

General Church Education



The Destruction of Jericho

Joshua 6

Lesson 8

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 4: The Lord Is the Hero

For ages 9-10

The Destruction of Jericho

Joshua 6

Teacher Background

As Joshua prepared Israel for battle, the people of Jericho trembled inside its walls. For six days the Israelites circled the city. Armed men led the way, followed by priests sounding trumpets and carrying the ark. Israel's men of war followed in silence. After circling the city once they returned to the camp at Gilgal. On the seventh day, Israel processed seven times around the city. When the priests blew a long trumpet blast the people shouted, and the city walls fell down. The Israelites rushed to take the city. The Lord commanded them to destroy everyone but Rahab and her family, and everything, except the silver, gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, which were to be given to the treasury of the house of the Lord.

Jericho was the first city the Israelites conquered in Canaan. Cities represent systems of belief or doctrines we use to rule how we live. When occupied by enemies, Jericho represents the pride and self-confidence we have in our own thoughts and loves. Its walls are false arguments we build to defend ourselves. These crumble when we listen to the Lord in His Word with a willingness to follow Him, just as the Israelites heard the trumpets and responded to the Lord's command. Seven pictures the new state that comes after a struggle to do what is right. It took Israel years to drive out its enemies, just as it takes time to learn to live from the Lord and not from ourselves.

Key Ideas

- True ideas from the Word can do miracles in our lives when we try to do what is right.
- The blowing of the trumpets is like the Lord speaking to us.
- All spoils except the silver, gold, and vessels were to be destroyed.

From the Writings

All places in Canaan signified spiritual things. Jericho signifies instruction in good and truth which introduces a person into the good of life. Since Canaan was held by idolatrous nations, Jericho signified falsity and evil which perverted truths and goods. See *Apocalypse Explained* 700.15.

“The priests were seven in number, and compassed the city seven days, and seven times on the seventh day, to signify what is holy...for seven signifies what is holy.” *Apocalypse Explained* 700.16

“‘In seven days’ signifies the beginning of a new church, and the end of the old.” *Arcana Coelestia* 728.5

“God’s truth from heaven was represented by the seven trumpets on which the seven priests blasted before the ark or in front of Jehovah when the walls of Jericho fell down. The trumpets achieved that effect because they represented God’s truth passing through the heavens. This truth perfects the good because they receive Divine Good present within Truth, but it destroys the evil because they do not receive Divine Good present there. ‘The walls of Jericho’ meant the falsities that defended evils.” *Arcana Coelestia* 8815.2

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Vocabulary

shofar—ram’s horn trumpet

abstain—to hold back from doing something

accursed thing—something hateful

consecrate—set apart for the Lord

This story is about the second miracle the Lord did with the ark. The children of Israel had crossed the Jordan River and were preparing to attack the first city in Canaan—the great walled city of Jericho. Cities in the Word stand for ways of thinking. Jericho, the beautiful “city of palms” pictures the idea that the Lord is really the one who fights our spiritual battles and wins the victory. The enemies in the city represent the false idea that we don’t need the Lord, that we can know what’s right without Him. To become angels we need to get rid of this idea, just as the children of Israel needed to destroy Jericho in order to take possession of Canaan.

Read Joshua 6:1.

Jericho Is Afraid

The citizens of Jericho were terrified. Nobody was allowed to go in or out of the city. They trembled behind high walls and strong doors. They remembered that the Lord had done amazing miracles for the children of Israel. They knew spies had visited, so they were probably expecting an attack. What kind of attack might they have been expecting? When would it happen? What kinds of

weapons might their enemy use? Would soldiers try to climb over the wall, or to batter down the city gates?

Read Joshua 6:2-5 to learn about the battle plan.

The Lord planned the battle of Jericho in an amazing way. The people would hear the sound of shofars—ram’s horn trumpets—as they marched around the city after the ark. Trumpets are like the voice of the Lord speaking to us in His Word. Let’s think of some other times when trum-



pets sounded in the Word while amazing things were happening. Trumpets sounded as Moses received the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19). And centuries later, the Lord's voice sounded like a trumpet when He spoke to His disciple John on the isle of Patmos (Revelation 1).

Shofars are made from the horns of a ram, a male sheep. Sheep represent innocence, or trusting in the Lord. The trumpets that blared as the children of Israel circled Jericho were a sign of the Lord's powerful voice. When we "speak up" for what the Lord tells us is right, it is as if we are blowing a trumpet of ram's horn.



The March Around Jericho

The citizens of Jericho who looked out must have been amazed at what they saw. Instead of an attacking army, they saw the children of Israel marching around the city day after day.

- First, came the Israel's armed soldiers or men of war.
- Then came seven priests, each blowing a ram's horn trumpet, followed by four priests carrying the ark.
- At the "rear guard" of the procession came the rest of the other soldiers.

Read Joshua 6:6-13.

The long procession, with the ark of the Lord in the middle, circled the city. The people were silent, obeying Joshua's order. The only sound was the rams' horn trumpets. The children of Israel were not the only ones who heard the trumpets. Israel's enemies inside Jericho heard them too. Can you imagine how afraid and confused they must have felt? What could all this mean? Were they wondering if this was the work of the fearful God of the Israelites?

The Ark, the priests, and the soldiers marched around the city once. Then they returned to their camp. The next day they did the same thing again. They did this every day this for six days! And all the while, the king of Jericho and his people must have been more afraid each day!

Do you remember how in the story of Creation the Lord labored for six days and then rested on the seventh day? The number six stands for struggles we experience when we are trying to do what is right. The number seven stands for the peaceful, happy, and holy state which follows victory in our struggles. In the Word whenever someone is commanded to do something seven times, it pictures trying hard to do what's right until we come to *love* what is right. Notice how many times the

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number seven is used in the story of the fall of Jericho.

Read Joshua 6:14-16.

- On the seventh day, the Israelites started very early in the morning.
- They marched around the city seven times.
- The seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua gave the order to “Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!”

All the people shouted, and the walls of the city fell down flat!

The City of Jericho Is Destroyed

Joshua and the people destroyed everything in the city except the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, which were kept for the treasury of the house of the Lord. They also kept their promise to Rahab. The spies brought her entire family safely out of the city to their camp.

Read Joshua 6:17-25.

Do you remember the Commander of the Army of the Lord who appeared to Joshua? He reminded Joshua that the Lord was the Leader and Protector of Israel. The Lord would give the Israelites victory over their enemies.

Our battles are fighting selfish and mean thoughts and feelings towards others. If we ask the Lord for help, He will win our battles for us.

Read Joshua 6:26-27.

Discussion Questions

- The children of Israel heard the sound of the shofar—or ram’s horn trumpet—as they circled the city. At what other times was the Lord’s voice heard as the voice of a trumpet? Have you heard a trumpet? What makes a trumpet sound?
- How can we hear the Lord’s voice speaking to us? What are some ways in which people answer the Lord’s voice? (Hint: think of ways in which different people who heard the trumpets reacted to the sound in the story.)
- What did the priests carry around the city? What was inside the ark?
- How can ideas from the Word help us to get rid of selfish thoughts and feelings? What must we do to make this happen?
- Why were Rahab and her family saved when everyone else was to be destroyed? Later in the Word we learn about someone who was descended from Rahab. Who was it? Look at Matthew 1:5 to see if you are right.
- What was supposed to happen to the gold and silver, and vessels of bronze and iron?
- Joshua 6:26 forbids anyone to rebuild the city of Jericho. Read I Kings 16:34 to find out how this curse was fulfilled.

Activity Overview | The Destruction of Jericho

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

The voice of the Lord is powerful;
The voice of the Lord is full of majesty.
The Lord will give strength to His people;
The Lord will bless His people with peace. (Psalm 29:4,11)

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Act Out the Destruction of Jericho
- Destroy Jericho Model
- Picture to color—The Destruction of Jericho (Joshua 6)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Play a “Destruction of Jericho” version of the game *Forty Steps to the Promised Land*, online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/game-forty-steps-to-the-promised-land-game.pdf>.
- Build a diorama of the city of Jericho. Download directions at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/project-build-a-diorama-of-the-city-of-jericho-joshua06.pdf>.
- For additional review questions for the battle of Jericho go to <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-battle-of-jericho-review-questions-josuha06.pdf>. Choose answers from a word bank.

Activity 1 | Act Out the Destruction of Jericho

Set up a “city of Jericho” and act out the story of its destruction. Destroying Jericho pictures the act of getting rid of evils in our life. Pay attention to how many times the people circled the city (false thought and loves) with the ark (true ideas), while listening to the trumpets (the voice of the Lord). If one child will be acting alone, simplify the activity.

Materials Needed

cardboard or wooden blocks, or chairs to be the city of Jericho

“trumpet” e.g. cardboard tube, paper rolled into a tube, etc.

“armor” for armed men, e.g. plastic sword, helmet, etc.

“ark” e.g. cardboard box sprayed gold with wooden dowel handles attached with wire *The Destruction of Jericho* script.

optional: costumes

Characters in Scene (students can act out multiple parts)

- Joshua
- Priests carrying the ark (4)
- Armed Men
- Rear Guard
- Priests with Trumpets (7)
- Rahab
- People—Children of Israel

Directions

1. Create props or costumes of your choosing, for example trumpets, the ark, or simple T-shirt costumes.
2. Set up Jericho using blocks or furniture. Clear a space around the city big enough to march around.
3. The children of Israel returned to their camp in Gilgal each night. Choose a spot for Gilgal.
4. An adult or child reads the script while the story is acted out.

The Destruction of Jericho

People	Reading	Action
1. Joshua, the people	Now Jericho was securely shut up. None went out and none came in. And the Lord said, "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.	All people are in the camp at "Gilgal"
2. Joshua, the priests carrying the ark and blowing the trumpets	Joshua called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord."	Priests being prepared to circle the city
3. Joshua speaking to the people	And Joshua said to the people, "Proceed and march around the city, and let him who is armed march before the ark of the Lord."	People form a line in the correct order: armed men, then priests, then the ark, then the rear guard
4. Joshua, armed men, priests with trumpets, priests carrying the ark, rear guard	The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets; seven priests with trumpets of rams' horns advanced and blew the trumpets. The ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. The rear guard came after the ark.	Finish lining up to circle the city
5. Joshua, armed men, priests with trumpets, priests carrying the ark, rear guard	So the ark of the Lord circled the city once, and returned to the camp and stayed there.	All walk around the city once, and return to Gilgal
6. Joshua, armed men, priests with trumpets, priests carrying the ark, rear guard	And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. Then the seven priests bearing seven trumpets before the ark of the Lord went on continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them. The rear guard came after the ark. (repeat)	The procession circles the city again
7. Joshua, armed men, priests with trumpets, priests carrying the ark, rear guard		Repeat steps 5 and 6 until all have circled the city six times

The Destruction of Jericho, *continued*

People	Reading	Action
8. Joshua, armed men, priests with trumpets, priests carrying the ark, rear guard	On the seventh day they rose early, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times.	All people march around the city seven times
9. Joshua	And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!"	Joshua speaks out
10. Joshua speaking to the people	When the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat.	All shout, help the wall fall flat
11. Two people rescue Rahab	And the two men who had stayed at Rahab's house went to her house and rescued Rahab and all her relatives, as they had promised.	Rescue Rahab
12. Everyone	Then the people went up into the city and took it. And they destroyed everything in the city.	Completely destroy the city
13. Everyone	Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.	Take treasures from the city to Gilgal
14. Everyone	So the Lord was with Joshua and his fame spread throughout all the country.	Return to Gilgal

Activity 2 | Destroy Jericho Model

The destruction of Jericho was a miracle the Lord did to so the children of Israel would know the power to conquer the land was from Him alone. Obeying the Lord would bring victory; disobeying would bring failure. The Promised Land waits within each of us. Since we are born with a tendency toward evil, it can only be won after a long struggle. The enemy we must defeat is our tendency to love ourselves more than the Lord and other people. The walled cities are false ideas we build up to defend our evils. We cannot destroy these cities by ourselves. But if we “follow the ark” by keeping the commandments, look to the Lord for strength and trust in Him, He will lead us to victory. Discover this by creating a model of “Jericho”, and destroying it.

Materials Needed

The Walls of Jericho

The Children of Israel

scissors

tape

Directions

1. Have you ever tried to fight a bad mood? Or ugly thoughts about someone who has hurt you? If you have, you have fought to bring down the walls of Jericho.
2. Jericho’s high walls are like defensive thoughts we set up when we feel hurt, that someone has treated us wrongly. They may be thoughts like “he deserves to get hurt”, “she’s mean”, or “he’s a terrible person”. If we are to enter heaven, we must completely destroy selfish thoughts like this.
3. Start by building the city of Jericho. Using scissors, trim the ends of the picture of *The Walls of Jericho*. Fold the paper below along the foundation line of the walls. Curve the walls into the shape of a city and tape the edges together.
4. Trim around *The Children of Israel*. Cut apart the strips. Place the strips end to end and tape.
5. Place the *The Children of Israel* around the outside of *The Walls of Jericho*, so the people appear to be walking around the city, see pictures below.
6. Think of a selfish thought you would like to drive out of your life. Ask for the Lord’s help to stop thinking that thought, and punch the city until it is destroyed.



The Walls of Jericho



The Children of Israel



