



Enter the Story

Conquest

A narrative about how God can overcome even the most overwhelming of obstacles.

THE BIBLE

Joshua 1-2, 5:13-6:27, 7

Prepare for the Story

ICEBREAKER

Have you ever done something that just seemed ridiculous at the time? Maybe someone asked you to do something that seemed a little absurd, or maybe you just were feeling a little goofy. Share with the group a time that you did something that didn't make a ton of sense.

Rewind the Story

Can someone highlight what has happened in the story so far ...

- Joseph – Dreams and Deliverance
- Moses – God rescues and redeems
- Liberation – God's people leave Egypt
- New Commands – Moses & the 10 Commandments
- Promised Land – Spies explore the land

Hear the Story

Scene One: God Instructs Joshua

After the death of Moses, God spoke to Joshua, Moses' assistant, and said, *"Moses, my servant is dead. It is time for you and all the people to cross the Jordan River into the land I'm giving to you. I'm giving you every square inch of the land you set your foot on, just as I promised Moses. No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life."*

"Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you, so be strong and courageous; you will lead these people to inherit the land that I have promised them. Be careful to obey my laws and commands, do not turn from it to the right or to the left; if you do this, you will be successful wherever you go". Joshua trusted God and did as He said.

So, Joshua said to the people, *"Get your provisions ready. Three days from now, we will cross the Jordan and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving us."* They answered him, *"Whatever you have told us to do, we will do; we will go wherever you send us. Just as we obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you as He was with Moses. Whoever rebels against your word, whatever you have commanded them, should be put to death."* So, while the people prepared, Joshua secretly sent out two spies. He said to them, *"Go. Look over the land. Make sure to check out Jericho."*

Scene Two: Rahab & the Two Spies

The spies snuck into Jericho and arrived at the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there. The king of Jericho got word that there were spies in the city. He was told, *"We've just learned that men arrived tonight to spy out the land. They're from the People of Israel."*

The king of Jericho sent word to Rahab: *"Bring out the men who came to you to stay the night in your house. They're spies; they've come to spy out the whole country."* But Rahab had already taken the two men and hidden them.

She told the King's men, *"Yes, two men did come to me, but I didn't know where they'd come from. At dark, when the gate was about to be shut, the men left. But I have no idea where they went. Hurry up! Chase them – you can still catch them!"* (She had actually taken them up on the roof and hidden them.) So, the men set chase down the Jordan road toward the fords. As soon as they were gone, the gate was shut.

Before the spies were down for the night, the woman came up to them on the roof and said, *"I know that God has given you this land. We're all afraid. Everyone in the country feels hopeless. We heard how God dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when you left Egypt and what he did to the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan whom you destroyed. We heard it, and our hearts sank. Now promise me by God because I have shown you mercy; show my family mercy. Please give me some tangible proof, a guarantee of life for me and my family. Deliver us from death!"*

"Our lives for your lives!" they replied, and the spies worked out an arrangement. They told Rahab that if she hung a red rope out of her window that her family would be safe, but they must stay inside. With that, the spies snuck out of the city and returned to their camp. They reported everything to Joshua, and he knew that God's favor was on them and that He would be with them.

Scene Three: Marching Around Jericho

After the spies returned, the Israelites crossed the Jordan River and began to head toward Jericho. The gates of the city were extremely secure, and a special watch was given because of the rumors about the People of Israel. No one was going in or coming out. Then God spoke to Joshua, *"Pay attention. I've already given Jericho to you, along with its king and its soldiers."*

"Here is what I want you to do: March around the city, all your soldiers. Circle the city once. Repeat this for six days. Have seven priests carry seven trumpets in front of the Ark of the Covenant. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times with the priests blowing away on the trumpets. Then sounds a long trumpet blast – when the people hear this, they are to shout at the top of their lungs. The wall will collapse, and the people will be able to enter the city."

Scene Four: The Walls Came Down

When Joshua had spoken to the people, the priests carrying the trumpets went forward, and the Ark of the Covenant was behind. On the first day, they did just as God described. They marched around the city once and then returned to camp. Again, on the second day, they did the same thing. They did this for six days straight.

Then on the seventh day, they marched around the city seven times, and when they heard the trumpet's blast, Joshua commanded the army, saying, *"Shout for the LORD has given you the city! The city and everything in it is under a holy curse and offered up to God. Only Rahab and her family will live because she hid the spies we sent."*

When the people heard the sound, they gave a mighty shout. The wall around the city fell at once, and the Israelites rushed straight into the city. They put everything in the city to the sword, killing man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey.

Then Joshua gave instructions to the two men who had spied out the land, saying, "Enter the house of the prostitute and rescue the woman and everyone connected with her, just as you promised."

So, the spies went in and brought out Rahab and her whole family. They gave them a place to stay outside the camp of Israel. But as for everything else, they burned everything in the city. Everything except things made of gold, silver, bronze, and iron. All of these things were put in the treasury of God's house. And God was with Joshua, and he became famous all over the land.

Retell the Story

- What did God tell Joshua to do at the beginning of the story?
- How did the people react when Joshua told them what was going to happen?
- Who was Rahab and why was she important to the story?
- What had the people in Jericho heard about the Israelites? How did they feel?
- What were God's instructions about Jericho?
- What happened to Jericho?
- What happened to Joshua?

Discuss the Story

- What is your first reaction to this story? How did this story make you feel?
- What stood out to you from this story? What did you notice for the first time?

- What from this story made you wonder?
- Before entering the Promised Land, God gave Joshua specific instructions; why do you think these instructions were important?
- After Joshua told the people they were going to move into the Promised Land, what was their response? Is there anything odd about this?
- If God can destroy a city with “sound,” surely He doesn’t need any help, so why do you think God used Rahab in this story?
- In destroying Jericho, God destroyed more than a city. Why would God destroy a city full of people?
- The Ark of the Covenant seems to take an important role in this story; why do you think this is? What does it represent or mean?
- What was the ultimate goal of the military campaign for God’s people?
- Did you hear anything that reminded you of *other* stories?
- From this story, what did you notice about humans?
- From this story, what do you notice about God’s character or His qualities?

1) WHO GOD USES

God used a prostitute (and a liar) to help His people in the conquest of Jericho. What does this mean for how He can use you? What does it mean for how God can work in your world? Do you see other examples of this in any of the previous stories we have discussed?

2) AN INVITATION TO HELP

In this story, God conquered a city, but He invited His people to help. What did they bring to the table? And what does this tell you about what God might want from us when it comes to conquering things in our lives?

3) GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

Sometimes, it's easy to forget that when God destroyed Jericho, it wasn't just buildings and walls, but the people of Jericho died as well. How do you understand a God who can do this? Has He done this before? How does it impact your faith today?

Pray

God,

We ask that we would experience a growing desire for You and for the things You declare are important. When obstacles seem overwhelming to us, help us trust Your ways and choose to be obedient in all circumstances. May we be dependent on Your promises and provision so that we will honor You through all we do. Amen!