

LESSON 3

JOSHUA AND JERICO

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Leads Us

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 5–6

GOD'S BIG STORY: God provides the Israelites with an unusual battle plan and leads them to victory over the city of Jericho, the last major obstacle standing in the way of the Israelites and their new homeland.

WORD OF WONDER: He will keep his covenant forever. He will keep his promise for all time to come.

—1 Chronicles 16:15

- Welcome Question: What's your favorite game? Explain how to play it.
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder Activity
- God's Big Story
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time
- LARGE GROUP
- Elementary Responding in Worship: Build, March, Draw
- Preteen Responding in Worship: Brick Prayers



SCAN FOR THIS
WEEK'S VIDEO!

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Leads Us

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 5–6

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Chronicles 16:15

When life gets crazy, sometimes I just want to be told what to do. I long for someone to enlighten me on the “right” way to proceed. But when I ask for a friend’s advice, I don’t always take it. Why? Because deep down, I believe my own ways of solving life’s problems are better.

After God faithfully led the Israelites across the Jordan River on dry ground and gave them assurance that they would defeat Jericho, He gave Joshua an unusual battle plan: Walk around the city, blow trumpets, and shout. Although God’s ways are mysterious, the Israelites were learning that His leadership can always be trusted.

Read Joshua 6:1–7, 20–21. Joshua had the Lord’s assurance of success if he followed each instruction. The people followed Joshua’s lead, and the result was a crumbling wall and an overwhelming victory.

- When have you followed God’s lead? What happened?
- When have you failed to follow God’s lead? What happened?
- What is an area in your life you can yield to the Lord’s leadership today?

In good times and bad, we can trust God to lead us. He is a good shepherd with a perfect plan. God led the Israelites, and God leads us too! Thank Him for providing divine guidance in every situation.

—**Suzanne Gosselin**

Children’s Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

This story revolves around God and how He delivered Jericho into Israel's hands. Jericho was famous as a walled city, but God showed that He is stronger than the thickest walls.

WHAT?

Joshua 5–6 shows how God led the Israelites to defeat the army of Jericho. God laid out a plan and the Israelites followed it, marching around the city for seven days. On the seventh day, God brought the walls of Jericho crashing down.

WHERE?

The story takes place at Jericho, which is one of the oldest cities in the world. The city was located on particularly fertile land in Canaan, which made it strategically valuable to the Israelites.

WHEN?

This story takes place immediately after God piled up the water of the Jordan River so that the Israelites could cross on foot (Joshua 3–4).

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

This story shows the central role that God played in defeating Israel's enemies. The Israelites didn't have to tear down the walls themselves. Instead, God brought the walls down for them. Likewise, salvation isn't something we can earn through what we do: It's a gift from God through Jesus!

LESSON 3 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Leads Us

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 5–6

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Chronicles 16:15

Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: paper, coloring utensils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

Games & Activities Guide

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them! Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

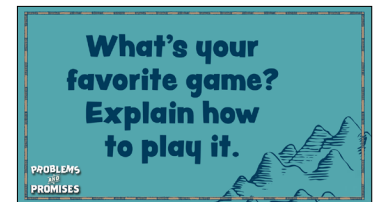
As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Use the Welcome Question and the following "I'm Curious" questions to engage kids. Say "**I'm curious..**" before each question and give kids an chance to think before answering each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

Consider having a whiteboard or poster for kids to write or draw answers to any of the questions:

- **What's your favorite game? Explain how to play it.**



Directions are pretty important to playing a game, aren't they? Sometimes, we might want to jump right into the game—before making sure we know what we're doing. Today, we're going to learn about some unusual directions God gave His people when they finally arrived in the promised land.

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity or game, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

He will keep his covenant forever. He will keep his promise for all time to come.

—1 Chronicles 16:15 (NirV)

SUPPLIES: Bible (1/kid), **Box Wall Sheets NirV (1/SG)**

Ahead of time, print the Box Wall Sheets NirV and cut out the word slips. Tape each slip to a separate box.

Our Word of Wonder for the Problems and Promises series tells us that God always remembers and keeps His promises! Let's say the verse together now. Open your Bible to 1 Chronicles 16:15. Read 1 Chronicles 16:15 several times together.

In today's story, God led Joshua and the Israelites by having them do some unusual things, and in the end, the walls of Jericho fell! Let's practice our Word of Wonder by building a wall of our own. Invite kids to help you build a wall out of boxes, placing the words of the verse in correct order from bottom to top. **Fantastic! Now, like the Israelites in God's big story did on the seventh day, let's march around our wall seven times. After the seventh time, let's shout the words of the verse together and knock down the wall!** Join kids in marching, shouting the verse, and knocking down the wall. Then rebuild the wall and repeat the process, as time allows.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Rather than build a box wall, write the words of the verse on stackable blocks (or on slips of paper that you tape to the blocks). Kids can stack the blocks in verse order, knock them down, and restack them!

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 /kid)

Share that today's words come straight from the book of Joshua in the Bible. God has led the Israelites through the wilderness for 40 years, and they're finally ready to enter the land God promised them.

Invite kids to open their Bibles to Joshua 6.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll watch and experience more of the story!

Invite three or four confident readers to read each section of the passage aloud while the rest of the group follows along: Joshua 6:1– 20.

Elementary Questions

- **What did the priests do each day as the Israelites walked around the city of Jericho?** (They carried the ark of the covenant, the gold-covered box that represented God's presence, and they blew their rams' horn trumpets.)
- **What did the fighting men do each day as the Israelites walked around the city of Jericho?** (They remained silent.)
- **What was different about the seventh (and last) day the Israelites marched around the city of Jericho?** (They circled the city seven times, the priests blew their trumpets, the army shouted, and the walls of Jericho crumbled and fell!)
- **A lot of people marched around the city. Who led the Israelites?** (God)
- **Does God still lead us and give us directions today? How?**

God led Joshua and the Israelites to victory over the city of Jericho! God leads us too, to know Him and know what's best for us. Let's spend some time talking with God in prayer and thanking Him for leading us.

Make It Inclusive: Open-ended questions can be difficult for some kids to answer. Consider modifying the questions into yes/no format or offering two answer choices for each.

Preteen Questions

- **Do you remember what God told Joshua about Jericho before giving him any battle plan directions?** (If needed, reread Joshua 6:2. God would lead Joshua and the Israelites to victory over Jericho.)
- **What was the difference between the directions for the Israelites on days 1–6 and on day seven?** (On days 1–6, the army was to march around the city one time, following the priests carrying the ark of the covenant. On day seven, they were to march around it seven times. After the final time, the priests would blow their trumpets, the men would shout, and the wall would crumble and fall.)
- **How would you have felt if you had been in Joshua's place? Do you think you would have done what God said? Or do you think you would have followed your own battle plan? Why?**
- **Why do you think God revealed the Israelites' victory to Joshua before they even took a step?**
- **Who was ultimately leading the Israelites around the city?** (God)
- **How do you think God might be leading you?**

The ark of the covenant that the priests carried around the city was a symbol of God's presence with His people. God promises to be with us and help us too, leading us as we have the courage to follow Him. Let's spend some time asking God to help us recognize His directions.

Small Group Prayer Time

Encourage the kids to brainstorm times they might need God's direction and guidance. Invite those who feel comfortable to pray aloud, thanking God for always being with us and willing to lead us. Ask for help recognizing God's directions and for the courage to follow Him. Then encourage kids to share their own prayer requests and to pray for one another.

LARGE GROUP

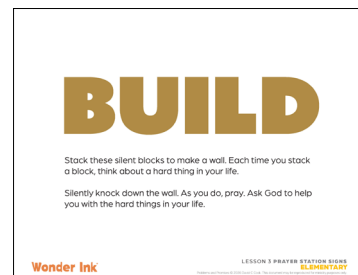
Elementary Responding in Worship: Build, March, Draw

SUPPLIES: silent stacking blocks (i.e., beanbags, kitchen sponges, pool noodles), scissors, table, butcher paper or posterboard, permanent marker (prep only), coloring utensils, tape (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Prayer Station Signs, \(1/SG\)](#) [music from the Problems and Promises Elementary Spotify playlist](#) (optional)

Ahead of time, print the Prayer Station Signs. Designate an area for each station and post the corresponding sign at each station:

- Build station: Place a large pile of silent stacking blocks. Ideas for blocks include beanbags, pool noodles sliced in half (vertically) and cut into smaller pieces, dry kitchen sponges cut into smaller pieces, or a combination of all three.
- March station: Set up a table with plenty of open space around it for kids to march.
- Draw station: Tape a large sheet of butcher paper or posterboard to the wall or set it out on a table or the floor. With a permanent marker, write “God Leads Me” in large letters across the top. Then cover the paper in rectangular-shaped brick outlines that kids can draw in. Set out coloring utensils.



Today we heard how God led the Israelites to victory over the city of Jericho, which stood between them and the land God had promised them. God leads us too! He desires us to trust Him and His directions, even when we don't understand them or see the outcome right away. Let's spend some time talking with God at prayer stations.

Show kids the three prayer stations and explain what they'll do at each. These instructions are also on the Prayer Station Signs:

At the Build station:

- Kids will stack these silent blocks to make a wall. Each time they stack a block, they can think about a hard thing in their lives.
- Kids will silently knock down the wall. As they do, they'll pray and ask God to help them with the hard things in their lives.

At the March station:

- Kids will silently march around the table six times. They'll pray this breath prayer each time:
- (Breathe in) God, ...
- (Breathe out) please lead me.
- March around the table one more time. Then pray this breath prayer:
- (Breathe in) God, ...
- (Breathe out) You are amazing!

At the Draw station:

- In one of the bricks on the paper, kids will draw a picture of one hard thing God has helped them get through.
- As they draw, they'll tell God "Thank You" for leading you through that hard thing.

Leader Tip: A breath prayer is a word or phrase repeated in a single breath with one part on the inhale and the other part on the exhale. Breath prayers help us focus on God and His presence with us. When teaching kids a breath prayer, pray it with them several times, modeling deep breaths in and out as you say the words.

Invite kids to pray at the stations. You might divide them into three equal groups and have each group rotate through the stations every few minutes, or you might let kids choose the station or stations they want to go to. If possible, station an adult or youth volunteer at each to help kids know what to do and stay focused. Consider playing music from the [Problems and Promises Elementary Spotify playlist](#) during this time.

After kids have had a chance to pray at the stations, gather them together. Invite them to share one difficult thing they've faced in life and how God helped them through it.

Preteen Responding in Worship: Brick Prayers

SUPPLIES: writing utensils, coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Brick Prayers Sheet \(1 per kid\)](#), "Way Maker" from the [Problems and Promises Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, print a copy of the Brick Prayers Sheet for each kid.

Today we heard how God led the Israelites to victory over the city of Jericho, a huge obstacle standing between them and the land God had promised them. God leads us too! He desires us to trust Him and His directions, even when we don't understand them or see the outcome right away.

Give a Brick Prayers Sheet to each kid. **Each of you has a sheet with a picture of a wall on it. Who would like to read the words at the top of the wall? Can anyone read the words at the top of the wall?** Encourage a volunteer to read, "God Leads Us." **The wall on your sheet can remind us of the walls of Jericho. The Bible said the walls were too high to climb over and too thick and strong to break down, yet God knew exactly how to bring those walls down.**



As we listen to music, take time to think about things in your life that feel like high, thick walls. Where do you need God to lead you? Then write about or draw a picture of each of those things on a different brick on your wall. You don't have to fill up every brick.

Leader Tip: Consider sharing an age-appropriate story about a “wall” you have faced in the past or are facing now. How has God led you through something difficult?

Play “Way Maker” or another song from the [Problems and Promises Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as kids reflect and write or draw. Once the song is done, pause to give further directions.

We're going to listen to this song again, and this time, I invite you to think of things that God has already helped you with, walls God has already brought down for you. Provide kids with some ideas, such as finding a new friend, knowing how to respond to a bully, getting help with family relationships, getting help studying for a test at school, etc. **As you think about these things, write or draw them in the empty bricks on your wall.**

Play “Way Maker” or another song again, watching to see if anyone needs help thinking of ways God has already worked in their lives. Feel free to engage with these kids individually, dialogging with them about ways God has come through for them.

Let's stand up and place our hands on our paper walls as though we're going to push them over! Demonstrate by holding a Brick Prayers Sheet between your hands. **I'm going to read the words of a prayer, and you can repeat each line after me. As we pray, imagine God's hand on yours, gently but firmly working to help bring your walls down.**

Pray each line out loud and pause for kids to repeat after you. Here's the prayer for your reference:

God, You promised to never leave Joshua, (Kids repeat.)

And You promise to never leave me! (Kids repeat.)

The walls of Jericho couldn't stand against You! (Kids repeat.)

So, when things feel too big, (Kids repeat.)

Too strong, (Kids repeat.)

Or too scary to ever change, (Kids repeat.)

I trust You to be with me. (Kids repeat.)

I trust You to lead me. (Kids repeat.)

Help me follow You! (Kids repeat.)

In Jesus' name, Amen! (Kids repeat.)