Joshua and the Battle of Jericho
Joshua 1:1-6:27
After leading the Israelites thru the wilderness for 40 years, Moses led them back towards Canaan. There Moses turned leadership over to his assistant Joshua

“Be strong and courageous, the Lord your God will cross over ahead of you Himself. He will destroy these nations and you will take possession of their land,” Moses said to Joshua before all the tribes.

Moses climbed Mount Nebo, and God showed him the whole land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then Moses died and God Himself buried Moses.
Before they got ready to move in, Joshua took some time to pray and make sure he was making a wise choice.

“I have called you to go and take the land for My people,” said God, “You will fulfill the Promise I gave to Moses and you will see My people take the land.”

“Be strong and courageous. Follow the Law that I have set out for you and you will not fail. Everything that your foot treads upon, I have given over to you.”

Joshua went and told the people to ready themselves for soon they would go into the Promised Land and take it.
As the tribes readied themselves, Joshua sent two spies ahead to scout out the city of Jericho. Jericho was a mighty city and it controlled all of the land along the Jordan River.

“Go and spy out the city,” Joshua instructed, “Find out what we need to do.”

The spies went into the city of Jericho and there they met Rahab, who offered them shelter.
Now, the King of Jericho had heard that there were Israelite spies in Jericho and that they had stayed with Rahab, so he called her to him.

“Have you seen these men? Have you heard of all their God has done? He has destroyed whole cities and conquered many people.” He said, “If you see these spies report them to me immediately. We need to get them out of the city.”

Rahab listened politely, then said, “Sir, the men you are talking about came to my house earlier, and then left. They’re far out in the hills by now.”

“Go!” the king said in annoyance, “Tell me if you see them again.”
Rahab returned home, and knowing the king might send soldiers to search her house, she hid the men on the roof among the thatch.

“I know the Lord has given this land to you and everyone is afraid of you and your God. We have heard what He did to the Egyptians and how you walked on dry land. We’ve heard of your victory over the Amorites. Swear to me that you will show kindness to my family because I have been kind to you.”

The spies conferred for a moment and then said, “When we come to take your city, hang a red rope from this window you let us out of. We will know that all of the people who are in this house are to be saved. If you do not hang the rope, then we will be guiltless of your blood.”

“I will,” Rahab answered, and she lowered them out of the window.
The spies returned and told everything that had happened, “The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are falling apart in fear because of us.”

Joshua heard all of this, and led the Israelites to the Jordan River. It was harvest time and the river was at its highest point. The waters pushed up against the edges of the banks.

Joshua turned to the people and said, “This is how you will know that the Lord is with us, that he will drive out the Canaanites. As soon as the priests carrying the Ark of the Lord step into the Jordan it will dry up.”

And so it was, the Israelites crossed on dry land, just as their parents had crossed the Red Sea on dry land.
As the priests stood there with the ark Joshua commanded 12 men, one from each tribe to go in and grab the biggest stone they could find.

They looked confused, but did as Joshua told them. Then they set them up in a pile, and Joshua gestured to the rocks behind them.

“Look at these rocks behind me. This morning they were covered by water, and no one had seen them for years, if ever. Today, we walked across them on dry land, not mud, dry land. Remember this day and tell it to your children. When you walk by these rocks and your children ask why it is here, you will say, “On that day God stopped the Jordan River and we walked on dry land.”
That night they camped outside the walls of Jericho. There didn’t seem to be a way into the city, the walls were high, the gates closed and soldiers alert. How were they going to defeat this enemy?

As Joshua paced back and forth trying to devise a battle plan a man dressed in armor and carrying a sword came up to him.

“Are you for us or against us?” Joshua asked stepping forward.

“I am the commander of the army of the Lord. I have come to talk to you. Take off your shoes for this ground is holy.”

Joshua fell on his face and worshipped him.

“I have given Jericho to you and the Israelites. But, so all the world will know it was Me and not you who defeated Jericho.”
The next morning everyone lined up to hear God’s news. Joshua put everyone in the order God said, first the armed men, then the Ark of the Covenant, along with seven priests carrying trumpets, and then the rest of the soldiers.

Everyone looked around in confusion, but they followed what God had said to do. They walked silently around the whole city the first day and then went back to their camp.

For five more days they did exactly the same thing, and finally on the seventh day they gathered up just as before.

This time they marched around six times absolutely silent. Finally at Joshua’s command, they shouted as loud as they could, and all the walls around the city fell into ruin.
Every living thing in the city was slain, except Rahab and all in her house. All of the silver, gold, bronze, and iron was taken into the Lord’s treasury as He had commanded.

Joshua met Rahab and smiled, “So this is the lady who would defy a king. Welcome to the nation of Israel.”

With the defeat of Jericho the Israelites now held a large part of the land. They were finally taking control of all God had promised them.
Questions

Younger Kids
1. What did Joshua do before going in to Jericho? How do your parents make big decisions?
2. Did Rahab tell the truth when she talked to the king?
3. What did Rahab want the spies to do? Did Rahab trust God?
4. What did Joshua tell the Israelites to do after they crossed the Jordan River? Why is it important to remember what God has done?

Middle Kids
1. Moses has now spent at least 40 years teaching Joshua how to be a leader and how to follow God. Who is teaching you how to follow God?
2. Read Joshua 1:17. What do the Israelites promise to do? How well did they obey and follow Moses?
3. Read Joshua 2:4-5. Did Rahab tell the truth? When is it okay to lie?
4. God calls the Israelites to remember what He did for them when they crossed the Jordan River. What do you remember God has done for your family?

5. Do your parents ever give instructions that seem weird? Is it hard to obey them then? How do you think the Israelites felt when God told them to walk around the city silently and not attack?

Older Guys

1. Read Hebrews 13:1-6. In what context does the writer use Joshua 1:5?

2. Read Joshua 2:4-5 and Exodus 20:16. Did she break that commandment?

3. Read Joshua 2:22-23. Do the spies follow her advice? Is it possible to get good advice from a non-believer? How can you tell if their advice is good?

4. Read Joshua 4:6-9 and 4:20-24. God repeats things that are important for emphasis. What are you doing to help your family remember
what God has done? What can you start doing now?
5. Read Exodus 14:14, 1 Kings 18:43, and Zechariah 2:13. In any of these cases did God act the way you would expect?
6. Read Hebrews 11:31 and Matthew 1:5. Why else is Rahab important?

Activities
1. Play spy hide and seek. Pretend one person is the soldier seeking for the Israelite spies. One of the other people is Rahab helping them hide from the soldiers.
2. Build a city out of blocks or cardboard boxes, and walk around it like Joshua and the Israelites did. At the end knock it all down like God did to the city.
3. Try to dry up a river. Fill a small pan full of mud and water. Can you stop the water and dry up the mud?
4. Walk around your house absolutely silently for 10 minutes. How hard was it? The Israelites
had to walk around Jericho 6 times without talking, this probably took several hours.

5. The Israelites gathered up 12 stones to remember what God had done in their lives. Find or buy some river rocks, and write down what God has done your family.

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