

The Walls of Jericho

Fall Down



Overview

Materials You'll Need

- small round rice cakes (store bought)
- cream cheese or frosting
- plastic spoons or knives
- graham crackers
- paper plates
- old newspapers
- gummy bears



Scriptures

Josh 6

Bible Truth Objective(s)

God's plan is always the best plan; God can help us and give us courage

Behavioral Objective(s)

To trust God by obeying His words; to have courage that God can help us even when things are hard

Memory Verse

"Shout! For the Lord has given you the city." (Josh 6:16)



Bible Knowledge

Jericho

The city of Jericho is one of the oldest cities in the world, and was built thousands of years before Joshua was born. It is situated in the lower Jordan Valley. According to Genesis 13:10, this valley was well watered and compared to "the garden of the Lord." With such rich soil and a warm climate, Jericho was an attractive area to live in.

The city of Jericho, at the time of Joshua, was not a large city. It measured less than half a mile in circumference. Therefore, it would not have been difficult to march around the city, as God had commanded the Israelites to do. However, as the Bible describes, the city was well-fortified. In some places, the wall could have been built up to 25 feet high and 20 feet thick. Soldiers standing guard on top of the walls could see for miles. Though it was a small city, Jericho was a symbol of military power and strength. When God made the walls fall flat at the mere sound of the shouts of the people, it demonstrated His great power.

God's Instructions

Why did God give Joshua complicated instructions for the destruction of Jericho (Josh 6:1-5)? It was because God had intended to test the faith and willingness of the Israelites to follow Him completely. God was making it undeniably clear that the battle would depend upon Him, and not upon Israel's weapons.

God also demanded the Israelites to destroy everything and everyone in Jericho. Although it may seem harsh, God wanted to keep His people from defiling themselves. Because of their evil practices and intense idolatry, the Canaanites were a stronghold of rebellion against God. God's purpose in all this was to keep the Israelites' faith pure, without contamination. It was God's intention to obliterate all Canaanite practices. When the Israelites did not follow God's instructions perfectly, there were disastrous results (i.e. the defeat at Ai).

However, Rahab and her household were saved because she had faith in God, and she had helped the Israelite spies.



Understanding Your Students

As with the previous lesson, this lesson aims to teach the children about trusting in the Lord. In this story, we can show them a concrete way in which to demonstrate their trust in God: to obey the Ten Commandments. While trust is quite abstract, obedience is not, and the story of the Israelites' victory at Jericho shows that to obey God means to trust God. Children can easily grasp the notion that they are to obey their parents; that is, to do what they tell them. This can be extended to following instructions from teachers in church and at school. Remind the students that when they obey their parents, it means that they trust in them. Likewise, when they obey God's commandments, they are trusting in God. Review some of the Ten Commandments with them (e.g. keep the Sabbath, don't be greedy, obey their parents, etc), and give them ideas about how they can obey

them.

As they grasp the idea that to trust in God means to obey Him, show them that people who trust in God by obeying Him are protected. In this story, the Israelites trusted in God and obeyed rather odd instructions. As a result, the great city of Jericho fell to the Israelites without a single Israelite casualty. When the Israelites ate manna, they were given specific instructions on how and when to gather it. As long as they followed those instructions, they always had food to eat. God protects and cares for those who exercise their trust in Him by obeying Him. Teach the children that if they obey God regularly in their lives, God will always protect and care for them. Even if it seems hard at the time, everything is always in God's plan, and under His protection. This is a lifelong lesson; however, examples like this story, coupled with testimonies, can help the students begin to build a foundation of trust in the Lord.



Vocabulary

Defeat

to beat something

Instructions

words that tell us what to do

Destroy

a get rid of something

The Ark of the Covenant

a special box that carried the holy things of God, for example the Ten Commandment stone tablets



Before You Teach

From the story of how the Israelites conquered Jericho, we can learn how to conquer the "Jericho" in our hearts. What are the "Jerichos" in our hearts? Perhaps it is pride, selfishness, or the inability to forgive others. We all have things that are difficult for us to overcome on our own. But what we can do is to rely wholly on God's power to defeat them. The walls of Jericho might have seemed insurmountable to the Israelites who had little, if any, experience in warfare. Yet, because they depended completely on God and obeyed all of His instructions, they were able to conquer the city. It is God's intention that we live our lives "Jericho-free," and if we follow His instructions, as

the Israelites did, victory is sure to be ours.

As they conquered Jericho, God also asked His people to destroy all the things of the city because He didn't want the Israelites to be defiled by the Canaanites evil practices. Although it may have seemed unreasonable to get rid of everything, God did this because He was protecting the Israelites. It is also critical for us to remember to destroy all remnants of the "old city" once the "walls" in our hearts come tumbling down. In order to do that we need to build God's kingdom in our hearts by being filled with the Holy Spirit. Today's lesson teaches us that if we want to triumph over sin, so that it is completely eliminated, we must be obedient and loyal to God and His teachings.



Bible Story

Rahab Saves the Spies

Children, do you remember one day Joshua sent two spies into Jericho to see how strong the city was and how many soldiers there were?

Even though the two spies got a good look at the land, someone saw them in the city. The two spies had to hide before they were found. They hid in a home near the city wall. A woman named Rahab hid them until it was safe for them to leave the city. Because she saved their lives, they promised Rahab that when they attacked Jericho she and her family would not be killed.

When the spies returned to the camp, the people were very happy because they had come back safely. What they had done was dangerous but God had protected them. That really encouraged the people to believe that God would give them the land He had promised.

Going to Jericho

After the Israelites decided to go to Jericho, they knew that they would need help. Jericho would be a hard city to win, because it had strong, high walls surrounding it. The high walls would keep anyone from getting in so the people inside would be protected. How could the Israelites break through the thick, tall wall in order to defeat the people of Jericho? The Israelites didn't have a plan, but they relied on God, and God had a plan. What do you think God's plan was? Do you think God's plan was to take lots of big hammers to break down the wall? Or maybe He would ask them to use fire to burn down the wall? No, neither of these plans would work because the wall was made of stone, and even a very large hammer would not knock it down. And fire can't harm stone. God had a better plan, and it was a strange and funny plan.

God told the people going to Jericho to line up. Soldiers would be first, next the priests with trumpets, then priests carrying the ark of the covenant and last more soldiers. Do you remember what priests do? Priests are people who work for God. Some priests worked for God by playing instruments, like the trumpet, which goes "TOOT!" Other priests worked for God by helping to carry the ark.

Remember, the ark is a special box that contained things that belonged to God. God told them to line up in this order: soldiers, priests with trumpets that go "TOOT!", priests with the ark, and then more soldiers. After everyone got in line, they weren't allowed to talk. Only the priests with the trumpet could blow the horns, but everyone else had to be very quiet. They would march in a straight line to Jericho, march around the city once, and then go home. Do you know what it means to march? Can someone raise their hand and show me what marching looks like? (Take a volunteer; if no one knows, demonstrate by stomping feet on ground, alternately.) This was what God wanted them to do: march around the city, and be very quiet, except for the tooting trumpets. Isn't this a funny plan? God told them that for six days, they had to wake up early, line up, march around Jericho one time, and then go home. No talking, only trumpets playing. Now, how is anyone going to knock down a big, tall wall just by marching around it? And if you take a trumpet and blow into it as loud as you can, do you think you could break down the walls in your own house? No, of course not! But God had His plan and He wanted the Israelites to trust Him.

The Israelites trusted God by obeying His commands. On the first day, they did just what He asked them to. They lined up, marched around the city, and went home. On the second day, they woke up early, lined up, walked around the city, and went home. They did the same thing again on the third day, the fourth day, the fifth day, and the sixth day (use visual aids to demonstrate six days, crossing out each day or posting up each day as it progresses). Were the Israelites obedient? Obedient means you do something exactly the way your mom or dad tells you to do it. The Israelites did exactly what God told them to do: line up, walk around the city, and then go home. They did all this without talking. Only the trumpets were playing. They followed God's instructions very carefully.

Can you imagine what the people of Jericho thought as they watched the Israelites march around their city tooting trumpets? They probably thought the Israelites were being silly. Imagine if someone came to your house and marched around it once, blew a trumpet and then went home. Wouldn't you wonder what that person was doing? It would be funny to see that, and the people inside

Jericho must have thought the Israelites were funny people. What were they doing walking around the big, thick wall? How would that help them get inside? Only God knew the answers to these questions.

The City Walls Collapse

On the seventh day the people got up early in the morning to start their march once more. But today, God wanted them to do something a little bit different. The last six days, God said that they just had to walk around Jericho once, but today, the seventh day, God told them to walk around it seven times! Around and around and around the city they marched—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. The Israelites were obedient to God, because they did exactly what God told them to do. They must have been so tired from walking around so much. But after the seventh time, they all stood still. What did God want them to do next? God had already told Joshua and now Joshua was ready to tell them.

"Shout! When the priests blow the trumpets, you need to shout!" cried Joshua, "For the Lord has given you the city! But don't take anything for yourselves. Everything is for God! Remember, once we get into the city, don't take anything in the city for yourselves!"

Remember that on the first six days of marching, the people weren't allowed to say anything. But now, God wanted them to shout as loud as they could. So the soldiers and the people listened to God and shouted together, while the priests blew their trumpets as loudly as they could! Can you imagine how loud it

was? So many people were shouting all at once, and not only that, there were trumpets playing too. It was very loud. After they shouted, something amazing began to happen. The great strong walls began to shake and tremble. They were falling down! Crash! Crash! The strong walls fell flat to the ground with a great noise. God had made the big, tall walls around Jericho fall down! Isn't that amazing? Then God's people went into the city and made Jericho their own land.

Rahab and Her Family Are Saved

The people of Jericho did not know what to do as the Israelites entered the city. They did not expect to see their great and strong wall just fall apart because the Israelites played their trumpets and shouted loudly. They weren't ready to fight. So the Israelites destroyed everything God had asked them to, including the people. Only Rahab and her family were saved because she had helped the two spies before.

After the walls of Jericho fell down, the Israelites learned that God's plan was the best, and that they should trust in God for everything. At first, they didn't know how they were going to go through the tall, thick walls around Jericho, but they followed all of God's instructions, and God made it easy for them to take the city. The walls just fell down after they shouted. When they didn't know what to do, they just followed God's words, and God took care of them. The Israelites trusted in God, and God helped them.



Check For Understanding

- 1. What was the name of the city the Israelites were trying to enter?** (Jericho.)
- 2. What did God ask the Israelites to do on the first six days?** (God told the people to march in a straight line to Jericho without saying one word, walk around the city wall one time while the priests blew their trumpets, then return to camp.)

- 3. What did God ask the Israelites to do on the seventh day?** (God told the people to march in a straight line to Jericho, walk around the city seven times and shout as loudly as they could afterward while the priests played their trumpets.)
- 4. What happened when the people shouted?** (The walls fell flat to the ground. Then the people could enter the city of Jericho.)
- 5. Who were the only people who were saved?** (Rahab and her family because she had helped the spies.)

6. **Why did God want to destroy all the people?** (The people in the city did not worship God.)

7. **Why were the Israelites able to win?** (God

helped them and they followed all of His words, even though it was a strange plan. But the Israelites learned that God's plan is always the best.)



Life Application Story

The Terrible Earthquake

Ricky and Juan were reading in the family room one afternoon. It was quiet and they were enjoying the sun shining through the window. Then Ricky noticed something strange.

"Did you feel something, like the ground shaking?" asked Ricky.

"No, you must have been reading for too long," laughed Juan.

But as soon as Juan had finished saying that, the ground began to shake and shift in every direction.

Immediately Ricky yelled, "It's an earthquake! Hallelujah! Please protect us from harm, God!"

"Hallelujah! God please help us!" Juan yelled. It all happened so quickly that the two brothers didn't know what to do. They watched as the bookshelf shook. They thought all the books would come falling down on top of them. Even though it seemed like a very long time to Ricky and Juan, the earthquake stopped after about 5 seconds. Juan ran to Ricky right away, as soon as the shaking stopped.

"I'm scared, Ricky," said Juan. But no sooner had Juan said those words, the room started shaking again. Juan held onto Ricky as tightly as he could. This time Ricky grabbed Juan and they both hid under the big desk. They kept saying, "Hallelujah, God please help us!"

Ricky and Juan closed their eyes and waited for the earthquake to end. After five seconds, the ground stopped shaking. The boys waited under the desk for a few more minutes. When Ricky was sure it was really over, they came out.

"Thank God! He saved our lives, Juan," Ricky said as he held onto Juan. "Are you okay?"

"Yes," replied Juan, still a little bit shaken up. "But look Ricky, your books have fallen off from

the bookshelf."

"Thank God we were not harmed," Ricky said. "I hope Mom and Dad are okay at work too."

"I want to check out my room, Ricky. Do you think it's safe to go?"

"I think so. I'll go with you," Ricky said.

As soon as Juan saw his room, he became sad.

"Oh no! All my toys are everywhere!"

"That's okay Juan. We can always clean that up. The most important thing is that God protected and helped us," said Ricky.

"Ricky, do you think Mom and Dad are alright at work?"

"We need to have courage, Juan, and trust in God. I'm sure God protected them from getting hurt," Ricky comforted Juan.

"You are right, Ricky. God is almighty. He won't let the people He loves get hurt," Juan said.

"You know what? Let's kneel down to pray and thank God for His protection. We can also pray that Mom and Dad are safe," Ricky said.

"Good idea!" Juan said.

They both thanked God from their hearts for His protection.

Questions to Think About

1. **What happened when Ricky and Juan were reading?** (There was an earthquake.)
2. **Were they hurt?** (No.)
3. **What did Ricky do to help his brother Juan?** (He held him tight and said words to comfort him.)
4. **What did they do to thank God for protecting them?** (They knelt down and prayed to God.)
5. **What do you think Ricky and Juan's parents are thinking at work?** (Allow students to answer.)
6. **Have there been times when God has protected you from harm?** (Allow students to answer.)



Activity 1

The Israelites March Around Jericho

How many times did they march around on the seventh day? (7 times.) Color in the picture if time permits.



Activity 2

How Did the Israelites Win?

Find out how the Israelites won at the city of Jericho by writing down every seventh letter (obey God) in order (starting from the top left). Write the letters down on the blanks.



Activity 3

Have Courage

The Israelites also won the battle because they had the courage to obey God. When we fall off a bike, we can ask God to give us the _____ (courage) to try again.



Activity 4

The Walls of Jericho

Materials:

1. small round rice cakes (store bought)
2. cream cheese or frosting
3. plastic spoons or knives
4. graham crackers
5. paper plates
6. gummy bears
7. old newspapers

Directions:

1. Cover the tables with old newspapers.
2. Give each student a paper plate and place one rice cake in the middle of the plate.
3. Provide each student with a plastic spoon or knife and have them spread frosting or cream cheese over and around the rice cake.

4. Demonstrate how to place the graham crackers upright around the rice cake (into the frosting so the "walls" will stay) to create the effect of the walls of Jericho.
5. Provide each student with several gummy bears.
6. Encourage the students to use their imagination and retell the story of how the Israelites marched around the walls of Jericho by using the gummy bears as people. Take the time to review the details of today's lesson. Here are some questions you could ask:
 - *How do you think the Israelites felt when God asked them to march around the city so many times?
 - *How do you think they felt when the walls came crashing down?
 - *God can do miraculous things for us when we trust and believe in Him. What kinds of great and wonderful things has He done for you or for your family?

The Israelites March Around Jericho



How many times did the Israelites march around Jericho on the seventh day?

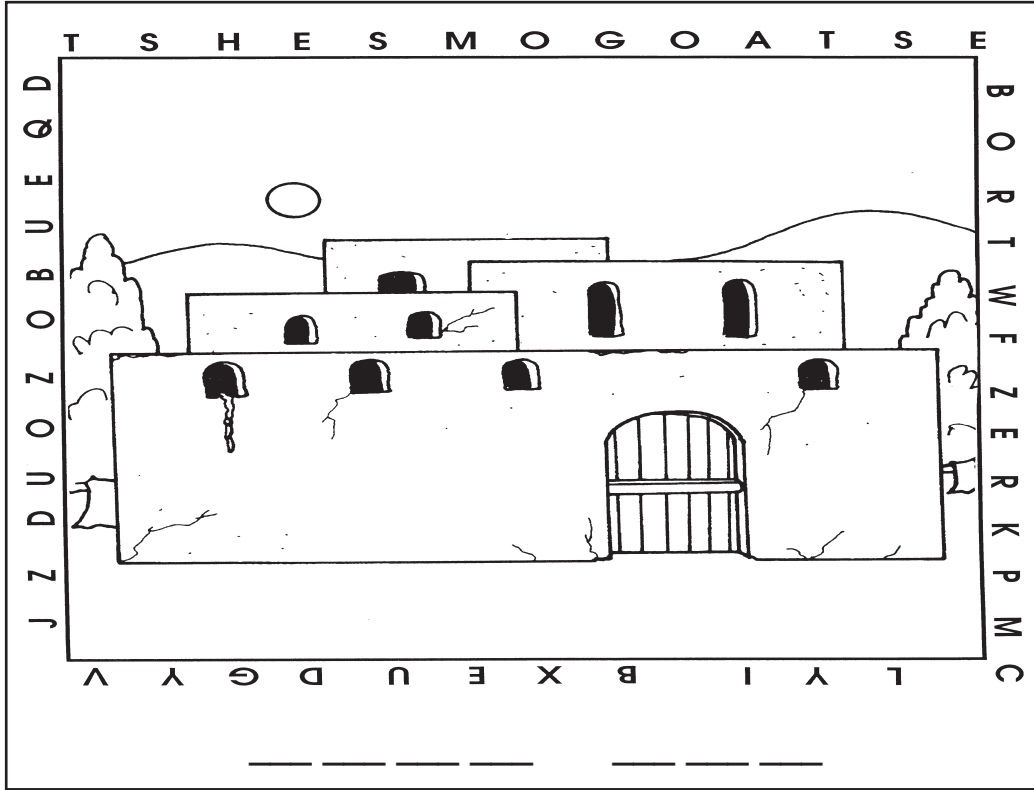
_____ TIMES

How Did the Israelites Win?

Activity 5:2

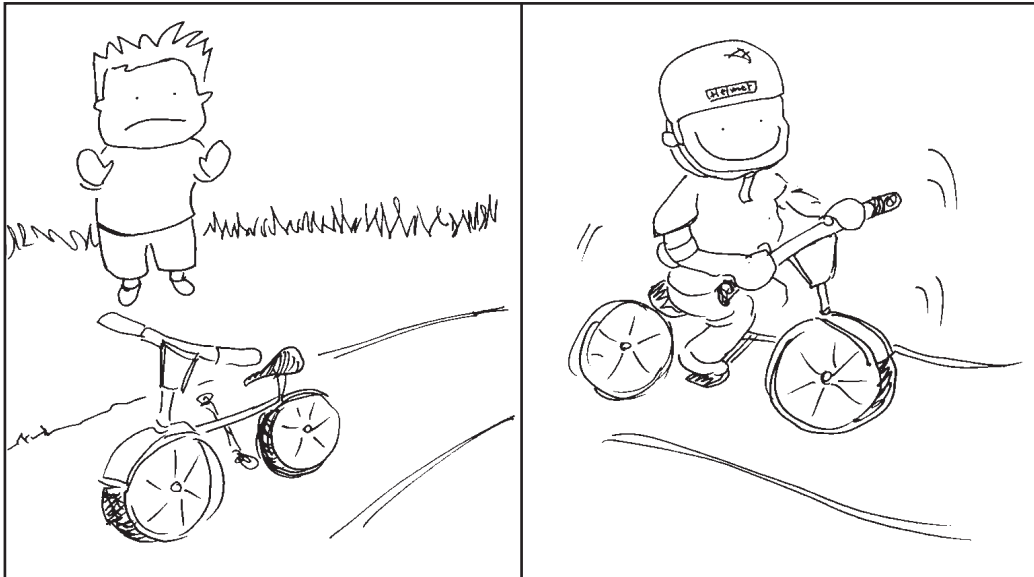
Find out how the Israelites won at the city of Jericho by writing down every seventh letter in order (starting from the top left).

Write the letters down on the blanks.



Activity 5:3

Have Courage



The Israelites also won the battle because they had the courage to obey God. When we fall off a bike, we can ask God to give us the _____ to try again.