrating our hearts, minds, and souls. We draw on what we learn, experience, and share from the connection of faith and music. It connects

generation to generation as we gather to worship, proclaim, and learn through song. As we teach the hymns and songs of the Church, we teach children and adults that all God's people sing praises and all creation praises the Lord.

Why Teacher Training?

by Robert Whipkey

The title of this article asks a simple question: why should you regularly attend the training opportunities offered by your congregation for Sunday School teachers? There are many reasons; you could probably provide a list of your own.

But I'm convinced that there is one overriding concern, as the apostle Paul warns: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against . . . the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

Our foe, Satan, wants us and the children we teach in hell, and he uses his powers to discourage, confuse, exasperate, and distract us from what we are doing and why we do it: sharing the Gospel for the salvation of souls. The battle we fight has eternal significance. Are we prepared? Are we equipped to prepare the children Jesus sends our way for the spiritual battle they must face on a daily basis?

The Problem

The bad news is Satan is still a part of our world. He promotes the temptations of this world and partners with our sinful flesh so that we ignore our conscience and resist our heavenly Father. We and the children we teach are consistently encouraged to be more self-indulgent and less Christlike. We are bombarded with media that expound every type of perversion and self-gratification, belittling God's Church at every opportunity. In many ways, our society is as dangerous as Paul's. Then and now, society offers many competing gods. A Christian's public witness to and personal faith in the one true God is criticized. How are we to respond as Christians?

The Answer

God overcomes the evils of Satan, the world, and our sinful flesh in Jesus Christ and gives us His Word and Sacraments to nourish our faith in Christ. All Christians need training in God's Word. The first and most important part of teacher training is regular attendance and participation in the church's worship, where God gives His gifts through Word and Sacrament. This is a vital aspect of being prepared to teach Sunday School and to live as God's children.

The privilege and high calling of teaching Sunday School requires an abiding knowledge of the Word, even as it removes us from the Sunday morning opportunity for study of God's Word for our own benefit. Sunday School teacher training is then another important opportunity for training in God's Word. As we study upcoming lessons, share ideas and insights, seek effective ways to apply God's Word, and give and receive encouragement, we are strengthening others and being strengthened in the Word. We need this spiritual training.

The apostle Paul helps us prepare for our daily spiritual battle. In the verses that follow his warning about “spiritual forces of evil” in Ephesians 6:12, Paul identifies the armor by which God protects us and our students in our battle against evil.

Stand Firm

How strong is your commitment to teaching Sunday School? Does it waver at times? Being in the presence of others who are committed is a great source of encouragement. At regular Sunday School teachers meetings, we can support and pray for one another—for deepened commitment, stronger faith, and special insight to reach that special child with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Put on the Breastplate of Righteousness

Jesus said, “But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person” (Matthew 15:18). Our words, actions, and values flow from the faith in our hearts. What is on the inside is what counts.

Our regular meeting with our peers for the study of God’s Word can make a difference. Satan is going after our hearts and the hearts of our students. We need to have our breastplate of righteousness firmly in place. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus reigns in our hearts. He is our first line of defense.

Readiness as Shoes for Your Feet

No matter where we are, what we are doing, or when we are doing it, we are witnesses for Jesus. We are, at all times and places, to be “prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). Are we ready to walk the extra mile to support and be supported by our fellow teachers?

Fasten on the Belt of Truth

Our society distorts the truth, suggesting that truth is whatever you want it to be, that anyone can declare his or her own truth. “I believe in some of the Bible, but a six-day creation? a virgin birth? Come on.” “Taking God’s name in vain is no big deal. Whom does it hurt?” “You don’t have to stay pregnant. It’s not really a baby, just a bunch of tissue.” “Christianity is okay, but Muslims have faith in God too.”

God’s Word is clear: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’” (John 14:6). Our students need to hear that Jesus is the eternal truth. On at least a monthly basis, surround yourself with your fellow teachers and study God’s Word of truth.

Take Up the Shield of Faith

Roman soldiers put their shields together to defend against barrages of enemy arrows. We need to stand together. Your faith, my faith, and the faith of others need the power of God’s Word to grow and become stronger. We gather to share, encourage, and remind one another of God’s love for us in Jesus Christ.

Take the Helmet of Salvation

At times, our heads can be filled with doubts, anxieties, and other misguided thoughts that distract us from the hope we have in Jesus Christ. The helmet of salvation is our defense.

A helmet is a recognizable symbol of an army's soldiers. The apostle Paul writes, "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12–13). This is not a onetime take-it-or-leave-it event. It is an ongoing process. We are always praying and listening to God's Word. This is what we do together as Christians.

The Sword of the Spirit, Which Is the Word of God

Then, strengthened by the Word, we can go on the offensive. We have all the defensive equipment we need. It is through the Word of God that we are victorious. Our foes are defeated. Consistent, intentional, and prayerful training with and for others in God's all-powerful Word is something against which evil cannot defend.

Effective Sunday School teachers are in the Word. They take advantage of every opportunity to share, listen, and learn. They attend the Divine Service for regular nourishment through Word and Sacrament. They attend Bible study whenever possible. And they take part in regular teacher training. See you there!

Lesson Scope and Sequence: God Provides Judges and a King

These lessons focus on Old Testament accounts of the judges and the first kings.

Lesson	Title	Text
1	The Twelve Spies in Canaan	Numbers 13–14
2	Entering the Promised Land	Joshua 3:1–5:12
3	The Fall of Jericho	Joshua 6
4	Deborah	Judges 4–5
5	Gideon	Judges 6:11–7:25
6	Samson	Judges 16
7	Ruth	Book of Ruth
8	God’s Servant Samuel	1 Samuel 1–3
9	Saul Becomes King	1 Samuel 8–10; 11:12–15
10	David and Goliath	1 Samuel 17
11	David and Jonathan	1 Samuel 18:1–5; 20
12	David Becomes King	1 Samuel 16:1–13; 2 Samuel 5:1–10
13	God Forgives David	2 Samuel 12:1–23

Weekly Podcasts

For teachers using the Cross Explorations Sunday School material, there is a wonderful weekly podcast resource available at www.cph.org/sundayschool. Click on “Seeds of Faith Podcast” in the Sunday School tools. This weekly interview unpacks the richness of the Bible text. Teachers will gain practical, relevant, biblical information to inform their teaching of the lesson.

Preparing the Lesson

The Twelve Spies in Canaan

Numbers 13–14

Date of Use

Key Point

By God's power, Israel rose victorious over many great enemies. By the power of Christ, who fought for us on the cross, we are victorious over the greater enemies of sin, death, and the devil.

Law/Gospel

I do not always believe God's promises; instead, I grumble and am afraid. **God, who always keeps His promises, kept His promise to send His Son to save me from my sin through His sacrifice on the cross.**

Context

A year and a few months after leaving Egypt, the nation of Israel stands on the brink of the Promised Land. More than four hundred years have passed since Jacob and his sons entered Egypt. Now, countless Israelites stand poised to sink deep roots in holy soil. But, alas, ten of the dozen spies who have scoped out the land throw a pall over the people's enthusiasm. They return with a good news/bad news report. "The land is lovely, to be sure," they say, "but the inhabitants are gargantuan! There's no way we can conquer them." Such rebellion ignites divine anger, brings down a curse on everyone age 20 and older, and begins the infamous forty years of wandering in the wilderness.

Commentary

Taking the land will not be as easy as taking candy from a baby—and that's not easy. The Canaanites, Jebusites, and a whole pack of other "ites" won't simply pack up and move out when Israel moves in to claim the land. So a plan of attack is needed; thus the mission of the spies to check out the land and its inhabitants. The land "checks out" as God had promised. It's top-notch real estate. The heavy, takes-two-men-to-carry cluster of grapes is ample proof of that.

"But," warn ten of the twelve spies, "we might as well dig our graves before we attack. We are grasshoppers compared to those giants. Plus, their cities are built like castles. God wants us to bite off more than we can chew. Mission: impossible." With such words, the spies (all but Caleb and Joshua) squash the hopes of Israel. The people, first dejected, then infuriated, soon want a pound of flesh from Moses and Aaron. Back to Egyptian slavery they want to go.

Such is fallen human nature. It revolts against God's ways when they seem contrary to reason or common sense. It tells David to put away his sling and kiss Goliath's feet. It tells the ten spies and the tens of thousands of Israelites to turn tail and run back to their former masters. In other words, sin says that God is a liar—that He can't do what He says He'll do. Better to trust in your five senses and one brain than any five words of the one true God.

But God, from creation onward, specializes in the impossible. He makes everything out of nothing. With Him, grasshoppers *can* stomp the life out of giants, sky-high city walls *can* tumble down, ninety-nine-pound Israelites *can* take on and *take out* any muscular "ites" who dare stand in their way. So say Joshua and Caleb, for so says our Lord, who fights for us every step of the way.

The enemies the Israelites fear are tokens also of the greater enemies we still face today: the "ites" of sin, death, and our archenemy, Satan. Who can stand against such mammoth foes? Christ can, and Christ has. He has proven to be faithful to His Father, victorious in all combat. On the cross, He took on and took out every adversary of humanity. God Himself came down from heaven to fight for us.

To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit cph.org/podcast and listen to our Seeds of Faith podcast each week.

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Arch® Book Connections

Children love the rhyming patterns found in Concordia Publishing House's beloved Arch Book series. Arch Books also offer lots of options for expanding and enriching your Cross Explorations lessons:

Read the Arch Book as a sort of "readers theater." Have students take turns reading stanzas, pages, or even the whole book. This would make a great Opening activity or lesson review.

Make a "book trailer"—sort of like a movie trailer—of the Arch Book with a narration that "plugs" the book. Here's an example: He was small—his adversary, a giant! He had only five smooth stones, while his enemy had a spear as long as a weaver's beam. Thrill to the challenge! "Ha, ha, ha! Come out and fight, pip-squeak!" Tremble with fear! "King Saul, what shall we do?!" Read it for yourself and find out who comes out victorious! Available now at your Sunday School library! The story of David and . . . (bum, bum, baaa!) Goliath!

Do a dramatic presentation of an Arch Book, and share it with another class. If the upper grade students do one story as a drama or trailer, make sure the lower grades see the final results. Let the younger children perform for the upper grades as well.

Have students create their own rhyming book with illustrations. Take digital pictures of the illustrations, and make them into a PowerPoint slide "book." These could be performed in a chapel service or the Opening in Sunday School.

If your church provides "worship bags" to help keep young children focused during the worship service, consider inserting the Arch Books for the quarter in those bags. With each new quarter, change out the Arch Books to include the applicable stories.

These are the Arch Books that correspond to the lessons for this quarter:

Lesson 1: *Rahab's Red Thread*, 59-2228

Lesson 3: *Jericho's Tumbling Walls*, 59-1539

Lesson 4: *Deborah Saves the Day*, 59-2220

Lesson 5: *God Provides Victory through Gideon*, 59-1587

Lesson 6: *Samson Strong and Faithful*, 59-2276
Samson, 59-1600

Lesson 7: *Ruth and Naomi*, 59-2211

Lesson 8: *A Mother Who Prayed*, 59-1535

The Lord Calls Samuel, 59-1583

Lesson 10: *One Boy, One Stone, One God*, 59-2249

Lesson 11: *David and His Friend Jonathan*, 59-1593

God Provides Judges and a King

Old Testament 3

Weekly Bulletin Notes

Help parents and others stay connected to your Sunday School with these weekly bulletin summaries of the Bible lesson for the week. An electronic version for placement in your church bulletin is also available online: www.cph.org/sundayschool.

Lesson 1

Sunday School students studied “The Twelve Spies in Canaan” today. We are like the faithless Israelites, doubting and revolting against God’s ways and direction. God forgave them and He forgives us our sins of disbelief through Christ who defeated sin for us on the cross. Parents could ask, *“How do we sometimes doubt God? What has God promised us?”*

Lesson 2

At the Jordan River, led by Joshua, Israel leaves the desert in this week’s Sunday School lesson “Entering the Promised Land.” In Baptism, led by Christ, we leave behind the desert of sin, death, and Satan so we may enter into the promised land of heaven. Parents might ask, *“What did the Israelites create to remind them of their crossing into the Promised Land? What do you have to remind you of your Baptism?”*

Lesson 3

In Sunday School this week students studied “The Fall of Jericho.” We are reminded that God is our mighty fortress who delivers us from the false walls of our sin and saves us in the true Joshua, (Jesus) that we might become and remain His people. Ask students, *“What did the people of Jericho think their wall (fortress) would do for them? What does God our Fortress do for us?”*

Lesson 4

Today in Sunday School students studied Deborah, one of the Old Testament judges. Through Deborah, Barak, and Jael, God brought about victory for His people and freed them from cruel oppression; through Christ’s death on the cross, God brought about our victory and freed us from sin, death, and the devil. Parents could ask, *“How did God use Deborah to help His people? How does God help His people today?”*

Lesson 5

Gideon’s amazing victory over the enemies of God’s people recorded in Judges 6–7 was the subject of today’s Sunday School lesson. Christ, the light of the world, overcomes the darkness of sin, death, and the devil, even as God overcame Israel’s enemy while the light streamed from the lamps of Gideon’s men. Discuss with your children, *“What do you think was the most amazing part of Gideon’s victory? Why is it important that Jesus won the victory over sin and death?”*

Lesson 6

Samson was the subject of this week’s Sunday School lesson. Students learned that Jesus repeats and completes Samson’s deeds of deliverance for us and for our salvation. When we are weak, He is strong! Consider asking, *“What was the true source of Samson’s strength? Who is the source of our strength?”*

Lesson 7

Today in Sunday School students learned how God used Ruth to accomplish His purposes for our salvation. Through her family God brought forth His Son, the Savior of all people including Jews and Gentiles, men and women. Parents could ask, *“How did Ruth demonstrate her trust in God? How does God help us to trust in Him?”*

Lesson 8

Lesson 1: The Twelve Spies in Canaan

Text: Numbers 13–14

Date Used: _____

Key Point: By God’s power, Israel rose victorious over many great enemies. By the power of Christ, who fought for us on the cross, we are victorious over the greater enemies of sin, death, and the devil.

Law/Gospel: I do not always believe God’s promises; instead, I grumble and am afraid. **God, who always keeps His promises, kept His promise to send His Son to save me from my sin through His sacrifice on the cross.**

To bring:

Engage

Approximate time: _____

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Suggested Songs: “Child of God,” Track 1; “One, Two, Three! Jesus Loves Me!” Track 2; “We Are in God’s House Today,” Track 4

Bible Challenge Question: What book of the Bible is named after one of the twelve spies who snuck into the new land to get information? **Joshua**

Notes: _____

To bring:

Explore

Approximate time: _____

Level 1 (Grades 1–3)

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes: _____

Level 2 (Grades 4–6)

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes: _____

Adult Bible Study

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes: _____

To bring:

Express Options (Choose 2 or more!)

Approximate
times:

Slot 1:

Slot 2:

Slot 3*:

Slot 4*:

Slot 5*:

Slot 6*:

- ☐ **Music:** Child of God, Track 2
Psalm 46:10, Track 16
Have No Fear, Little Flock, Track 4

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes:

- ☐ **Skit:** The Twelve Spies in Canaan

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes:

- ☐ **Craft:** Caleb's Spyglass

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes:

- ☐ **Food Activity:** Promised Land Snack

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes:

- ☐ **Service Activity:** Military Care Packages

Location: _____

Leader(s): _____

Notes:

*If applicable

Old Testament 3

God Provides Judges and a King

Lesson	Title	Date of Use
1	The Twelve Spies in Canaan	_____
2	Entering the Promised Land	_____
3	The Fall of Jericho	_____
4	Deborah	_____
5	Gideon	_____
6	Samson	_____
7	Ruth	_____
8	God's Servant Samuel	_____
9	Saul Becomes King	_____
10	David and Goliath	_____
11	David and Jonathan	_____
12	David Becomes King	_____
13	God Forgives David	_____