

JOSHUA CONQUERS JERICHO

Scripture:
Joshua 5:13-6:27

Memory Verse: *Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6*

Materials Needed:
Pictures of lesson
Chess set
5 clothespins for each student

Objectives: As a result of this lesson, I want my students

To Know: that as Joshua was about to embark on conquering the cities and inhabitants of Canaan, the Captain of the Lord of Hosts met him, reminding Joshua of His presence and holiness. Afterwards, Joshua marched around Jericho seven times, carefully following God's instructions, completely destroying the city when the walls fell down, and devoting the precious items only to the Lord.

To Realize: that God's work must be done in God's way, and when God gives success He expects the full glory for the results, by receiving the first and best of what they have.

To Respond: by carefully obeying God, giving Him the full glory for the success, and offering Him the first and best.

Setting Up the Story—

Have a chess board set up with the two sides. Ask or tell what the object of the game is: to take the opponent's king.

When you start the game of chess, both players normally have the same number of the same pieces. They are starting from an equal advantage. But in today's lesson, we have Joshua who is about to start on his job of conquering this whole land of Canaan. And his job is going to be to go to each major city and take their king. Only what is Joshua missing? Does he have a king that is directing him? (they may say that God is his king—and that is a true point you will come back to in just a minute, but for now we are talking about a physical king like the other side has) (remove the king from Joshua's side of the board) Is there a queen in charge of the Israelites? No. (remove queen) Do they have bishops? Weeelll—maybe we could say that the priests would function in that sort of a role, so we'll leave them. What about horses and/or chariots? No. (remove the knights). Does he have a castle and a fortress that he can run back to? No. (remove the rooks.)

Telling the Story—

As you tell the story—

Scripture: Joshua
5: 13-15

I. Joshua Meets the Captain of the Lord of Hosts

A. About to conquer Jericho

If you were Joshua, how would you be feeling just about to begin this big battle against one of the best defended cities, Jericho. Against one of the best-equipped armies, against one of the strongest kings, against one of the best-walled cities? Do you think he might be feeling just a little bit nervous? Who do you bet he wants to make sure is on his side?! (God!) It's not long before the battle; Joshua looks up and there is a stranger standing just opposite him and he has a drawn sword. What goes through your mind?

B. Man standing with drawn sword

C. "Are you for us or our adversaries?"

D. "No. I come as captain of the Lord of Hosts."

1. Joshua falls on face
2. Asks what he has to say
3. Is told to remove his sandals because ground is holy.
4. Joshua does it.

Was this good news? God wasn't asking Joshua to go out there and saying, "Ok, Joshua, I'll back you up!" God was reminding Joshua that this was HIS battle. God wasn't joining Joshua—Joshua was joining GOD'S forces! And because God was going to be the one in charge of this thing, He had a specific way He wanted to do this FIRST battle.

II. Joshua Carefully Follows God's Instructions

A. God Instructs

1. First six days: March around city one time
2. On the seventh day:
 - a. March around seven times
 - b. Seven priests blow seven trump
 - c. All the people shout
 - d. Wall will fall down
 - e. Go in and destroy

(Point to chess board with uneven amounts of players) On Jericho's side we have everything that looks like it should. On Joshua's side we have a bunch of pawns and some priests...AND...what is the unseen part? GOD! And his forces. And God is going to make sure that EVERYONE SEES that HE is the one who is fighting against these Canaanites—that it is something Joshua can't make up. So God give Joshua really strange commands. Imagine this: instead of moving your pieces this way on the board, to

Scripture:
Joshua 6:1-5

Joshua 6:6-14

B. Joshua Obeys Details

1. Armed men go before

priests

2. Seven priests blow trumpets before the Lord
3. Ark follows
4. Rear guard follows in silence

Scripture:
Joshua 6:15-27

III. Joshua Gives God Glory; Offers the First and Best to Him

- A. Joshua explains NOT to take the silver, gold, bronze, and iron because they are for the Lord

- B. People utterly destroy

engage in battle—what if the pieces went off the board and started to circle around the other army? (take some pawns, followed by bishops, with more pawn behind) Of course, in a real game, the players couldn't do this—but this is what is happening. Imagine this from the soldiers' view who are on the walls guarding Jericho. They hear the seven trumpets begin to blow. They call the men of Jericho to get ready. "They're coming!! They're marching!!" They watch as the Israelite soldiers move, the priests move with the covered ark, and the rear guard comes up. Thousands of soldiers. Marching. Trumpets blowing. (pretend you are speaking as the person on the wall.)

"What are they doing?"

"I don't know. Nothing yet. Oh!

Watch out! They're coming around now! They're surrounding our city!

Oh, wait a minute! They are leaving."

"They're WHAT?!"

"They're leaving."

The next morning the Jericho guard wakes up...(repeat performance)

Then the seventh days comes. What are you thinking if you are one of the guards? Maybe laughing at these strange Israelites who have no chariots, who haven't even tried to batter down your strong walls, who haven't sent one soldier to fight. But today, the Israelites know, is the day God brings the walls down. This city is the FIRST. The STRONGEST. The BEST. And God is the one who is going to destroy it. And HE wants all the credit for it.

Read vs. 17 and 19. Ask your students what Joshua meant by "under the ban." What would soldiers

everything and everyone
C. Rahab and household alone
is saved.

D. Joshua curses rebuilding of
the city

normally do if they captured a city?
(Plunder—they get to keep anything
they find.) Why can't they keep any of
this? Because God expected to get
the first and the best! It was HIS and
He wasn't going to share the credit
with any person. On other battles
they could take the plunder, but this
FIRST one was different!

(Quickly finish telling the story of the
destruction and briefly mention
Rahab's rescue since that was
covered in last week's lesson in
detail.)

Concluding the story:

If you were Joshua and you were back at the camp after this great victory over the biggest city, Jericho, what lessons would you have learned about doing God's work? (have students answer)

I would like you to write down the answers to these three questions:

In what ways are you involved in God's work now?

In what ways does God get the credit for your successes?

In what ways do you give God the first and best of what you have?

(after they have written them down, if they are comfortable sharing, they can. If they feel their answers are too personal, close in prayer.)

Let's pray.

Boardwork:

JOSHUA CONQUERS JERICHO HELPS FOR THE TEACHER

Personal Application Questions:

1. Which do you have a tendency to do more often: see yourself as asking God to join you in the plans you have laid, or do you see Him as asking you to join Him in the plans He has laid?
2. In what ways are you involved in God's work?
3. In what ways do you give God the credit for your successes?
4. In what ways do you give God the first and best?

Application Questions to think through for your Students:

1. Although your students may not be in "full-time Christian work," in what ways has God called them to join Him in His work?
2. How might your students be tempted to take the credit for success God has given? How can they give credit to God instead?
3. How can your students give their first and best to God rather than taking it for themselves?

Memory Verse:

Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Write here which game you will use to teach this verse and any supplies you might need:

Post-Lesson Activity:

Play "Forget 'I'". Give 5 clothespins to each student. The object of the game is to talk about things without saying the word "I". Other students can try to trick each other with questions, such as, "What did you do yesterday?" (Note: the word *we* might be an acceptable substitute—decide this beforehand.) The kids can talk to each other and try to tempt each other into saying the 'forbidden word.' After 5 or 10 minutes, call everyone to a halt and count the clothespins. You might want to ask, "Who won?" (But make sure no one says, "I did!") You can tie this into the lesson by showing God's intention to take the whole credit and the first. This was not about Joshua being great—it was to show that God alone was great!

Homework Ideas:

During the week, have the students write down things for which they are praised and then write how they can or did give credit to God for those things.