



God Gives Jericho to Israel

Joshua 6



LESSON GOAL

Students will be encouraged to obey because of God's ability to do what He says.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God told Israel to walk around the city once a day for six days and on the seventh day seven times, ending in a shout.
- When the priests blew the trumpets and the people shouted, the walls of Jericho fell.
- God instructed Israel to conquer Jericho in this way to show that it was by His power that the walls fell.

KEY VERSE

"And the LORD said to Joshua: 'See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor'" (Joshua 6:2).

APPLICATION

- Remember that difficult circumstances are an opportunity for God to glorify Himself.
- Obey God's instructions, whether they make sense or not.
- Reflect that God's work is done by Him, although He may use us.

NEXT WEEK

God Reveals Achan's Sin
Read Joshua 7.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

In the first five chapters of Joshua, God repeatedly encouraged the Israelites by telling them that He would give them the Promised Land. In Joshua 1:2–9, God encouraged Joshua, the leader of Israel, by promising him that he would never be abandoned by God, that he would be unbeatable in battle, and that he would conquer every place his foot would tread. In Chapter 2, the spies were encouraged that God would give Israel the land when they learned of the Canaanites’ terror and Rahab’s faith. The Canaanites’ terror was magnified when God stopped the Jordan from flowing and the Israelites passed over on dry ground (Josh. 5:1). As Israel spent their first night in the Promised Land, their thoughts must have raced with how God had parted the Jordan River so they could enter.

God’s encouragement was not without exhortation. While He gave powerful promises to Joshua, He also called him to be strong and courageous and to be resolute in his attention and remembrance of the Law (Josh. 1:6–9). Similarly, the crossing of the Jordan was an incredible encouragement to the Israelites, but God also charged them to “fear the LORD your God forever” (4:24). Israel apparently took the warning. For the first time since leaving Egypt, the Israelite men obeyed God and were circumcised (Gen. 17:9–14; Josh. 5:2–7). Even though the procedure was painful and would leave the men unable to fight, the Israelites feared God and obeyed. The people further obeyed God by celebrating the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Josh. 5:10–12). During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the people enjoyed “the produce of the land” for the first time (5:11). God had faithfully fed his people manna for over 40 years, but now that Israel was in the land, the manna stopped (5:12). God had begun to give Israel the land, and they were enjoying His blessing by obeying and fearing Him.

Joshua’s meeting the commander of the army of the Lord in chapter 5 is one last example of encouragement and exhortation. Not knowing who the man with the drawn sword was (Josh. 5:13), Joshua asked if he was friend or foe. The man revealed that he was the commander of the army of the Lord. Although Joshua “fell on his face to the earth and worshiped,” he still did not understand that he was on holy ground (5:15). Like Moses on Mount Sinai, Joshua was in the presence of God. The visit from the commander of the army of the Lord was indeed strong encouragement. But at the same time, being in God’s presence is always an exhortation toward holiness. This balance of encouragement and exhortation continues in the next two chapters of Joshua. In chapter 6, the destruction of Jericho, God encourages His people and reveals that He alone will give Israel the land. In chapter 7, which tells of the disastrous sin of Achan, Israel learns the danger of ignoring God’s exhortation.

Surprising Instructions: Joshua 6:1–5

Judges 6:1 describes the problem that Israel faced in conquering Jericho: the gates

of Jericho had been shut, and no one could enter or exit. Israel had the difficult task before them of besieging the city and trying either to get inside or waiting for the inhabitants to surrender. But as soon as the problem is introduced, the text reveals God's plan for conquering the city. The Lord triumphantly told Joshua, "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor" (6:2). God's instructions emphasized that it was He who would give Jericho to Israel. Israel's job was to simply obey what God instructed.

Every day for six days, the Israelite soldiers were instructed to march around the city once (6:3). (The city probably measured 225 by 80 meters.) The soldiers were to be followed by seven priests blowing seven trumpets made from rams' horns. These seven priests were followed by the ark of the covenant, which symbolized the presence of the Lord among the Israelites (6:4). On the seventh day, the same march was to be made seven times (6:4). At the final trumpet blast on the seventh day, all the Israelites were commanded to shout. God promised that the city's walls would fall flat, and the Israelite soldiers would be able to enter (6:5). Such an unusual method for taking the city emphasized that it was the Lord alone who was going to give Israel the city of Jericho. Israel would not be able to look at themselves and say, "We did it!" Instead, they would be able to say only, "The Lord did it!"

Simple Obedience: Joshua 6:6–19

Joshua called the priests and people and gave them the instructions from the Lord (Josh. 6:6–7). The people obeyed exactly as God had commanded (v. 8). Verses 8–14 describe what happened on the first six days. The first day is described in verses 8–11. These verses supply the extra information that a rear guard followed the ark (6:9). They also reveal that Joshua commanded the people, "You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout" (6:10). Israel returned to camp until the next day (6:11) when they again followed the Lord's instructions (6:12–14).

After six days of following God's commands (Josh. 6:14), Israel rose early on the seventh day and marched around the city seven times (6:15). Joshua had instructed the people what to do when the seven priests blew the trumpets for the seventh time. The people were commanded to "shout, for the LORD has given you the city!" (6:16). God commanded that the people and the goods of the city were not to be taken by the Israelites. Instead, everything was "doomed by the LORD to destruction" (6:17). Except for Rahab and her house, all the people and animals were to be killed. In Deuteronomy 20:16–18, God had revealed that every person was to be killed "lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the LORD your God." God was preserving Israel from the wicked practices that Canaanites would teach them. Instead of being destroyed, "all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron" were to be consecrated to the Lord and become part of the tabernacle treasury (6:19). Joshua also warned the people, "Abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it" (6:18). The seriousness of not following this warning will not be revealed until Joshua 7.

Stunning Results: Joshua 6:20–28

When the priests blew the trumpets and the people shouted, "the wall fell down flat" (6:20). The Lord had delivered Jericho into the hands of the Israelites. The Israelites rushed into the city and "utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword" (6:21). God had patiently waited with the Canaanites over 400 years. In Genesis

15:16, God had told Abraham that “the iniquity of the Amorites [was] not yet complete.” Like all people, the Canaanites deserved God’s judgment (Rom. 6:23), but God graciously waited to punish them. By the time of the conquest, Israel was God’s chosen instrument to punish the unrepentant Canaanite nations. (One day, God would use other nations to punish Israel.) Even after hearing the wonders of the God of Israel, the Canaanites did not repent like Rahab and look to Israel’s God for salvation. Instead, their hearts were hard, and even though they knew they would be defeated, they continued to fight against Yahweh and Israel (Josh. 11:19–20).

Of all the people in Jericho, only Rahab had submitted to the God of Israel. Because “she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho” (6:25), Joshua instructed the two spies, “Go into the harlot’s house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her” (6:22). Rahab knew that God was going to give Israel the Promised Land (2:9). Unlike that of the other Canaanites, her knowledge turned to faith, and she was saved. The rest of Jericho was burned with fire, except for the gold, silver, and bronze, which were put into the Lord’s treasury (6:24).

Conclusion

In the miraculous destruction of Jericho, the Lord confirmed to Israel His precious promise that He would give them the land. While the people were responsible to heed His instructions, only God is glorified in the story of Jericho. God again used a difficult situation to encourage His people by acting on their behalf. Because God is omnipotent and omniscient, He can always keep His word. He promised Joshua, “See! I have given Jericho into your hand,” and in the most glorious way affirmed that it was He alone who would give Jericho to Israel! Israel’s response was to be encouraged and to heed His exhortation. Chapter 7 reveals what happened when one of those who went into Jericho ignored the Lord’s exhortation.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth” (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

What river did the Israelites need to cross in order to enter the Promised Land?
The Jordan River.

Was this a safe river to cross?
No. It was a large river, and there were swift rapids.

What miracle did God do to make it possible for the Israelites to cross?
He stopped the waters from flowing just as He had done at the Red Sea.

Why were the people of Israel required to stay back from the ark of the covenant?

The ark of the covenant was a symbol of God's presence, and the people needed to be respectful of God's holiness.

Did all the people make it safely across?
Yes.

What did God tell the Israelites to make as a reminder of His mighty act?
A memorial of stones.



Surprising Instructions

Give the students strange instructions that do not make sense to them but will result in a small blessing. For example, blindfold a student and tell him to take a certain amount of steps in various directions. If he follows the directions correctly, he will then be blessed with a prize. Israel was also blessed through their obedience. If they followed God's instructions, they would also experience God's blessing in the Promised Land.



Ram's Horn Trumpet

Have the students make rams' horn trumpets by curling a sheet of paper lengthwise and taping it closed, making one side larger than the other. They can use the horns during the lesson with the "Conquering Jericho" activity found under "Presentation Ideas."



Obedience—Even When It Does Not Make Sense

Ask the students to explain what it means to obey. To obey means to follow the instructions of someone or something. What kinds of people or instructions do we follow? (A policeman, our moms and dads, a medicine prescription, the Bible, etc.) Some kinds of instructions we can choose to obey or not obey—for example, instructions on a recipe or directions on a map. We usually obey instructions because we think that the other person knows better than we do and can help us get what we want or help us avoid danger. We choose not to obey when we think that we know better than the other person. We may think we know how to make a cake and so ignore the recipe, but we may be wrong, and then our cake won't turn out right. God knows everything and always knows what is best for us. We must, therefore, always obey God's instructions, even when we think we know better. We must also obey those whom God puts in charge over us. God wanted Israel to obey Him and Joshua, even though their instructions didn't make sense. That shows that we trust God and believe He knows best.



Who Did It?

1 Use this call-and-response throughout the lesson to reinforce the idea that God is the source of all that happens. Each time you say, "Who did it?" the students should respond, "The Lord did it!" This call-and-response can be used to keep the students listening for the appropriate phrase, as well as acknowledging God's work in the life of Israel.



Push Over

1 Explain to the students that they will be playing a game called "Push Over." Instruct them to line up against a wall, and on the count of three, have them all try to push the wall over. After they realize that it is impossible for them to do this, tell them to yell the wall over. On the count of three, have the students yell at the

wall to see if they can knock it down. After they try to yell over the wall, ask them whether they think it is possible for the walls to fall that way. Explain that in today's lesson, they will be learning about how God made a wall fall when Israel obeyed His surprising instructions.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

The people of Israel had been through a lot. Moses led them through the wilderness for 40 years because of their sin. After the 40 years, the people finally had come to the edge of the Promised Land. Moses, their leader, was about to die. The people would need a new leader as they entered the land. God made Joshua the new leader of the people of Israel. God used Joshua to lead them across the Jordan.

On the other side of the Jordan was a city called Jericho. The city had huge walls and an army. How would Israel conquer this huge city with big walls? The people of Israel did not have to worry about that. God promised to remove Israel's enemies as long as Israel was obedient to Him. The people followed God's instructions, and something incredible happened. Have you ever been told to do something but did not understand why? God was telling Israel to do something that didn't make sense.

God told them to walk around the city for seven days. They were to have the ark lead the people. In front of the ark were to be priests with trumpets made of rams' horns. In front of the priests were to be armed soldiers. On each of the first six days, Israel was to walk around the city one time. They were told to walk around the city without saying a word. On the seventh day, they were to walk around the city quietly for the first six times, and then on the seventh, the priests were to blow their trumpets, and the people were to yell at the top of their lungs. Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!" The people screamed as loudly as they could, and the priests blew their trumpets as loudly as they could. Do you know what happened next? Just as God had promised, the walls of Jericho fell down. And the people of Israel ran in and conquered the city. The only part of the wall that did not fall was where Rahab's house was. Do you remember Rahab? She had hidden the Israelite spies in her house. Because she had trusted in God and put the scarlet cord out her window, God protected her and her family. The two spies whom Rahab had hidden went to her house and brought her out safely.

God was faithful to keep His promises. He was faithful to bring Israel to the Promised Land. He was faithful to take out the people who lived in the land. He was also faithful to keep Rahab and her family safe. The God who protected and provided for Israel is the same God who protects and provides for His children today.



Lesson Questions

What did God tell Joshua to do in order to conquer Jericho?

The Israelites were to march around the city once a day for six days. Everyone was to be quiet. On the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times. After the seventh time around the city, the priests were to blow the trumpets very loud. After the loud blast, everyone was to shout. When they shouted, the wall would fall down flat so the soldiers could attack the city.

Who gave Joshua victory over Jericho?

God.

What happened to Rahab when God gave the Israelites the city of Jericho and they attacked it?

Rahab's house did not fall down even though it was on the wall. God protected Rahab and her relatives who were in the house with her. After the wall fell down, the Israelites attacked. Joshua sent the two spies to bring Rahab and her family safely out of her house.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



Conquering Jericho

Using the materials from last week and the trumpets from this week, have students act out the conquering of Jericho. The walls of Jericho could be made up of butcher paper, cardboard boxes, or cardboard. After students have walked around the walls of Jericho, they can blow trumpets and yell, making the walls fall.



Israel's Key

Materials: several keys on a key chain

Directions: Explain to the students that in today's lesson they will learn about a city that was locked up tight. Hold up one key at a time and ask them whether they think that the key could open the door. Explain that the only key that would open up Jericho for Israel would be God's power.



Tumbling Walls

Materials: large foam blocks or small cardboard boxes, large towel

Directions: Build a small wall on top of the towel while the students watch; then have them sit in front of the wall and shout at it to see if they can knock it down. When they cannot, have them shout again; then quickly pull the towel out from underneath the wall. (It should tumble down.) Explain that in today's lesson, they will learn about a much larger and stronger wall that was built around the city of Jericho. God crumbled the wall flat so the Israelites could get in.



Building the Walls of Jericho

Materials: large set of building blocks, table, tablecloth, horns

Directions: Set up a table in front of the class and cover it with a long tablecloth that touches the floor. Before any students enter the classroom, ask an adult volunteer to hide under the table. Begin building the part of the wall that will represent Rahab's house. This section can be identified by a red cord coming out of a window. Fasten this section to the table securely with tape or putty. As students come to class, invite them to continue building the walls of Jericho as a team. Once the city of Jericho is completely fortified, instruct students to sit down for the lesson. Ask student volunteers to pretend to be Israelites walking around the city walls once for six days. While acting out the seventh day, direct the volunteers to walk around the city seven times, and have the priests blow their trumpets and the whole class shout. When the class shouts, the volunteer beneath the table should shake it so that the walls of Jericho come tumbling down. The students should notice that one section of the wall did not fall down. Use this to explain how God protected Rahab and her family because of her faith and her kindness to the Israelite spies.

Praise and Worship

Awesome God

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Joshua (Fit the Battle of Jericho)

Mighty Is Our God

My God Is So Great



Jericho Falls

The Lord told His people to do something strange:
(Scratch head; look confused.)

To march around Jericho's wall.
(March in place.)

They did what He said, and around they did go
(Nod head.)

They circled for six days in all.
(Count to six on fingers.)

Then the seventh day came, and they marched seven times—
(Hold up seven fingers.)

They circled around and around.
(March in place.)

The priests blew their horns and the people all yelled
(Pretend to blow horn.)

And watched as the wall crumbled down!
(Lower hands while wiggling fingers.)

Remember this story, and do not forget:
(Point to temple; wag finger.)

Even when His instructions sound odd,
(Scratch head; make confused face.)

Obey Him and trust that His plan is the best.
(Place hand over heart; nod head.)

All wisdom and power are God's!
(Point to temple; flex biceps; point upward.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Instructions

What surprising instructions has God given you? Although God does not tell us to walk around a city, many of His instructions to us are contrary to what we might hear in the world today.

Rejoice always—but what about when you're sick? Tired?

Obey your parents—but what about when you want to do something else? When you think your parents are wrong?

Love your neighbor as yourself—How? Why?



Set It Aside

Materials: copies of the Jericho standalone page (at back of lesson); crayons, small circles, squares, and triangles cut from brown paper; small bags; glue

Directions: Give each student a copy of the standalone page and a bag containing various cutout shapes. Tell the students to glue the shapes to Jericho's walls—except for the triangles, which they should set aside or give to the teacher. Remind them that God told Israel to set aside "all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron" for the tabernacle treasury (Josh. 6:19). You could use the finished project next week when teaching about the seriousness of not following God's warning.



Piñata

Bring to class a piñata with a variety of candy inside. Tell the students they can collect the candy, but all the lollipops (or pick another good candy) must be set aside and given to the teacher. You might even talk about how good the lollipops are and the fact that God should have the best, but also remind the students that there is plenty of other good candy left, and God gave a lot of good spoil to the Israelites in Jericho.



God's Surprising Instructions

Materials: copies of the "God's Surprising Instructions" craft pages, white card-stock, scissors, glue or tape, crayons, red yarn (optional)

Directions: Give each student a copy of the craft pages, and have him cut out all

the pieces. Give each student a piece of cardstock to fold in half like a greeting card. On the front of the page, the students should glue the square that says "God's Surprising Instructions for the Miraculous Destruction of Jericho." On the back, they should glue the square that says "Israel Did All That God Commanded." They should then fold the verse strip in half and glue it across the bottom of the card's inside. They can color the city walls brown and then draw a window in the wall, punching a small hole in it and hanging a piece of red thread through it to represent Rahab's house. Direct the students to draw simple stick "soldiers" on the strip of paper that says "Rear Guard, Ark of the Covenant, Priests, Armed Men." They should glue this strip to the bottom of Jericho's wall. Then direct them to fold the wall in half down the center, and then reverse fold each side to create a W shape. This will create a pop-up effect when the two side edges are glued to the inside of the card.



Encouragement and Exhortation

Ask the students what sorts of things they dislike doing (cleaning their rooms, brushing their teeth, washing dishes). Ask what sorts of things they find very difficult to do (juggle or catch a ball, for example). Sometimes we don't do things just because we don't feel like doing them, and sometimes, we don't do them because we don't think we are able to. Sometimes we lack discipline and don't want to keep trying until we learn to do something that is difficult to do at first. Israel didn't always feel like doing the hard work of taking over the Promised Land, and they weren't sure that they were able to. To encourage someone is like putting courage into him. God encouraged the Israelites by promising them that they would be able to drive the Canaanites out of the land. He also exhorted them to obey. This means that He gave them firm instructions that they needed to believe His promises and act upon them. What are some exhortations and encouragements that God gives to us today?

Coloring Sheets

Give each student copies of the coloring sheets from the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

"And the LORD said to Joshua: 'See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor'" (Joshua 6:2).

God's Surprising Instructions

God's Surprising Instructions for the Miraculous Destruction of Jericho

Cut out and glue on front of card.

Israel Did All That God Commanded

“So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the LORD advanced and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, while the priests continued blowing the trumpets”
(Joshua 6:8–9).

Application

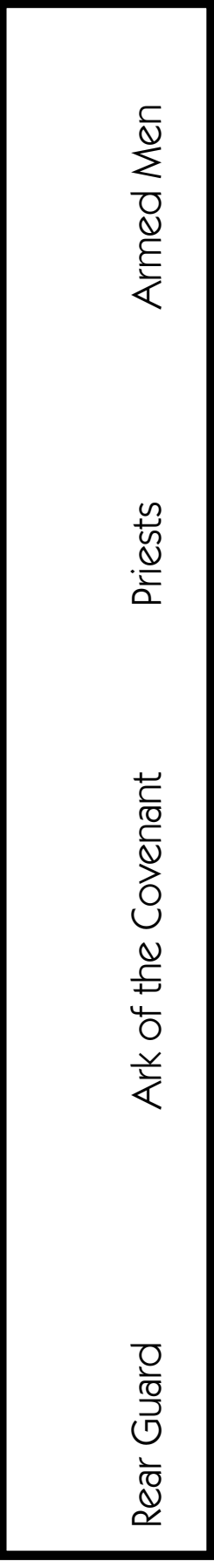
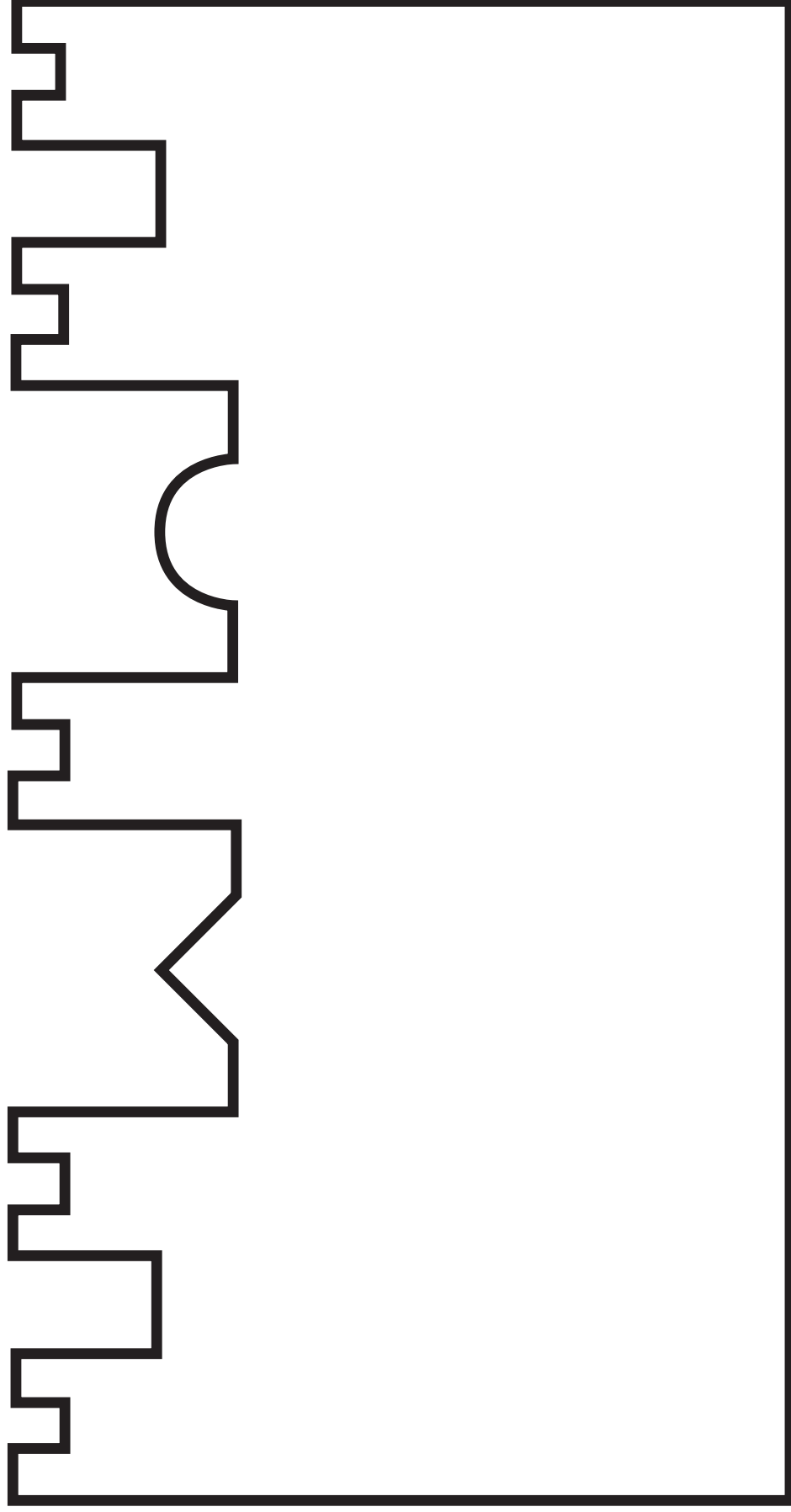
What instructions has God given you?
Are you ready to obey Him, no matter how surprising His instructions are and no matter what the results might be?

Cut out and glue on back of card.

“And the LORD said to Joshua: ‘See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets’” (Joshua 6:2–4).

Cut out and glue on inside of card.

God's Surprising Instructions

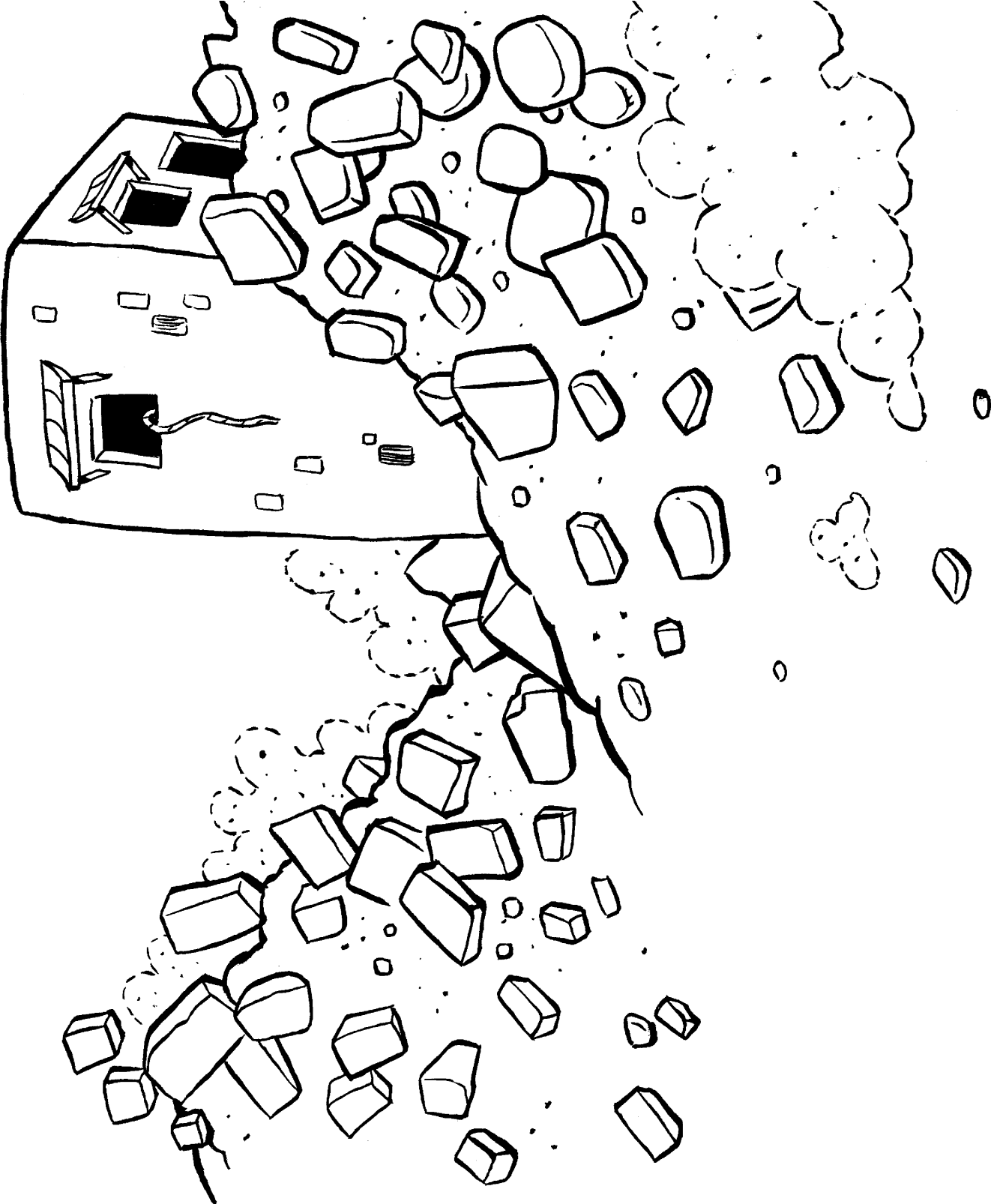


Rear Guard

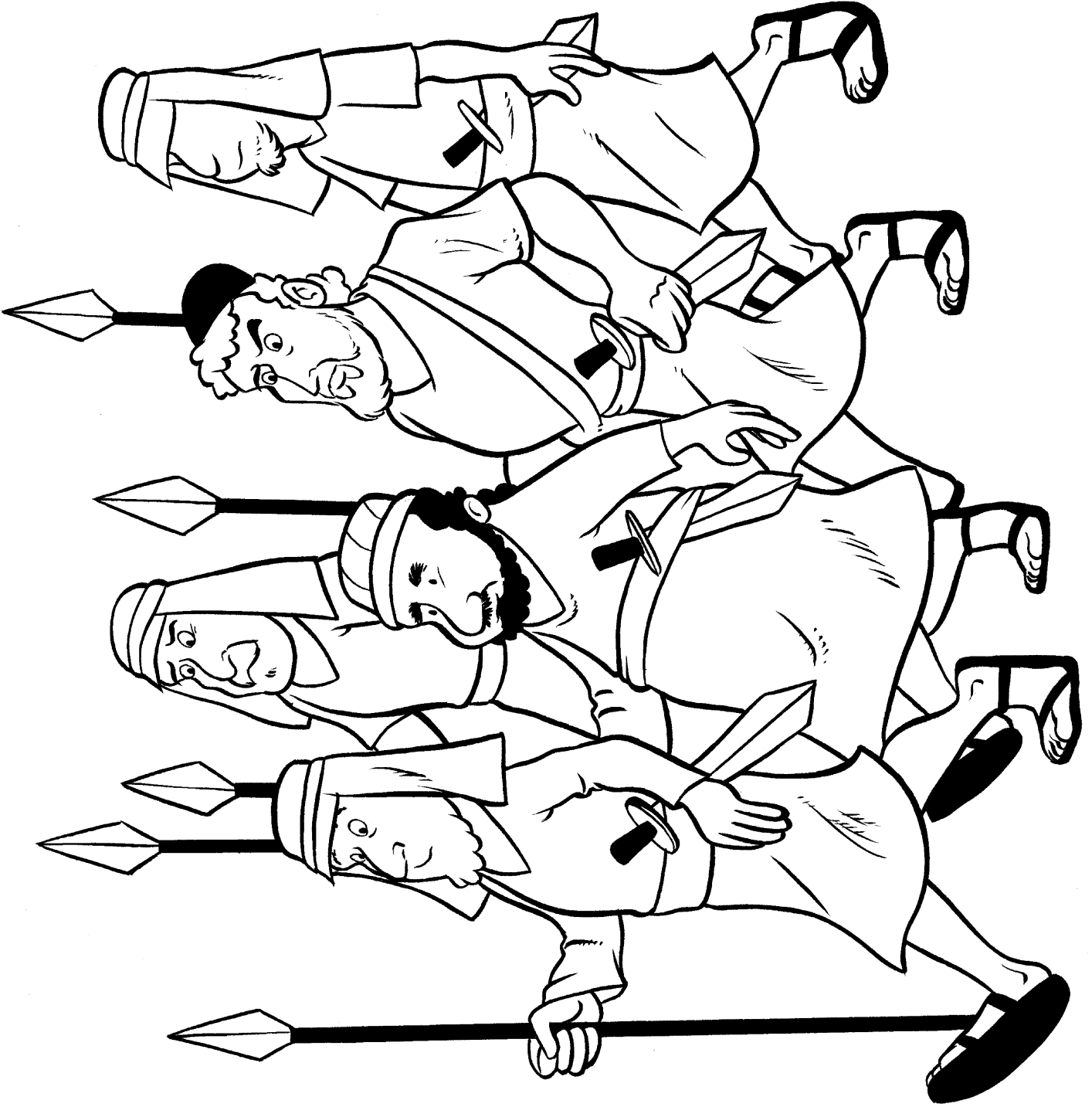
Ark of the Covenant

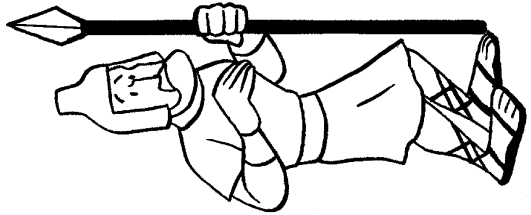
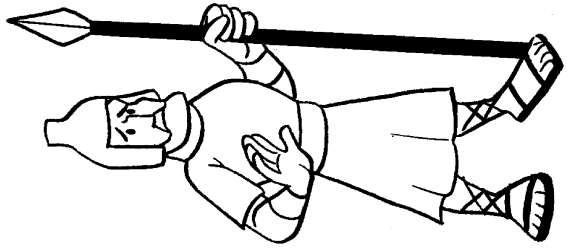
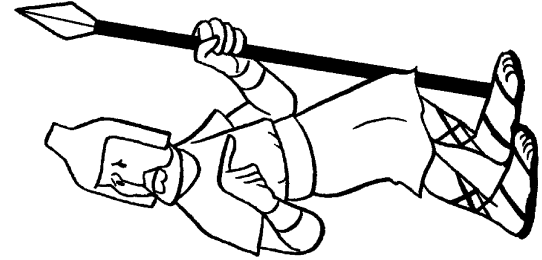
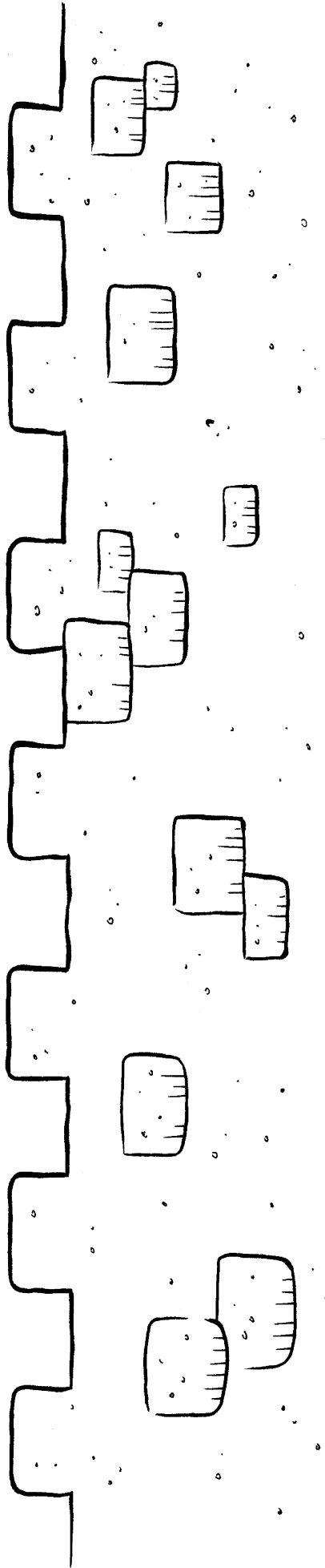
Priests

Armed Men











“You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days” (Joshua 6:3).



“And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat” (Joshua 6:20).

