

Session 13

The walls of Jericho

Today the story of amazing events continues as the walls of Jericho fall after Joshua and the people are obedient to God.

To plan your session... Choose a selection of *Play and learn*, *Bible time* and *God and me* activities to make your session fun and memorable.

Play and learn activity options...

Play and learn activity

Construction and destruction play!

Activity time: no time limit

Aim: to focus on what God is able to do

You will need: lots of empty boxes, construction toys, pictures of walls

- 1 This can be a large- or smaller-scale activity, depending on the space and materials available. Talk with the children and look at pictures of walls.
- 2 Set out the construction toys or empty boxes to be used as bricks. Make sure the children know they will be building a wall to be knocked down later, when you say so. Let them experiment with making walls of their own. Challenge them to build a big wall. While they are playing, talk about the Bible story, contrasting their play walls with the real walls of a great city.
- 3 Stand back and say that it is time to make the walls fall down! Pretend to be Joshua and say together: 'God our Father – can God help us? Can he do anything? Yes he can!'
- 4 Ask the builders to knock down their walls. You could use a trumpet noise as a signal for the walls to fall.

Play and learn activity

Making trumpets

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to find out what made the walls fall down

You will need: the trumpet template from page 103, card, cardboard rolls, disposable cups or yogurt pots, wide sticky tape

- 1 Help the children make trumpets, using the instructions on page 103. If you make more than one style, test them to find which makes the most noise!
- 2 You can use the trumpets during the Bible time activities or march now (on the spot or round the room) and say:
Marching, marching, all around the wall,
Marching, marching, hear the trumpet call.
Shouting, shouting, on the seventh day,
Crash, the wall has fallen,
All shout: 'Hurray!'
- 3 Ask and shake your head to encourage a negative response, 'Did Joshua make the walls fall down? Did the marching/the people/the shouting/the trumpets make the walls fall down? So what did make the walls fall down?' If none of the children think of this answer, have a leader primed to shout, 'God did!'
- 4 Instead of a praise shout, have a praise 'toot' to show that God is fantastic!

Aim

To find out that God is powerful enough to do anything

Bible passage

Joshua 6

Play and learn activity

Prayer bricks

Activity time: no time limit

Aim: to 'talk' to God

You will need: rectangles of coloured paper, reusable sticky tack, art materials

- 1 Line up sheets of paper on a wall or display area overlapping like bricks. Hold these lightly in place with reusable sticky tack. Set out a work area with art supplies nearby.
- 2 Explain that these are 'prayer bricks'. At any time in the session, the children can choose a 'brick', take it out of the wall and use it to draw or write something they want to say to God.
- 3 You may need to prompt the children to remember to do this, but let them use the 'bricks' to express their own ideas and thoughts.
- 4 Towards the end of the session, invite the children to spread (or scatter!) their prayer bricks on the floor, like the stones falling from the walls of Jericho. Some children may want to tell you what their prayers are about, but don't insist – God will know what they are saying!

Ready to use options...

Bible time activity

Using Bubbles

Activity time: 10 minutes

Aim: to find out that God is powerful enough to do anything

You will need: Bubbles Sheet 13 from pages 101 and 102, copied back to back; *The Big Bible Storybook* (SPCK) or *Bonus Sheet C* from page 83

- 1 Look at the procession of people marching around the walls of Jericho on the front of *Bubbles Sheet 13*. Help the children match the small pictures with the items in the main scene. Tick the box next to the people and items as you find them. Look at the people watching from the top of the high, strong walls.
- 2 Act out being the different people in the story. March like a soldier. Make a sound like a trumpet, as the priests did. Pretend to carry God's special box. What do the children think happens next in the Bible story?
- 3 Turn the *Bubbles Sheets* over to see if you were right! List all the things Joshua and the people did not do to make the walls fall down! Instead, they did just what God said – and the city walls fell down! Use the tone of your voice to help the children understand how amazing this was! God could make the walls fall down!
- 4 While the children draw more walls tumbling down, read 'The walls of Jericho' from *The Big Bible Storybook* or *Bonus Sheet C*. Add a few words about Rahab, if you did Session 11, and say that she and her family were safe when the walls fell down and they went to live with God's people.
- 5 Read the rhyme from the back of *Bubbles Sheet 13*, making your own sound effects.
- 6 Suggest you all join in a shout of praise to God, just as Joshua and the people did. Practise saying,

'God is strong!' See how loudly you can shout the words. Can you make the walls fall down just by shouting?! It happened for Joshua because God made the walls fall!

God and me activity

Praise songs

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to praise God because he can do anything

You will need: song from page 82; 'My God is so big' *kidsource* 255 (or similar song)

- 1 March around the room (or 'wall', if you have made one) singing the song from page 82. Say the words rhythmically if you do not know the tune.
- 2 Add further verses to 'My God is so big':
Our God is so big, so strong and so mighty,
There's nothing that he cannot do.
(Repeat these two lines.)
He broke down the walls, so strong and so tall,
Our God is so great, yes it's true!
(Repeat first two lines.)
He will help me and he will help you,
Our God is so great, yes it's true!
(Repeat first two lines.)
- 3 What else can God do? Create further verses of your own, based on what you have chatted about today, such as, 'He helps us at school; he's here when I'm sad...'

Play and learn activity

Finger game

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to consider why the walls fell down

- 1 As the children get used to doing the finger actions for this rhyme, speak the words louder and faster.
Jericho's walls stand high and straight, (Hold both hands upright, with fingers together and pointing upwards.)
Tall, strong walls and big strong gates. (Keep hands very still.)
But Jericho's walls begin to shake! (Make hands tremble.)
Jericho's walls move up and down, (Make hands judder.)
And side to side, all round the town, (Move hands sideways and back.)
And Jericho's walls fall! Crash! Bang! Down! (Drop hands sharply and spread fingers wide.)
- 2 Chat about what made the walls of Jericho fall down. The type of answers the children give will depend on when you use this activity: you could use it both before and after your Bible story and see if, and how, their responses change.

Tip for Leaders: If you are short of planning time, choose to include one of the *Ready to use* activity options for part of your session.

Options for children aged 3 to 5 years...

Bible time activity

Acting the Bible story

Activity time: 10–15 minutes

Aim: to find out that God is powerful enough to do anything

You will need: *The Big Bible Storybook* (SPCK) or *Bonus Sheet C* from page 83, toy trumpets or those made from page 103, sound effects

- 1 You may like to tell the story first in your own words or read ‘The walls of Jericho’ from *The Big Bible Storybook* or *Bonus Sheet C* to set the scene for this re-enactment. Create your own sound effects of marching feet, blaring trumpets and crashing walls.
- 2 Explain the importance of a city wall in biblical times: it protected the city and its people. A city wall needed to be very solid and strong, so that it could not easily be broken down or destroyed. Joshua and the people did not think they could break down the walls of Jericho. But God promised to help them.
- 3 List God’s instructions to Joshua. Invite the children to share what they think about these instructions. Is this the way they would expect a wall to be broken down? Stress that although the instructions were strange, Joshua trusted God, and so he obeyed God and did what God told him – even though he did not understand why. (Mention Rahab, if you did Session 11, and say that she and her family were safe when the walls fell down and they went to live with God’s people.)
- 4 Invite the children to act out the story. Use a ‘wall’ if you have made one or agree an area of your room which will be ‘Jericho’. Get

ready to march round the city, carrying trumpets (or other musical instruments) to blow. For safety reasons, do not ask the children to blow the trumpets as they walk: instead, pause several times for them to blow. Remember, you must not speak as you go! March around once and then sing, to the tune of ‘Ten green bottles’:

On day one, we marched around the walls,
Left, right, left, right, round the walls so tall,
Left, right, left, right, while the trumpets blew,
With God on our side, we knew just what to do.

- 5 Repeat five times, singing: ‘On day two...; On day three...; On day four...; On day five...; On day six...’

- 6 For the last time (‘On day seven...’), you can sing while you march: this time you go round seven times. Be ready to shout loudly!

Marching, marching, marching round the walls,
Left, right, left, right, round the walls so tall,
Seven times round the walls of Jericho,
That’s how God has told us all to go.

Blow the trumpets, blow the trumpets now! (*Make ‘tooting’ noises to the tune or stand still and blow your trumpets.*)

Shout to God, come on and shout out loud! (*Give a praise shout: ‘God is great!’*)

And with shouts and trumpets and marching round the walls,
With God on our side, the city walls will FALL!

God and me activity

Praise shout

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to praise God!

- 1 Invite the children to march slowly around the room. As they do so, teach them a simple praise shout like: ‘God is great! God is strong! God can do anything!’
- 2 While marching, encourage the children to mention great things God has done, such as: God made high mountains, God made beautiful flowers. After each idea, everyone can respond with one phrase from the praise shout.
- 3 All say the praise shout together, softly at first, then gradually getting louder and louder.
- 4 Say: ‘In today’s Bible story, Joshua reminded the people that God is great and powerful. He told the people to shout as loudly as they could... and when they did, something amazing happened!’ Ask the children to describe, in their own words, what happened when all the people shouted. Then march and shout some more!

More on this theme

If you want to do a short series with your group, other sessions that work well with this one are:

- **Session 10** Joshua leads the way, Joshua 1:1–9
- **Session 11** Joshua makes plans, Joshua 2
- **Session 12** Over the river, Joshua 3:1 – 4:9

Options for children aged under 3 years...

Bible time activity

Bible story

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to find out that God is powerful enough to do anything

You will need: trumpet template from page 103, or cardboard tubes or party blowers; bricks, cardboard boxes or cushions

- 1 Make some trumpets using cardboard tubes, cones of paper shaped like megaphones or use party blowers.
- 2 Then build some walls using wooden or plastic bricks, cardboard boxes or even cushions! As the children build, the bricks may keep falling over. Talk about how you could make them stronger, perhaps by fastening them together with sticky tape or using interlocking bricks.
- 3 Feel a wall in the building where you meet and see if the children can push or move it. How are real walls made? What makes them strong? Rebuild your play wall in a square ready for the story.
- 4 Remind the children of the story last session when Joshua led God's people across the river.

God did something amazing – he made the water stop flowing. The people went on to the city of Jericho. There were big, strong walls all around it. (*Point to your wall.*) How could God's people ever get through them and into their new land? But God was going to do something amazing again! God told Joshua his plan. 'Tell some priests to carry my special box.' (*Ask two children to carry the cardboard box.*) 'Everyone must march round the city, blowing their trumpets.' It seemed a strange thing to do, but the people trusted God. For six days, they marched once round the city. On the seventh day they marched round seven times and blew their trumpets. (*Act all this out.*) They shouted loudly, 'Hurray for God!' Suddenly, amazingly, the walls fell down and the people rushed in! (*Knock down the walls and go into the middle.*)

God and me activity

Counting story

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to declare that God is powerful!

- 1 Use this counting rhyme as you march round, or to recap on the story:
Round the city on day one,
Back to where we first began.
Round the city on day two,
Men on trumpets blew and blew.
Round the city on day three,
People followed seven priests.
Round the city on day four,
'We've done this walk three times before!'
Round the city on day five,
Joshua knows God's on their side.
Round the city on day six,
Look at that big wall of bricks!
On day seven, seven times round,
Listen to the trumpets sound!
The walls have fallen to the ground!
- 2 Pray with the children, 'Thank you, God, that you are so big, (*reach up*) so strong (*show muscles in your arms*) and so powerful (*use arms to sketch a big circle*) that you can do anything!'

Play and learn activity

Active game

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to consider the effects of God's power

- 1 Stand in a circle, all facing outwards, and practise different ways of 'being' a wall. Try standing very straight with arms down by your sides; or linking arms, with elbows held out sideways; or arms held up, hands as fists, feet spread. Which makes you feel tall and strong?
- 2 Stand together and explain that, even though you are very strong, when you hear a trumpet, you are all going to unlink your arms and all fall down! (Carefully! Make sure there are no obstacles around your 'wall'.)
- 3 Sing to the tune of 'Ring o' roses':
We're the city wall,
Standing strong and tall,
Too-to-toot, too-to-toot,
We all fall down!
- 4 Say that you are like the walls of Jericho. In the Bible story, God makes the strong walls of a great city fall down! Joshua and the people with him knew that God could do anything!
- 5 Play at being city walls at times in your session. Ask, or remind, the children why the walls fall down.



13 Bubbles

The walls of Jericho

Today's aim is to find out that God is powerful enough to do anything.

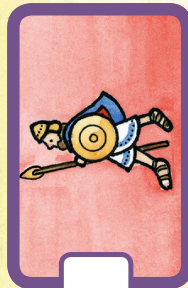
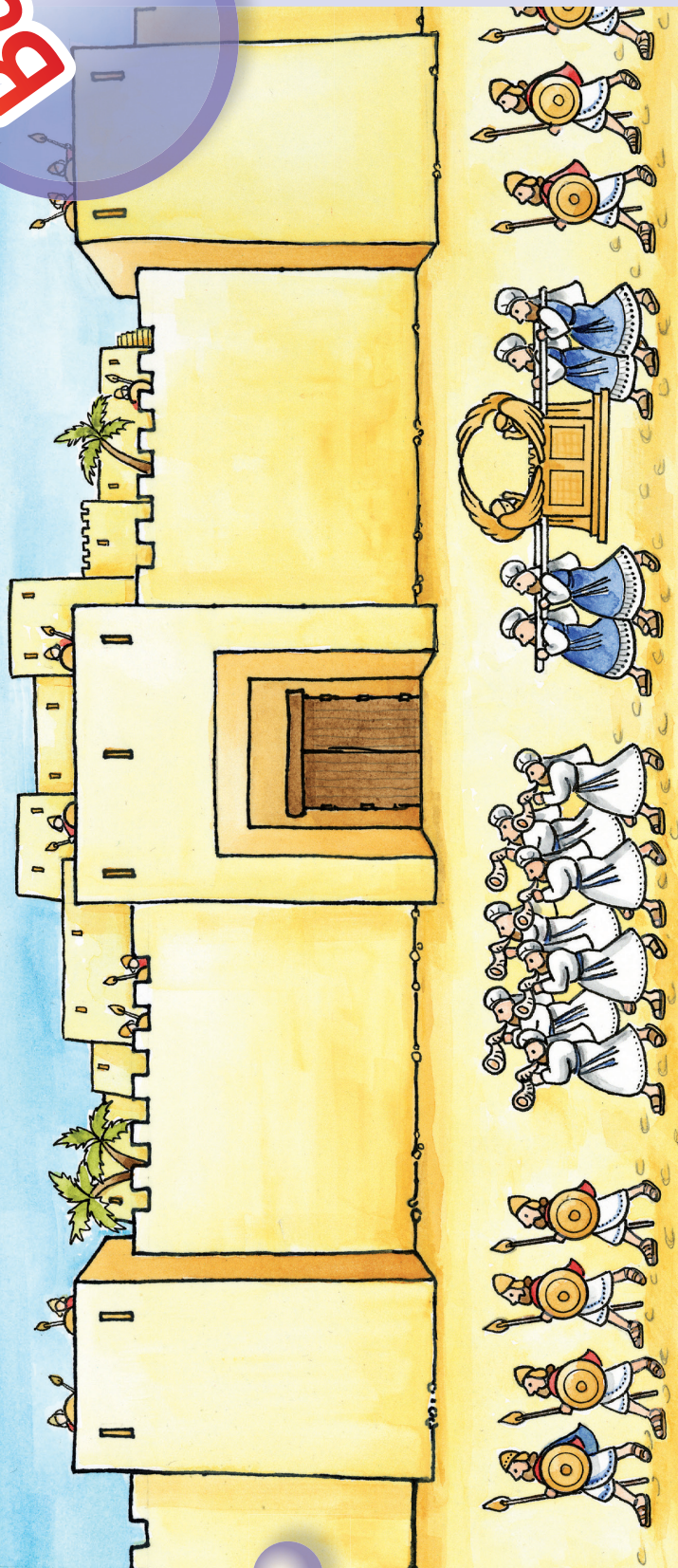
Joshua 6

Help your child match the small pictures with the items in the main scene.

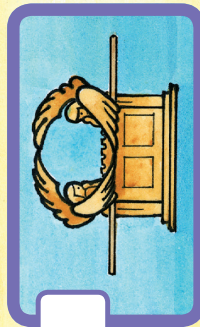
Children do not "spot" things as quickly as adults, so be patient and encouraging as they look.

Act out being the different people in the story. March like a soldier. Make a sound like a trumpet. Make a sound like a trumpet as the priests did. Pretend to carry God's special box. What does your child think happens next in the story? Turn the page to find out.

The Bible story is on **Bonus Sheet C**.



Can you find these things in the picture?



13 Bubbles

The walls fell down!

Say:

The soldiers' feet
went tramp, tramp,
tramp.

The trumpets
sounded, "Toot,
toot, toot!"

The people shouted,
"God is strong!"
And the walls came
tumbling down!

Make the walls fall down.

Encourage your child to
draw or paint more of the
fallen walls. Be amazed
that God was powerful
enough to make the strong
walls of Jericho fall down!

Can you make walls fall
down? Build some walls with
toy blocks or interlocking
bricks. Can you make them
fall down by shouting? Try it
with real walls. Who made the
walls of Jericho fall down?

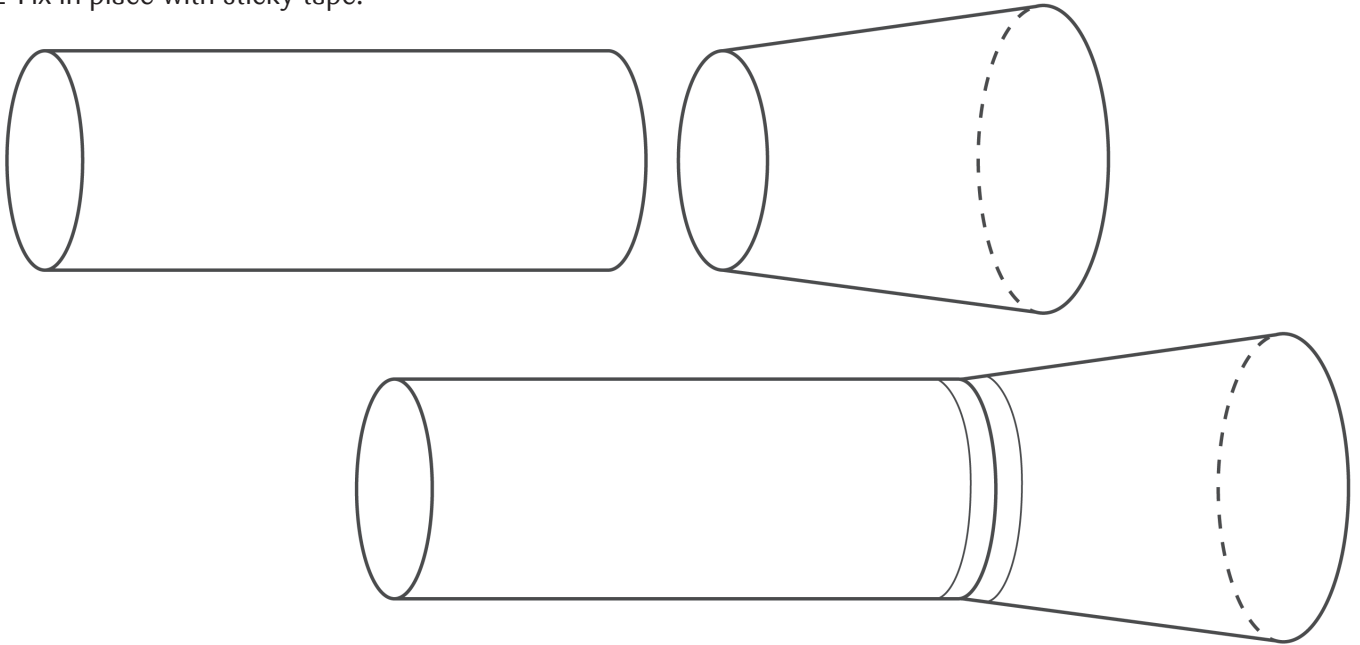
Joshua obeyed some strange
instructions and trusted
God to help him – and it all
worked out. In this story
there is excitement and
action but there is also time
to develop a relationship of
trust and obedience with God,
which can be as dramatic as
tumbling walls!



Roll trumpet

You will need: cardboard rolls, disposable cups with their bases cut away, wide sticky tape

- 1 Put the cup over one end of the roll.
- 2 Fix in place with sticky tape.



Megaphone-style trumpet

You will need: this template shape, card (any size), sticky tape

- 1 Enlarge this shape to suit whatever size card you have.
- 2 Cut out.
- 3 Shape into a cone and tape along the edge.

