**FIRST STEPS TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Session 4 of 4

# Jericho

### MEETING AIM

To think about how Joshua trusted God’s plan and was brave because God was with him.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Joshua 6

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

The Israelites have spent 40 years in the desert. They’ve spied out the land, crossed the Jordan and they’re ready to go in. Jericho is surrounded by a huge wall; the task of conquering the city would have looked impossible. Joshua followed God’s instructions and gave God all the glory when the impossible happened. It wasn’t down to his talents or a plan he came up with, the Israelite people fully trusted in God and he went with them into ‘battle’.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Welcome each child by name and encourage them to share stories from their week. Celebrate any birthdays, or special events. Ask the children: “Who’s the bravest person you know?” Thank God that he’s with you and ask him to help you learn more about him today.

### PLAY – 10 mins

**You will need:** a selection of building blocks, such as Lego or Duplo (or bigger blocks such as cardboard boxes)

Use the blocks to build a big wall. You could do this all together if you have a small group, or let the children play with the blocks individually or in smaller groups if you have lots to go around.

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** building blocks or shoeboxes; a box; musical instruments

Build a wall together and sit around this as you begin to tell the story:

Joshua and the people of God had almost reached the promised land. They’d sent in their spies who met Rahab, and then they had crossed the river Jordan. They were camped near the city of Jericho.

Jericho was surrounded by big walls, it had big heavy gates. The city was shut because the people inside the city were scared of the people of God.

The people of God wondered how they would get in. However, God had promised them the land and he knew what to do.

God told Joshua his plan. It was a strange plan. I wonder if Joshua was surprised. But he trusted God and he listened.

Joshua gathered the soldiers together. They had their weapons ready but the plan wasn’t to fight. *Invite the children to stand up and be the soldiers. Ask some to be the priests and to carry a box to be the ark of the covenant.*

Priests carried the ark of the covenant (a wooden chest covered in gold where they kept the ten commandments) and seven priests walked in front of it blowing a ram’s horn (a bit like a trumpet). *Give these children a musical instrument to play.* The army marched with the priests one time around the city but they didn’t make any noise.

They did this for six days. *Walk around your wall six times.* On the seventh day, God told them to march around the city seven times. On the seventh time around, the priests blew their horns and Joshua said to the army: “Shout! Because God has given you this city!”

They all made as much noise as they possibly could and the big, strong walls fell down! *Ask the children to play their instruments, shout and then knock your wall down.*

The Israelites took over the city of Jericho as God had told them. They looked after Rahab and her family just as they had promised.

Joshua was strong and courageous because he knew that God was with him. The plan probably sounded a bit ridiculous so when the walls fell down everyone knew that it was because of God that the impossible had happened. It was because Joshua trusted God and followed him.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Ask the children these questions, ensuring everyone has the chance to contribute:

* What was your favourite part of the story?
* Imagine you were there, how do you think you would have felt when it seemed impossible?
* How do you think you’d feel when you were walking around seven times?
* And, how about when the wall fell down?
* What makes you feel brave when you feel scared? What helped Joshua to feel brave and courageous?

### CREATIVE TIME – 10 mins

**You will need:** building blocks you can write or draw on (or brick-shaped paper and Blu Tack); felt-tip pens

Explain that God doesn’t just say: “Be strong and brave, don’t be afraid” and that’s it. He says: “Be strong and brave, don’t be afraid, *because I am with you.*” He is with us when we’re feeling scared or nervous. God says: “I’m with you.” Whenever we feel like there is a big wall in the way, God says: “I am with you.” We can choose to be brave because we know that God is with us. We don’t have to pretend everything is OK or that we don’t feel scared but we can trust that he is *always* with us wherever we go.

Invite the children to write or draw the things on the bricks (or paper bricks) that stop them feeling close to God or the places where feel afraid. Build a wall and then remind the children that they can be strong and courageous because God is with them. There is no wall between us and God, he is with us. Knock or tear your wall down to represent this.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

Invite the children to settle into a comfortable space away from others and spend some time ‘catching’ from him. Allow time and space for the children to connect with him. You might also want to invite the children to say out loud the places where they want to know that God is with them and pray that they would know him in those places.

Ask the children to share what God is saying to them, if they would like to.

**ANNIE WILLMOT**

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