



The Battle of Jericho

Plan



Note: To include everything here takes about an hour so some groups will need to shorten it or do it in 2 parts.

Aim/s select

- To look at how the Israelites won the Battle of Jericho and what it can teach us about how to win the spiritual battles that we face.
- God can deal with the toughest problem
- What happens when we trust and obey God even when it looks ridiculous

Key verse

Joshua 1:5-6 - No one will be able to defeat you all your life, if you obey all my teachings.
(Paraphrased from NCV)

Bible Verses

Although this story is mainly in Joshua chapter 6, you would find it helpful to read chapters 1-5 as background, especially

Joshua 1 16-17

Joshua 3:5 just before they crossed the Jordan

Joshua 5:10 celebrated Passover

Joshua 5:13-15 purified themselves

Hebrews 11:30 It was by faith that...

Resources select

For junk model map:

- Egg boxes
- Green sheet / flags / ribbons
- Model soldiers
- Bibles or extracts with appropriate text.
- Flashcards (see below) & pens or clue activity sheets from separate documents
- Large cardboard boxes for re-enactment activity
- Activity sheets

Visuals

These can show that it was a real place and not very large so try to find

- A photo of the ruins of Old Testament Jericho
- An appropriate map of the area.

I used 'Treasures from Bible Times' Alan Millard, p.94 & 97 for Canaan and to show the ruins of Jericho and 'Children's Atlas of the Bible' Nicola Baxter p.13. The picture symbols in this make the maps more interesting.

Junk model map

We made a large 3D map from an old green plastic tablecloth with blue ribbons and flags for the River Jordan and the Red Sea. We cut out egg boxes for Jericho, the camp at Gilgal and some pyramids (we needed 3 boxes). We also had some model Roman soldiers which pretended to be Israelite! This helped to visualise the story.

Programme

Ice breaker - Silly Bible quiz (for English groups only – this won't translate)

Who was the shortest man in the Bible? Bildad the Shuhite (shoe height)

Who was the second shortest man? Nehemiah (knee-high mia)

Who was the largest woman in the Bible? The woman of Samaria (some area)

Which Bible character played tennis? Joseph served in the courts of Pharaoh

Who had a motor bike? The sound of David's Triumph could be heard throughout the land

Which two ice cream companies are mentioned in the Bible? Lyons of Judah and **Walls of Jericho**

➤ So has anyone heard of Jericho? What do they know about it?

Main story

The way you approach this will depend on the background knowledge of your group.

We used our 'map' to remind us of how they had left Egypt and why they had spent 40 years in the wilderness. We used the newspaper style 'The Bible Chronicle' by Derek Williams to briefly cover the crossing of the Jordan.

Any available photos help to communicate that this was a real event in time and not just a story.

➤ **What problems were they facing?**

➤ **What advantages/disadvantages did they have?**

- They were facing an impossible situation. Jericho was extremely well fortified and was 'tightly shut up'
- Joshua was a new leader. Moses had only just died and Joshua no longer had him as a mentor.
- Israel had limited experience of warfare but their recent successes in battle (Numbers 21) could have caused them to start to be too self-assured.
- It was one thing to pledge obedience to Joshua, it was another to obey such ridiculous instructions. Some of them were surely tempted to suggest better ways of tackling this problem, such as building siege equipment (especially the budding engineers and military experts amongst them!) How would they have felt as they marched around Jericho each day?
- They had God's promises
- Joshua had been gifted and appointed by God
- The Israelites were determined not to repeat the mistakes of the past.
- They prepared themselves spiritually this battle and for what lay ahead.

Why did they win?

Was it because of an earthquake / shaky foundations/ sound/shock waves? For information on the earthquake idea see the Leader's notes and the Activity Sheet

Clues from the Bible

Select some Bible verses and write on flashcards for them to look up. Or use the activity sheet

1. Deuteronomy 34.9
2. Joshua 1.5 & 7
3. Joshua 1.16-18
4. Joshua 3.5
5. Joshua 5.10
6. Joshua 5.13-15
7. Hebrews 11.30

The spiritual preparation

1. They all had a time of spiritual preparation before the battle. They celebrated the Passover and made themselves holy.
2. Joshua in particular spent much time before God and met with God in a very special way. Joshua 5:13-15
3. It was a strong team effort. They obeyed God and supported their leader. They all pulled together.
4. They acted in faith.

The final score

Triumphant Trumpeters - Resounding victory
Catastrophic Canaanites – Total destruction

Challenge

We can't obey the Bible if we don't read it. Discuss ways to help us do this.

Prayer activity

Make a wall with lining paper or left over wallpaper. Everyone in the group may then draw a brick in the wall. Invite them to write or draw something in their brick which they would like to break down in their life e.g. Fear, anger, jealousy. Take the wall outside and hold it up. Invite them to pray, shout and charge through the wall to break it down.

Some groups may like to make swords from cardboard and write 'the sword of the Spirit = the Word of God'. Be aware that some groups may like to use any home-made weapon against each other. Use your discretion and/or imagination here!

Extra Ideas**Discussion questions**

- Do we obey what suits us?
- Do we obey what fits with the times?
- Do we ignore anything which makes us stand out as being different?
- The Israelites were prepared to look foolish for God. Are we afraid of being ridiculed? How can we deal with this?

For older groups

How can being a spiritual person help us with the problems we face in life?

Do you ever feel your life is going round in circles and getting nowhere?

Do you ever do something just because you feel sure that God is telling you to do it without being at all sure that it will ever lead anywhere?

Activity: Collect large cardboard boxes from supermarkets. Build a large scale junk model of Jericho which the group can march around while they re-enact the event.