

JOSHUA AT JERICHO: THE WALLS FALL DOWN

God had told Israel He would bring them into the Promised Land. Now He used miracles to help them cross a river and defeat Jericho.

by Shelby Faith

After the two spies Joshua had sent returned from Jericho, they told Joshua all they had seen and what had happened to them. They told him how Rahab had helped them. They also told Joshua about the promise they had made to save her and her family. (Read more about this in the Bible story “[Rahab and the Two Spies](#).”)

They said, “God has delivered all of this land to us. The people of this country are fearful because they have heard of us and what our God has done for us” (Joshua 2:23-24).

CROSSING THE JORDAN RIVER

After the spies gave their report, Joshua led Israel the short distance to the Jordan River. There they camped for three days. Then Joshua’s officers went through the camp and instructed the people how they were to cross over the river. They told the people, “When you see the ark of the LORD and the priests carrying it, then you shall follow it.”

Joshua then told the priests to take the ark and go into the river before the people. So they did. The river was overflowing its banks because of the spring rains. Joshua told them God would dry up the river for them so they could cross over.

When the priests’ feet dipped into the edge of the river, the waters stopped. It was a miracle from God! The priests stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan riverbed. All Israel crossed over on dry ground.

After the people reached the other side, the priests carried the ark over. When their feet touched the other edge of the river, the waters of the Jordan returned. It overflowed all its banks, just as it had before (Joshua 4:1-18).

12 REMINDER STONES

Joshua told Israel to choose a man from each of the 12 tribes. Each of the men was to pick up a stone from the Jordan where the priests stood. They carried the stones out of the river. Joshua set up the stones in Gilgal as a memorial of this crossing over the Jordan.

Then he told Israel, “When your children ask, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them about the miracle of crossing the Jordan.”

QUIZ TIME

What happened when the priests reached the edge of the river?

FEARING GOD AND KEEPING HIS FESTIVALS

When the kings of the land heard that Israel's God had dried up the waters of the Jordan so that Israel could cross over, their hearts melted. They were very afraid (Joshua 5:1).

Israel stayed camped in Gilgal. They kept the Passover on the 14th day of the first month. They also kept the Days of Unleavened Bread as God had instructed through Moses (Exodus 12:15-20).

God stopped providing them the manna that they had eaten all those years in the wilderness. From then on they ate the produce of the land of Canaan.

MEETING GOD

Joshua was near Jericho when a Man appeared. He held a sword in His hand. Joshua went closer to Him. He asked Him if He was an enemy. The Man said, "No, I come as Commander of the army of God." Joshua fell on his face to the ground and worshipped Him. He was actually God, the One who later came as Jesus Christ!

Then Joshua was told, "Take your sandals off, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so, just as Moses did when God spoke to him near the burning bush (Joshua 5:1-15).

God said to Joshua, "I have given Jericho to you." (The people of Jericho were very afraid.)

GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS

God then told Joshua what He wanted Israel to do next.

"Each day your men of war shall go all around the city one time, for six days. Seven priests shall each carry a trumpet made of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets.

"On that day, they shall blow a long blast with the ram's horn. When you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout. Then the wall of the city will fall down flat. The people will be able to walk right in."

So Joshua called the priests and said, "Take up the ark of God and let each of the seven priests carry a trumpet before the ark." And he told the people, "March around the walls of the city. The men who are armed should go first in front of the ark."

MARCHING AROUND JERICHO

The seven priests carrying the trumpets marched around the walls, blowing them. The ark followed them. The armed men went before the priests, and the rear guard came after the ark.

Joshua said, "You shall not shout or make any noise until I say, 'Shout!'"

QUIZ TIME

On the seventh day, what were they to do differently?

So on this first day the ark of God circled the city, going around it once. Then they went back to camp and stayed there the rest of that day.

The next morning the priests again took up the ark of God. They marched around the city just as they had done the day before, blowing their trumpets continually. Then they returned to camp. This was the second day.

They did this for six days. On the seventh day they marched around the city in the same way as before. Only on this day they marched around the city seven times.

After the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!

“Today this city will be totally destroyed along with all its people. Only Rahab shall live, she and all who are in her house, because she hid the spies that we sent.” (Joshua sent men to Rahab’s house to bring her and her family safely out of Jericho.)

Joshua told Israel not to take any cursed things from Jericho. These may have been idols, ornaments or other things used for pagan worship. But he told the people to take all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron. These things would be used in the treasury of God’s house.

THE WALLS FALL DOWN!

So the people shouted with a great shout. The walls around Jericho fell flat! The people went into the city and took it. Then they burned the city.

So God was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country. Israel had finally made the long, difficult journey to the land God had promised Abraham and his descendants many generations before.

QUESTIONS

Here are some questions to think about or talk about as a family:

1. Why were the people of Jericho fearful of Israel?
2. What did God tell the priests to carry into the Jordan River?
3. What happened when the priests’ feet touched the edge of the river?
4. When did God stop giving manna to Israel? (What is manna?)
5. Who appeared to Joshua with a sword in His hand?
6. How many days did they march around Jericho?
7. What did they do each day?
8. What did they do differently on the seventh day?
9. What did Joshua tell the people to do on the seventh day when they heard the long blast of the trumpet?
10. What happened when the people shouted?

You can read this story in the Bible in Joshua 3-6. Read more in the Bible story “[Rahab and the Two Spies](#).”



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