

CONQUERING CANAAN

Date: 11.08.26 | The Battle Of Jericho
Scripture: Joshua 6

CENTRAL TRUTHS



PRESCHOOL:

God is powerful, and we can trust Him.

YOUNGER KIDS (K5-2ND GRADE):

God is powerful and saves those who trust Him.

OLDER KIDS (3RD-5TH GRADE):

God gives victory and provides rescue for those who trust Him.

STUDENTS:

God is holy and powerful; He judges sin and graciously rescues those who trust Him.

ADULTS:

The holy God judges sin yet graciously provides the victory and rescue we cannot accomplish for ourselves, ultimately through Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9



DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Providence. The Bible is a story of divine providence. Behind every page, promise, and prophecy is the hand of God. He sustains, directs, plans, ordains, superintends, and works all things after the counsel of His will. In providence, God preserves His creatures, works by His creatures, and directs His creatures. It is by God's providence that His people will spend eternity with Him. DeYoung p. 96

BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

The first step for Israel to enter the Promised Land was to cross the Jordan River—no easy task for a nation of over a million people, but God made a way. The priests went first, carrying the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark was a small golden chest used in the Tabernacle. It contained the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments, along with reminders of God's faithfulness: Aaron's rod and a pot of manna, the daily bread God provided in the wilderness. When the priests stepped into the Jordan River, the water stopped flowing. Suddenly, there was a clear path, and all Israel crossed over on dry ground. What a miracle! God had brought His people into the land He had promised to give them.



Now that the Israelites were in the Promised Land, however, they had to conquer it. Joshua was Israel's leader and general, handpicked by God and commissioned by Moses. Before the Battle of Jericho in **Joshua 6**, Joshua reinstituted the covenant sign of circumcision in **Joshua 5:2–9**. This reminded the people of their privileged covenant relationship with Yahweh. The Israelites also celebrated Passover and remembered their freedom from slavery (**Joshua 5:10–12**). Participating in circumcision and Passover required Israel to recommit itself to living in the land according to its identity as God's covenant people.

At the end of **Joshua 5**, Joshua encountered the commander of the Lord's army and was told to take off his sandals, "for the place where you stand is holy" (**Joshua 5:15**). Joshua obeyed. This moment echoes Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush. Before Joshua led Israel into battle, God reminded him that this conquest ultimately belonged to the Lord. Israel's success would not depend primarily on Joshua's military skill, the strength of Israel's army, or their ability to devise the right strategy. The Lord was the true warrior, and Joshua and the Israelites needed to trust, worship, and obey Him.

That becomes especially clear when Israel arrives at Jericho. *Joshua 6:1* describes Jericho as tightly shut because of the Israelites: no one went out and no one came in. Jericho was one of the oldest known fortified cities in the ancient Near East. From a human perspective, defeating such a well-defended city would have been extremely difficult. But before Israel did anything, the Lord told Joshua, “See, I have given Jericho into your hand” (*Joshua 6:2*). Notice that God spoke of the victory as something He had already given. The land was God’s gift, and the conquest of Jericho would be the Lord’s doing.

God then gave Joshua a strategy that was unlike any normal military plan. The armed men were to march around the city once a day for six days. Seven priests carrying seven ram’s-horn trumpets would march before the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark—the visible symbol of God’s presence among His people—was at the center of the procession. Israel’s attention therefore turned not to its own military strength but to the presence and power of God.

For six days, the Israelites marched around Jericho exactly as God commanded. Then, on the seventh day, they marched around the city seven times. After the seventh time, the priests blew a long blast on the trumpets, Joshua commanded the people to shout, and the people obeyed. The walls of Jericho fell, and the Israelites went straight into the city (*Joshua 6:15–20*). Hebrews later points back to this moment as an example of faith: “By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days” (*Hebrews 11:30*). Their actions demonstrated that they believed what God had promised, even when His instructions did not resemble a conventional battle plan.

Normally, a siege of a fortified city could take more than a year and sometimes several years. God gave Israel victory at Jericho in only seven days. The point was unmistakable: Jericho fell because of God’s power, not Israel’s strength. Israel’s responsibility was to trust the God who had made the promise and obey what He commanded.

The destruction of Jericho can be one of the more difficult parts of Joshua to teach. Scripture presents what happened at Jericho as an act of God’s judgment against sin, not simply Israel taking land from innocent people. God had told Abraham generations earlier that the sin of the Amorites had not yet reached its full measure (*Genesis 15:13–16*), demonstrating that this judgment did not come suddenly or without patience. God later commanded Israel concerning the

peoples of Canaan in *Deuteronomy 20:16–17*. *Deuteronomy 7:1–6* explains that Israel was also to be protected from being drawn into the idolatry of the surrounding nations.

Because Jericho was the first city conquered in Canaan, it was to be wholly devoted to the Lord, much like the “first fruits” principle in Leviticus 23:10. Joshua therefore commanded the Israelites not to take Jericho’s spoils for themselves. The silver, gold, bronze, and iron were to be placed in the Lord’s treasury (*Joshua 6:17–19*). Israel was not free to treat God’s victory as an opportunity for personal gain. The seriousness of this command becomes important in the next chapter when Achan secretly takes some of what had been devoted to God (*Joshua 7:1, 20–21*).

Yet right in the middle of this story of judgment is a remarkable story of mercy and salvation. Joshua commanded the Israelites to spare Rahab and everyone in her household, keeping the promise the spies had made to her in *Joshua 2:14, 17–20*. Rahab was a Canaanite living inside the city under God’s judgment. She could not claim Israelite ancestry or covenant status as the reason she should be rescued. Instead, she had heard what the Lord had done, confessed that “the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath” (*Joshua 2:11*), and acted in faith. *Hebrews 11:31* later commends Rahab for this faith.

Rahab’s rescue helps us understand an important truth running through Joshua: God’s judgment and God’s mercy are both real. Being born an Israelite did not automatically rescue someone who rejected God, as the story of Achan in *Joshua 7* will demonstrate. Likewise, being born a Canaanite did not prevent Rahab from receiving mercy when she turned to the Lord in faith. Rahab and her family were rescued from judgment and brought among God’s people (*Joshua 6:22–25*).

This makes Rahab’s story especially important to the gospel. Rahab was an outsider who could not save herself from the judgment coming upon Jericho, yet she trusted the God of Israel and received mercy. Her story points forward to the good news that salvation is not based on our family, nationality, goodness, or ability to rescue ourselves. Sin places every one of us under God’s righteous judgment, but God has provided salvation through Jesus for everyone who trusts in Him.

Rahab's story does not end at Jericho. *Matthew 1:5* records Rahab in Jesus' genealogy. The Canaanite woman, once an outsider living in a city under judgment, was rescued by grace, welcomed among God's people, and ultimately became part of the family line through which the Savior came.

Joshua 6 therefore teaches more than simply, "Obey God, and He will help you win your battles." It reveals a holy and powerful God who keeps His promises, judges sin, fights for His people, and graciously saves those who trust Him. Israel could not bring down Jericho's walls by its own strength, and Rahab could not rescue herself from the judgment coming upon the city. God alone provided the victory, and God alone provided the way of rescue. In the same way, we cannot defeat sin or save ourselves. Our salvation rests entirely in what God has done for us through Jesus.

After the victory, Joshua pronounced a curse against rebuilding Jericho, and *Joshua 6:27* concludes, "So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land." Once again, the story emphasizes what God had promised Joshua from the beginning: the Lord was with him. The God who brought Israel across the Jordan was the same God who brought down Jericho's walls, kept His promise to Rahab, and continued to fulfill His covenant promises to His people.

TELL THE STORY

Joshua 6



Hey-O! Stories of the Bible – The Walls of Jericho

The Biggest Story Bible Storybook – The Walls Came Tumbling Down

God had done something amazing for His people. He stopped the waters of the Jordan River so the Israelites could cross on dry ground and enter the land He promised them. But entering the Promised Land was only the beginning. There were cities already there, and one of the first was Jericho.

Jericho wasn't an easy city to conquer. It was a fortified city surrounded by huge walls. *Joshua 6:1* says Jericho was "shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in." Imagine being Joshua. God had chosen him to

lead Israel after Moses, and now this enormous city stood in front of him. But Joshua had already learned something important: this battle did not depend on him.

Before Joshua ever reached Jericho, he met the commander of the Lord's army. Joshua fell before him, and the commander told Joshua, "Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy" (*Joshua 5:15*). Does that sound familiar? Years earlier, God told Moses something very similar at the burning bush. Now Joshua was being reminded that God was holy and that God—not Joshua—was Israel's true leader.

Then God made Joshua an incredible promise. The Lord said, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand" (*Joshua 6:2*). Did you notice what God said? He didn't say, "Joshua, I hope you can figure out how to defeat Jericho." God said, "I have given Jericho into your hand." The victory would come from God.

Then God gave Joshua the battle plan—and it probably wasn't the plan anyone expected. God told Israel's armed men to march around Jericho once each day for six days. Seven priests carrying seven ram's-horn trumpets would march in front of the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark reminded Israel that God was present with His people. So the army wasn't going to attack the walls. They were going to march. Day one—they marched around Jericho once. Day two—they did it again. Day three—again. Day four. Day five. Day six. They followed God's instructions even though they hadn't seen the walls move at all.

Then came the seventh day. This time, the Israelites marched around Jericho seven times. After the seventh trip around the city, the priests blew their trumpets. Joshua told the people, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city" (*Joshua 6:16*). And the people shouted! Then something happened that no army could have accomplished on its own. The walls of Jericho fell. *Joshua 6:20* tells us that when the people heard the trumpets, they gave a great shout, "and the wall fell flat."

God had done exactly what He promised. Years later, *Hebrews 11:30* looked back at this moment and said, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days." The Israelites believed God's promise, and their obedience showed that they trusted Him.

But what happened next can be difficult for us to understand. God commanded Israel to destroy Jericho and its people. This wasn't because God wanted Israel to attack anyone they wanted. God Himself commanded judgment on the Canaanites (*Deuteronomy 20:16–17*). Long before Joshua was even born, God had told Abraham that judgment would eventually come because of the Canaanites' sin. But God patiently waited for generations. In *Genesis 15:13–16*, God explained that their sin had not yet reached its full measure. Now the time for God's judgment had come.

This teaches us something important about God: God is holy, and He takes sin seriously. God also warned Israel that the Canaanites' false gods and sinful practices could lead His people away from Him (*Deuteronomy 7:1–6*). Everything in Jericho was to be devoted to God. The Israelites weren't allowed to take the city's riches for themselves. The silver, gold, bronze, and iron belonged in the Lord's treasury (*Joshua 6:17–19*).

But one house in Jericho was different. Do you remember Rahab? Before Israel crossed the Jordan, Joshua had sent two spies into Jericho. Rahab hid those spies and protected them because she had heard what the God of Israel had done. Rahab wasn't an Israelite. She was a Canaanite living in a city about to experience God's judgment. But Rahab believed. She told the spies, "The LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath" (*Joshua 2:11*). Rahab asked the spies to save her and her family when Israel came to Jericho, and they promised they would.

Now it was time to keep that promise. Joshua told the two spies, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her" (*Joshua 6:22*). So while judgment came upon Jericho, Rahab and her family were rescued. *Joshua 6:25* says that Rahab lived among the Israelites.

And Rahab's story wasn't over. The New Testament tells us, "By faith Rahab...did not perish with those who were disobedient" (*Hebrews 11:31*). Rahab was an outsider. She wasn't born into God's people, and she couldn't rescue herself from the judgment coming upon Jericho. But she heard about the Lord, believed He was the true God, and trusted Him. And God showed her mercy.

Even more amazingly, hundreds of years later, Rahab's name appears again in *Matthew 1:5*. Why? Because Rahab became part of the family line of Jesus! Think about that. A woman who had once lived in

a city under God's judgment was rescued, welcomed among God's people, and eventually became part of the family through which Jesus, the Savior, would come.

The story of Jericho shows us two things about God that we must hold together: God judges sin, and God provides a way of rescue. The Israelites couldn't knock down Jericho's walls by their own strength. Rahab couldn't save herself from the judgment coming upon Jericho. God provided the victory, and God provided the rescue.

And that points us toward an even greater rescue. Our greatest problem isn't a giant wall or an enemy army. Our greatest problem is sin. Because God is holy, our sin deserves judgment, and there is nothing we can do to save ourselves. But God has provided a Rescuer. Jesus came to save sinners. Our rescue doesn't depend on being born into the right family, being good enough, or somehow fixing our own sin. Like Rahab, we must trust the God who saves.

At the end of the story, *Joshua 6:27* says, "So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land." God had kept His promise. He brought His people into the Promised Land. He brought down the walls of Jericho. He rescued Rahab. And He was continuing His plan that would one day lead all the way to Jesus.

REBUILD THE STORY

1. How does the Bible describe Jericho when the Israelites arrived, and what does this tell us about the challenge they faced?
(*Joshua 6:1*)
2. Before Israel did anything, what did God tell Joshua about Jericho?
(*Joshua 6:2*)
3. What unusual instructions did God give the Israelites for conquering Jericho? (*Joshua 6:3–5*)
4. How did the Israelites show that they trusted God's promise even though His battle plan was unusual?
(*Joshua 6:6–16; Hebrews 11:30*)



5. What happened when the priests blew the trumpets and the people shouted on the seventh day? What did this demonstrate? (*Joshua 6:16, 20*)
6. What did God command Israel to do with Jericho and its possessions, and why was the city being judged? (*Joshua 6:17–19; Genesis 15:13–16; Deuteronomy 7:1–6; 20:16–17*)
7. Who was rescued from Jericho's destruction, and why? (*Joshua 2:9–14; 6:22–25; Hebrews 11:31*)
8. How does Joshua 6 end, and what does it show about God keeping His promises to Joshua? (*Joshua 1:5, 9; 6:27*)
9. Why do you think God gave Israel a battle plan that their own military strength could not explain? What did He want them to understand about the victory?
10. What does the destruction of Jericho teach us about God's holiness and the seriousness of sin? How should that affect the way we think about our own sin?
11. Rahab lived in the same city that was under God's judgment, so why was her story different? What does her rescue teach us about who can receive God's mercy?
12. Both the Israelites and Rahab faced situations they could not solve on their own. How do their stories help us understand our need for Jesus?

GOSPEL EMPHASIS

Throughout Joshua, God shows His people that His promises are fulfilled by His grace and power, not because they have earned them or are strong enough to accomplish them on their own. In *Joshua*



1, the Promised Land was God's gift. Israel had repeatedly failed to obey God's Law perfectly. Yet, God remained faithful to His covenant promises and graciously brought His people into the land He had promised to give them. In the same way, we do not earn salvation through our goodness or obedience. It is a gift of God's grace, made possible through Jesus' perfect life, sacrificial death, and resurrection. (*Joshua 1:2–6; Ephesians 2:8–9*)

In *Joshua 2*, Rahab showed us what it looks like to respond to God's grace with faith. Rahab was a Canaanite, an outsider, and a sinner living in a city that would soon face God's judgment. Yet when she heard what the Lord had done, she believed that He was the true God and trusted His promise. Her actions did not earn her salvation; they demonstrated the faith she had placed in God. Rahab reminds us that God's saving grace reaches even the most unlikely people. We are all sinners who deserve God's judgment, but everyone who places their faith in Jesus can be forgiven, rescued, and welcomed into God's family. (*Joshua 2:9–14; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25*)

Then in *Joshua 3–4*, God demonstrated once again that He is the One who makes the way for His people. Israel could not make the Jordan River stop flowing, but God went before them and brought them safely across on dry ground. He then commanded them to build a memorial of twelve stones so future generations would hear about what He had done and know the power of His hand. God's people were not supposed to look back and celebrate what they had accomplished; they were to remember what God had done to save them. (*Joshua 3:13–17; 4:6–7, 21–24*)

Now, in *Joshua 6*, those truths come together at Jericho. Israel faced another obstacle they could not overcome in their own strength. They could march around Jericho, blow trumpets, and shout, but they could not make those massive walls fall. Before they ever marched, God told Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand" (*Joshua 6:2*). Once again, God provided what His people could not provide for themselves. The Israelites trusted God's promise, obeyed His instructions, and by faith watched God accomplish the victory. (*Joshua 6:2–5, 20; Hebrews 11:30*)

But Jericho also shows us something important about God's holiness and our need for salvation. God is holy, and He does not ignore sin forever. The destruction of Jericho was God's righteous judgment against the persistent sin of the Canaanites. Yet right in the middle of that judgment, God rescued Rahab and her family. Rahab could

not stop the judgment that was coming, defeat Israel's army, or save herself. She had to depend entirely upon the promise that she would be rescued. Because she believed the Lord and trusted His promise, she "did not perish with those who were disobedient" (*Hebrews 11:31*). (*Genesis 15:13–16; Joshua 6:17, 22–25*)

Rahab's rescue gives us a beautiful picture of the gospel. Like Rahab, we are sinners who cannot rescue ourselves from God's judgment. Being from the right family, doing enough good things, or trying harder cannot save us. But God has graciously provided a way of rescue through Jesus. Jesus perfectly obeyed God in our place, took the judgment our sin deserved when He died on the cross, and rose again in victory over sin and death. Everyone who turns to Jesus in faith is forgiven and brought into the family of God. (*Romans 3:23–24; 5:8–9; Ephesians 2:8–9*)

And Rahab's story becomes even more remarkable. God did not merely allow her to escape Jericho. He brought her into His people. Rahab eventually became part of the family line of Jesus Himself (*Matthew 1:5*). The Canaanite outsider who once lived in a city under judgment became part of God's unfolding plan to send the Savior of the world.

Across these stories, the message has remained the same: God makes the promise. God provides the way. God gives the victory. God provides the rescue. Israel could not earn the Promised Land, Rahab could not save herself, Israel could not stop the Jordan River, and Israel could not bring down the walls of Jericho. Again and again, God's people had to depend upon what God would do.

The gospel tells us the same thing. We cannot save ourselves from sin, but through Jesus God has done for us what we could never do for ourselves. Our response is not to trust our own goodness or strength, but to turn to Jesus in faith, trusting the God who keeps His promises, judges sin rightly, and graciously saves all who come to Him.

WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE TEACH US ABOUT GOD?

Use the attributes of God list and determine the characteristics of God that we see in today's story. How can knowing these characteristics of God to be true change the way we live in Christ?

PRAYER PROMPTS

God, thank You for keeping Your promises no matter what! Thank You for the great plans You had for the Israelites and for making a way for them to come to pass. You are powerful and mighty, and we praise You! Help us to trust You with our battles and to follow Your instructions always!



THIS WEEK'S BIBLE READING

Joshua 23-24