

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Joshua 6; 8:26; 10:28-43; 11:1-23; Deuteronomy 7:1-26

PRINT PASSAGE: Joshua 11:6-9, 16-23



L3 Fighting among the Nations

REFLECT



Kamir loved basketball. He was the shooting guard for his high school basketball team. However, what he loved most was “street” basketball. His community had been playing street basketball since he was a kid. It was a big deal in his neighborhood and the surrounding neighborhoods. Everyone looks forward to the annual tournament where the local team plays two opposing teams for the championship.

Last year, Kamir’s team, the Bulldogs, came in first place. This year, they were planning to win again. The two other teams—the Wildcats and the Tigers—were good . . . much better than they were last year. They both had outstanding players.



The tournament was in two weeks, so Kamir and his team prayed and strategized on the best plan to take down both teams. The Bulldogs were fortunate because they only needed to play once. The other teams played first, and the Bulldogs played the winner. They hoped that the Tigers would win because the Wildcats had taller, stronger guys. Archie and Blake were formidable players for the Wildcats.

It’s tournament day! Everybody was out, having a great time. The excitement and intensity were in the air. The game between the Wildcats and Tigers was great. People were holding their breath to see who would win. Fortunately for the Bulldogs, the Tigers won! It was now time for them to compete—but when the teams arrived at the court, Blake and Archie were waiting to play for the Tigers. How is it that two opposing teams could come together and join forces against them? It seemed illegal, but they did. But God was with the Bulldogs because their prayers and planning for the seen and unseen had paid off. They were quicker and smarter, and they won.

If God is for you, who can be against you?



It was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. (Joshua 11:20)



Joshua 11:6-9, 16-23



6 The LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them, slain, over to Israel. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots.” **7** So Joshua and his whole army came

against them suddenly at the Waters of Merom and attacked them, **8** and the LORD gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left. **9** Joshua did to them as the LORD had directed: He hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.

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16 So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev, the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills, **17** from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and put them to death. **18** Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time. **19** Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle. **20** For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. **21** At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns. **22** No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive. **23** So Joshua took the entire land, just as the LORD had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.

INTERSECT

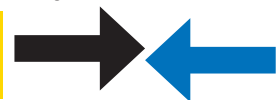
TODAY'S BIBLE PASSAGE IS ABOUT JOSHUA'S FULFILLING GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM AND MOSES. God promised the Israelites the Promised Land. To do that, the land had to be rid of the current inhabitants, who were nonbelievers living in sin and idolatry. These were evil nations.

As we read how Joshua and his army waged war and attacked these nations, it appears that everything happened quickly when, in reality, it happened over a span of seven years. Joshua displayed brilliant military strategy in his approach to take Canaan. The Lord was with Joshua because Joshua was always obedient. God told him repeatedly, “Be strong and courageous,” and that He would be with him. Joshua believed God. Joshua believed because he had witnessed what God did for the Israelites in the desert with Moses. God fed them, gave them light by night, gave them laws by which to live righteously, parted the Red Sea, parted the Jordan River, met with God in the Meeting Tent, and more. Joshua knew that God was real and that His word was true. As long as he was obedient to God, he knew that God would be with him and fulfill the promises He made.

The other nations feared the Israelites. They knew that the Israelites had a God who parted the Red Sea and successfully defeated its foes. When the evil nations heard that Joshua was approaching, though they were enemies, many nations joined together to defeat Joshua and the Israelites. So, they were a significant number, much greater than the Israelites. God told Joshua not to worry . . . He would deliver them into his hands, and so He did.

When fear and jealousy set in, enemies become friends, even if just for a little while, to destroy those they fear. But it's not the quantity or quality that matters. Is God on your side? That's what matters. If He is, you will be victorious.

Inside Out

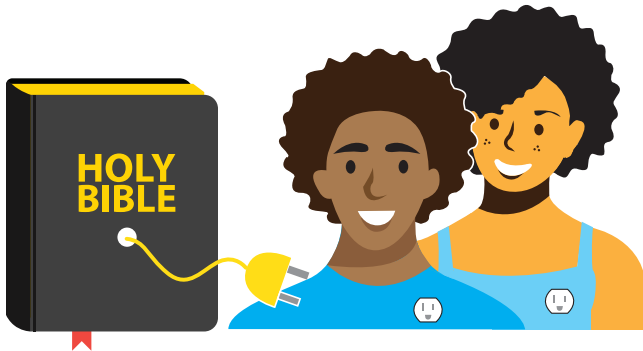


These passages are difficult to read and envision. It speaks of killing millions of people, even women and children. You may ask, “Why would a loving God do such a thing?” These recorded battles should not be interpreted as glorifying the physical destruction of other nations but, rather, as upholding and advocating for spiritual purity. Canaan had to be purified before God's chosen people could inhabit it. These chapters are written as a theological reflection on God's promise of land, heritage, and blessing.



THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

How can we apply our lesson today to your lives? Today's lesson is complicated. What is hard to digest is the killing of so many people. However, we must remember that God knows what is best for us. He knew what was best for Joshua and the Israelites. We often challenge our parents or other adults in authority if they are doing what's best for young people. They may have experience or a history of a situation and can offer what is best from their perspective. Be encouraged, be obedient, and be prayerful that God's will be done.



CONNECT

Have you ever had or seen the opposition join forces to defeat someone? Sometimes countries join together in war to defeat another country. Sometimes, political adversaries come together to defeat the opposition. There have been times when enemy street gangs have united for a common cause. In Joshua 11, many nations united to defeat the Israelites. But they were defeated because their faith was in the number of combined people fighting ("as numerous as the sand on the seashore," Joshua 11:4). Joshua's faith was in God.

Be obedient and keep your faith in God, no matter how dire the situation looks.

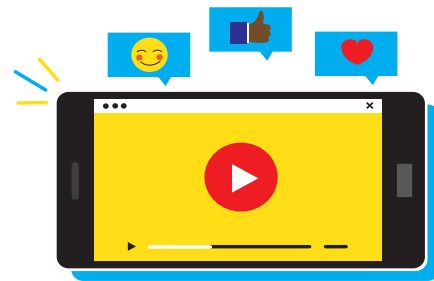


STEPPING OUT!

The walls of Jericho were massive and impenetrable. And the Israelites had no siege weapons of any kind to penetrate the walls.

Read Joshua 6 and outline how God instructed the Israelites to defeat the city of Jericho. Draw or write out the instructions on a board for visual effect.

God's instructions may not seem practical at times, but be obedient and you will be victorious.



MEDIA MISSION

Find a person or a song that demonstrates the power of obeying God. Access the link below to find an old hymn ("Trust and Obey") that you may know. Concentrate on the words and compare them to Joshua.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOTCpHZAdZw>

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Joshua 2; 6:1-25;
Matthew 1:5; James 2:25; Hebrews 11:31

PRINT PASSAGES: Joshua 2:8-13; 6:16-17



L4 Joining Forces with Unlikely Allies



The Bulldogs won the tournament for the third year in a row. They were excited about another win but unhappy about the unexpected merger of the other two teams. They felt it was unfair and unsportsmanlike. They decided to take it up with the league coordinators. The Bulldogs now had a negative perception of the players on the other two teams. The other two team players were upset because they lost, even though they thought they had the advantage of swapping players. The boys were not speaking, even though they were on neighboring teams. There were public outbursts and social media drama.



Three months later, Kamir received a letter from the league coordinators. There was a team—the Lions—in a bordering state that was challenging the Bulldogs. The winning team would receive TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS! Of course, the Bulldogs would accept the challenge. However, two of their key players were no longer available. This was their last year playing due to age restrictions. Kamir assured the league coordinators that he could find some replacements in time for the challenge.

The Lions had won their last FIVE tournaments! No one could beat them . . . but that did not stop Kamir from stepping up to the challenge. He was exhausted trying to find replacements that were as good as the two other guys.

One afternoon, Blake and Archie approached Kamir. “We heard about the Lions challenge,” Blake noted. “Yeah, and I know you need two more players,” Archie blurted out. “Forget it,” Kamir said, “I’ll figure it out.” “Look, don’t be stubborn. We’ve had our issues, and, hey, I know what we did was not cool, but let’s squash this feud, unite, and show the Lions they ain’t got nothing on us.” Kamir knew that this was the Bulldogs’ only hope of winning. The two unlikely teams merged, practiced together, and beat the Lions. The community was restored!

Sometimes, we must set aside our pride and differences to do what is best for the greater good.



[Joshua said,] “The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent.” (Joshua 6:17)



Joshua 2:8-13; 6:16-17

8 Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof **9** and said to them, “I know that the LORD has given you this land and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. **10** We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. **11** When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone’s courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. **12** Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign **13** that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them—and that you will save us from death.”

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16 The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, “Shout! For the LORD has given you the city! **17** The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent.”

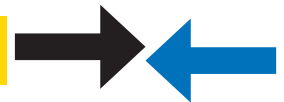


INTERSECT

NATIONS HAD HEARD ABOUT THE GOD OF ISRAEL AND FEARED HIM BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT HE PARTED THE RED SEA AND HAD ALREADY SUCCESSFULLY CONQUERED OTHER LANDS. Such is the case with Rahab. She was not afraid to admit to Israel’s spies that she feared the God of Israel. She believed in Him. She knew that He was coming to destroy Jericho, and she knew that Israel would prevail. Rahab risked her life by hiding the spies on her roof and by lying to the king and his men about their whereabouts. They immediately believed her, a prostitute, and did not look for the men in her house. That alone says that though she was a prostitute, she may have had some influence within the community. Rahab was a businesswoman, savvy and clever. She knew to establish an alliance with Israel to spare herself and her family.

But why would God choose a prostitute to help him fulfill His promise? God chooses anyone He desires, regardless of their past or present issues. He chose Saul (aka, the apostle Paul), a murderer, to become a kingdom builder for Christ. He chose Moses, someone who was not a great speaker, to convince Pharaoh to free His people from slavery. God knew Rahab’s heart. He knew that she was faithful, so He used her to play a significant role in His plan.

Inside Out



Read each statement and determine whether it is true or false. Write your answer on the line.

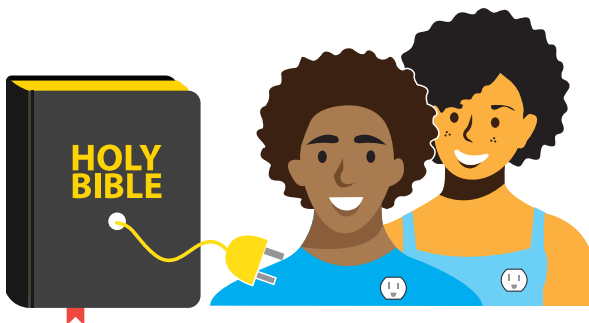
1. God chose Rahab to help the spies because she was a prostitute. _____
2. Rahab hid the spies because she was afraid of Israel’s God. _____
3. Rahab was to hang a purple cord in her window so that the Israelites would not kill her and her family. _____
4. Joshua kept his agreement with Rahab, the prostitute, and spared her and her family. _____
5. Rahab is part of Jesus’ lineage. She is King David’s great-great-grandmother. _____



THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

You can't judge a book by its cover. You don't always know a person's heart. There are some things for which taking a risk has worth. Rahab had faith in God that He would save her if she helped the Israelites.

Her profession as a prostitute may not be appealing to us, but God used her because He knew her heart. This is a lesson for us not to judge people—who they are, what they do, and where and how they do things. God knows and God can change their course of life. He chooses who He wants to fulfill His plan regardless of the labels that society has placed on them. He elevated Rahab to a great status. He rewards those who are faithful and obedient.



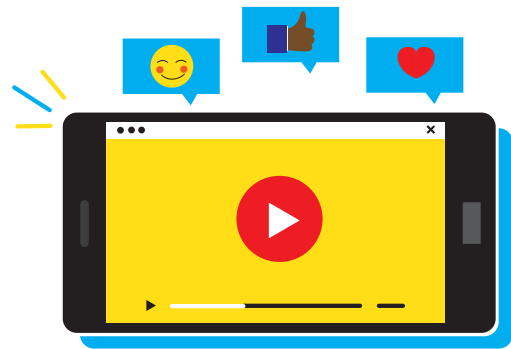
CONNECT

You may be asking yourself, “Rahab lied. Isn't that a sin?” Lying is indeed a sin. Rahab did what she had to do at that moment. It was a risk, but an opportunity to save her family. God directed the spies to her house. God knew that her heart was open to Him. She protected and saved the lives of the spies. Rahab also became a faithful Israelite and the great-great-grandmother of King David. God forgave Rahab and blessed her for her faithfulness and trust in Him. God will do the same for you. Do what you believe is right to do while trusting and believing in God's protection.



STEPPING OUT!

- Perform a word study of the word *prostitute*. What preconceived judgments do we make about prostitutes?
- Write about a time when you judged someone unfairly and ended up being wrong. What did that feel like, and what did you learn about God?



MEDIA MISSION

Find a poem or a song that demonstrates the faith of Rahab. Visit the link below to find a song that tells the story of Rahab and her faith in the God of Israel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2aPZJqLONk>

