

# JOSHUA CONQUERING JERICHO

Joshua 6:1-27

## STRUCTURE

**Key-person:** Joshua

**Key-location:** Jericho

### Key-repetitions:

- Promise that Jericho would be conquered before the battle: the Lord told Joshua that he had delivered Jericho into his hands (Jos 6:2); Joshua told the Israelites to shout because the Lord had given them the city (Jos 6:16).
- Instructions for conquering Jericho: the Lord instructed Joshua (Jos 6:3-5); Joshua instructed others (Jos 6:6-7); the instructions were obeyed (Jos 6:8-21).
- Destroy: the city and all that are in it are to be destroyed as an offering to the Lord (Jos 6:17); if you take anything that should be destroyed, then you will be destroyed (Jos 6:18); the Israelites destroyed every living thing in the city (Jos 6:21); they burned everything in the city (Jos 6:24).
- Go into the Lord's treasury: all silver, gold, and articles of bronze and iron are holy and must go into the Lord's treasury (Jos 6:19); they burned everything, except they put silver, gold, and articles of bronze and iron into the Lord's treasury (Jos 6:24).

### Key-attitudes:

- People of Jericho's fear.
- Joshua's solemnity when he gave instructions and warnings.
- Israelites' gravity when they followed Joshua's instructions.

### Initial-situation:

God informed Joshua that Moses was dead and that the time had come for the Israelites to take possession of the Promised Land. The Israelites were camped along the east bank of the Jordan River. On the other side of the river was the Promised Land of Canaan.

Joshua chose two men and sent them to spy out the city of Jericho. A prostitute named Rahab hid the two spies and pleaded with them to spare her family when the Israelites conquered Jericho.

The Jordan River was flooding; however, the Lord stopped the flow of the waters and the Israelites walked across the Jordan River into Canaan. The kings west of the Jordan River were terrified of the Israelites.

### Initial-problem:

Jericho was shut up tightly because of the Israelites.

**Final-situation:**

The city walls of Jericho collapsed and the Israelites destroyed every living thing in it – people and animals; except Joshua spared Rahab, the prostitute, and her family. The Lord was with Joshua and helped Joshua in everything he did.

**BIBLE STORY**

The city of Jericho was shut up tightly because of the Israelites. The Lord told Joshua, "I have delivered Jericho into your hands. For six days, march around the city with the army one time every day. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times with the priests blowing the trumpets. Then have the priests sound a long blast on the trumpets. When you hear that, all the people are to give a loud shout. Then the city wall will collapse, and the people will go up straight into the city."

The Israelites obeyed the Lord's instructions. On the first day, an armed guard marched in front; next came the trumpet-blowing priests; they were followed by priests carrying the Ark; then came the rear guard. Those marching didn't speak a word. They circled the city once. Then they returned to camp and spent the night. For six days, the men marched around the city once each day and then returned to the camp.

On the seventh day, they circled the city seven times. The seventh time around, the priests sounded the long trumpet blast and Joshua commanded, "Shout! The Lord has given you this city! The city and all that is in it are to be destroyed as an offering to the Lord. Only spare Rahab, the prostitute, and all those in her house, because she hid the spies we sent. If you take anything that should be destroyed as an offering to God, then you, yourselves, will be destroyed. You will endanger the camp of Israel and you will make trouble for everyone. All silver and gold, all articles of bronze and of iron are holy to the Lord and must go into his treasury."

The trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and the wall collapsed. Every man charged straight in and they took the city. They offered the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it – people and animals.

Joshua spared Rahab, the prostitute, and her family. But they burned everything in the city, with the exception of the silver and gold, and articles of bronze and iron which they placed into the Lord's treasury.

The Lord was with Joshua. The Lord helped Joshua in everything he did (Jos 6:1-27).

**GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS**

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story?                  | 5. How did the characters face their problems?                                       |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems?  |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story?                  | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face?                     | 8. What does the story tell about God?   |

## SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When the city of Jericho was shut up tightly, what promise did God make to Joshua?
2. What battle plans did the Lord give to Joshua?
3. What commands and warnings did Joshua give the soldiers?
4. How did the Israelites conquer Jericho?
5. What was destroyed and what was spared in the city?
6. Why was one family in Jericho spared?
7. Why was Joshua able to conquer Jericho?
8. What did you learn from the story that will help you face battles in your life?

## LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Pre-conditions for a sinner to be forgiven and to become an instrument used by God are: trust God, confess confidence in God, and take a stand to serve him.** The prostitute Rahab had faith in God, confessed her faith to the Israelite spies and helped them. Her life was spared (Jos 2:9-11). Her faith resulted in God's considering her a righteous person, and it produced action that benefitted God's people. Her name is included in the list of the heroes of faith (Heb11:31). She became an ancestor of King David and of Jesus Christ (Mat 1:5-16).
2. **God's servants fight against a defeated enemy.** Before the battle against Jericho, God told Joshua that the city of Jericho was already delivered into his hands; the enemy was already defeated (Jos 6:2-5). Christians also fight against a defeated enemy; Satan was defeated by Christ (Rom 8:37-39; Heb 2:14-15; 1 Jn 3:8). Christians still fight battles every day and sin is prevalent, but Christians have the assurance that the war has already been won. They can overcome sinful habits, evil people, and the world through Christ's power.
3. **Different people use different methods to do God's work.** The leader Moses sent Joshua to fight the Amalekites. Moses climbed a hill and held up his hands while Joshua won the battle (Ex 17:8-13). To conquer Jericho, Joshua told the army to march in silence around the city one time every day for six days. On the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. After the priests sounded a long blast on the trumpets and the people gave a loud shout, the city wall fell (Jos 6:1-27).
4. **Events that punish God's enemies may at the same time benefit those who trust the Lord.** The destruction of Jericho enabled the Israelites to live in Canaan. The destruction of Jericho is interwoven with the salvation of Rahab and her family (Jos 2:12-20; 6:17-25). The story emphasizes Rahab's salvation as much as the account of Jericho's fall.

5. **God's people need to remove from their presence evil practices.** God demanded that the Israelites destroy almost everyone and everything in Jericho (Jos 6:21). God carried out severe judgment against the wickedness of the Canaanites. This judgment required that everything be destroyed (Deut 12:2-3; 13:12-18). The Canaanites were a stronghold of rebellion against God and a threat to the right kind of living that God required. If not removed, the Canaanites would affect all Israel like a cancerous growth. The story of Judges shows that the remaining Canaanites did contaminate Israel.

## **LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

### **Pantomime Retelling of the Story:**

The storyteller tells the story one time. Then the storyteller:

- Chooses a listener to pantomime the story as the storyteller tells it a second time.
- Invites a listener to retell the story.
- Asks listeners if the one who retold the story left out or added to the story.